

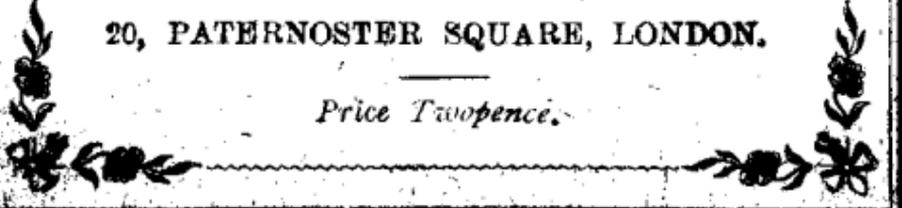
THE
TWO RESURRECTIONS.

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THE
TWO RESURRECTIONS.

It is quite possible that the brief title that stands at the head of this paper may strike some of our readers with a little surprise. Accustomed as they may long have been to look upon this deeply-interesting and important subject as one which is involved in almost hopeless obscurity, they may have given themselves up to the by-no-means-uncommon thought that there is a moment coming in the far-distant future when the wheels of time shall have ceased to run, and the history of this world shall have reached its close, and that then the graves will be opened, and all who have ever died,

from the beginning to the end of time, whether saved or unsaved, shall rise from the dead together to stand before one common judgment-seat, in order to have the great question settled of their souls' eternal destiny.

In a previous paper we have briefly taken up the subject of "judgment to come,"* and we now desire to examine, by the help of the Spirit of God, what the Scriptures say concerning the resurrection of the dead. On such a matter we need hardly say that the word of God is our *only* guide; for who but God could unveil the future? Man may speak or write about the *past* and the *present*; he can only speculate as to the *future*. But God has spoken in His word of the future with just as much certainty as of the past.

* *The Three Judgments.* W. H. BROOM.

We take it for granted that our readers are not imbued with the doctrine of the Sadducees, who said that there was "no resurrection" (Acts xxiii. 8), a doctrine which is, alas! being revived in these dark days of infidelity. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12), is the solemn utterance of the Spirit of God through the apostle Paul; and the same Spirit through the same writer has borne witness to the fact "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts xxiv. 15.) The truth of the first statement none can gainsay. The dark stains of sin are everywhere to be seen, in the world without and in the heart within; while as for death, the sight has now become so familiar to our eyes, that we are sometimes apt

to think that it always did and ever will exist. No, beloved reader. Time was when death was an unknown sight, the blessed time when "God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. i. 31.) How brief this blissful moment was, every reader of Genesis knows full well. The aspect of this fair creation was completely changed by the entrance of sin, and by sin everything has been spoiled. God could no longer look with complacency upon this world; not a spot could His holy eye rest on with delight until He entered it who "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. x. 26.) Need we remind the reader that this peerless Person was none other than the Lord of glory, who stooped to become a man, and upon whom, the heavens being opened the

Spirit of God descended, the Father's voice at the same time declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? (Matt. iii. 16, 17.)

Upon this sinless One death had no claim. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," was the wondrous declaration with which He came into the world (Heb. x. 1-10); and this marked His every thought and word and deed from His birth in Bethlehem to His death at the cross. *His death!* the reader might well exclaim. Why should He have died, if death had no claim upon Him? In no other way, we reply, could sin be put away than by the sacrifice of Himself. The death of a perfect victim was necessary to meet the requirements of God's righteousness and satisfy the claims of His justice, as also "that through death He might destroy him that had the

power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14); and though even now to faith He "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility* to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10), yet the bright day is coming when, on the basis of this perfect offering, every trace of sin shall be removed (John i. 29), the works of the devil completely destroyed (1 John iii. 8), death included, and the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, established, one of the blessed features of which will be that "there shall be no more death." (Rev. xxi. 4.)

That there shall be a resurrection of the dead is then clearly taught in the Scriptures, and it is equally clear that this will be "both of the just and unjust." (Acts xxiv. 15.) This passage teaches that the two resurrections

* This is the correct translation.

will be different in *character*, a fact which is also stated in John v. 29: "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."*

Abundant Scripture evidence might be brought forward to establish this point; but these two in themselves are amply sufficient to show that in the resurrection the dead will be divided into two distinct companies, whose characters will form a perfect contrast the one to the other—"the just and the unjust;" "they that have done good, and they that have done evil."

We would now earnestly invite the reader's most serious attention to the

* The word here is really "judgment." There is but one word in the Greek for "condemnation" (v. 24), "judgment" (v. 27), and "damnation" (v. 29), and in each case should be translated "judgment." (See Revised Version.)

passage from which the latter clause has been quoted. Its grand theme is to show the honour that is due to the Son, as equal with, though subject to, the Father. It is the Son that has been here in this world: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Though in the form of God, equal with God—yes, God Himself—"He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) Did He by this lose aught of His glory? By no means. A moral glory surrounded His blessed person, unseen, it is true, by the natural man, whose eyes were blinded by Satan, and whose spiritual vision was obscured by sin, but joyfully and thankfully acknowledged by all whose hearts divine grace had touched, and whose eyes divine power had opened.

“We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.”
(John i. 14.)

But God has decreed that “ALL men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” Whether their eyes have been blinded by the god of this world, or opened by the God of all grace, ALL shall honour the Son. He has been here in this world despised and rejected of men—exposed to all the scorn, shame, and contempt that the human heart could heap upon Him; but *every* knee shall bow to Him, and *every* tongue shall yet confess that He is Lord. (Phil. ii. 10, 11.)

In the passage we are about to consider the blessed Lord is brought before us in two distinct characters, and in one or other universal homage will be paid to Him; for in one or

other every one without exception *must* have to say to Him—either as the *giver of life*, or the *executor of judgment*; but be it well remembered that though we *must* meet Him in one, we *cannot* meet Him in both ways. Let verses 24–31 be carefully studied, and this will at once be seen.

In v. 24 three things are told us as true of every believer :

1. He HATH everlasting life.
2. He SHALL NOT come into judgment.*
3. He IS PASSED from death unto life.

* We are not forgetting that “we must all appear” (or, be manifested) “before the judgment-seat of Christ.” (2 Cor. v. 10.) This verse no doubt applies to *all*, whether saved or unsaved; but then we must remember that when the saint is manifested there he is already glorified, and perfectly like the One that sits upon the judgment-seat. Clearly therefore it cannot be to raise a question as to his title for glory, seeing that he is in it already. *For the saint* it is a question of *reward*.

We cannot now enlarge upon this important verse, but simply draw the reader's attention to the facts so clearly stated that the believer has *now* everlasting life, and does not need to wait until he dies to get it; he is also assured that God will not enter into judgment with him as regards his sins, and that whereas he *was* in a condition of moral death—"dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii.)—he has now through hearing the voice of the Son of God been quickened, and has passed into a state of spiritual life.

But all have not heard His quickening voice; many have lived and died and wilfully remained deaf to it. They have refused to honour Him as the giver of life; they *must* as the executor of judgment. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the

which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." Whatever may have been their spiritual state at the hour of death—whether saved or unsaved, believers or unbelievers—*all* shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; but how different will be the *object* for which they are raised! The one is for "life," the other for "judgment."

If the reader has not already considered this weighty subject he may feel disposed to ask, Are not both classes raised for judgment? Why is one said to be a resurrection of *life*, and the other a resurrection of *judgment*? Be well assured the change of the word was no accident, but in beautiful harmony with the whole teaching of the New Testament. For the believer in Christ *judgment is past*; yes, it is more than 1800 years

behind his back. Jesus, his blessed Substitute, has entered into death for him, has borne the judgment which his sins deserved, and has introduced him *now* into a place of perfect acceptance before God. He is, moreover, so completely justified from all things (Acts xiii. 39) that he possesses *now* peace with God (Rom. v. 1), and the assurance that his sins and iniquities will be remembered no more. (Heb. x. 17.) If the believer could possibly be brought into judgment on account of his sins it would be as much as calling in question the value and efficacy of that atoning work which has for ever put those sins away.

But if *v.* 24 tells us that the believer possesses eternal life as to his *soul*, *v.* 29 assures us that at the resurrection his *body*, ransomed from the grave, will be changed and

fitted for that same scene of life and glory where even now by faith and in spirit he delights to dwell. For this reason it is called the *resurrection of life*.

“In spirit there already,
 Soon we ourselves shall be ;
 In soul and body perfect,
 All glorified with Thee.”

But how different for the unbeliever! If judgment is passed for the one it is yet future for the other. The voice that calls him from the grave calls him not to enter and enjoy the glory as his home, but to witness its dazzling rays for a brief moment while he stands as a criminal at the bar to be judged for all his sins. Having lived and died, rejecting Christ the only Saviour of sinners, and having refused to trust in His precious blood, the only atonement for sin, all that awaits him is to

be judged in righteousness according to his works, ere suffering the fearful and everlasting sentence of the lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 11-15.)

We have thus clearly seen that the two resurrections are not only distinct in *character*, but that they are also perfectly different in their *object*.

Here perhaps the reader may say, "I fully admit that those who are raised are divided into two distinct companies; and, moreover, the passage seems to say that the object of their resurrection is different. But does it not also imply that they are raised at the same moment? for it says, 'The *hour* is coming.'"

In the verses before us the Lord twice makes use of the word "hour," and in neither case does it mean a brief period of sixty minutes, but an extended, though a measured, interval

of time, and with this use of the word we are all familiar in the language of every-day life. At first sight we might think that the "hour" of *v. 25* was the same as that of *v. 28*; but they are widely different. The "dead" in *v. 25* are not those who are physically dead, and whose bodies are in the grave, but those who are morally and spiritually dead. This is plain from the very wording of the verse—"The hour is coming, AND NOW IS." That "hour," beloved reader, had commenced when the blessed Saviour spoke those words; it has continued ever since, and during its whole extent dead souls have been hearing the voice of the Son of God, and, hearing, have received life. Now while the giving of spiritual life to the *soul* is the subject of *v. 25* the resurrection of the *body* is treated

of in *v.* 28; and inasmuch as the resurrection of the body is a process which has not yet commenced, the words "*and now is,*" which were used in *v.* 25, are left out in *v.* 28. How perfect is the word of God!

But we may ask, Over how long a period of time has the first hour extended? It had begun when Jesus spoke the words, it has not yet come to an end, so that it has already reached to more than 1800 years. Now if the word "hour" in *v.* 25 means a period of 1800 years and more, there is no reason whatever, so far as the use of the word "hour" is concerned, why it should not mean an equally long period in *v.* 28. If we had no further light on this subject from the word of God, it would have been impossible to say whether the two resurrections took place at the same time

or not; but from the foregoing remarks it must be evident that, at any rate, there is the *possibility* of their being separated by a long interval of time—how long that interval is we are distinctly told in another part of Scripture.

We would now turn to a passage which contains a truth of the greatest practical importance in the life and daily walk of the Christian. Of course all will admit that the resurrection is an act of God's power; none but He can give life to the dead. Man can *take* life; God only can *give* it. Man can open the grave to put the dead *in*; God can, and will, open it to take the dead *out*. But is the resurrection of the saints only an act of God's power? It is this; but is it only this? Romans viii. 11 tells us that "if the Spirit of Him that raised up

Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." The future resurrection of the Christian is connected with the present indwelling of the Spirit of God. It is a resurrection similar in *principle* to that of Jesus Himself, and of none but the saints could this be said.*

To enlarge upon the blessed theme of the presence of the Holy Ghost would lead us far away from our present subject; but we would draw the reader's attention to one result of His presence, as shown in v. 23, "ourselves also, which have the first-

* This passage refers to the saints of the present dispensation; that is, to those that compose the Church—the saints before the day of Pentecost were not indwelt by the Spirit. It shows how completely the Church is identified with Christ.

fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The present time is one of suffering for the child of God; he suffers with Christ; but soon he will be glorified together with Him, and the present groans and sufferings are not worthy to be compared with that coming glory—he then shall be conformed to the image of God's Son, (v. 29.) But for this he waits, the Spirit within him meanwhile leading on his thoughts and aspirations to that bright moment. He does not wait to become a son of God, the Spirit of adoption within leads him *now* to cry, "Abba Father" (v. 15), but he waits to be manifested as such in glory. Creation itself waits for that blissful epoch; it will then be "delivered from the bondage of corruption

into the liberty of the glory* of the children of God." (v. 21.) We surely need not remind our readers that all this is future; it takes place, *not at death, but at the resurrection*. At death the body goes down into corruption, at the resurrection it comes forth in glory. In passing, we would observe that glory is in connection with the *body*; it is quite a mistake to talk of glorified *spirits*. When the Christian dies, though his body is laid in the grave, his spirit departs to be with Christ, and in that condition of perfect repose and happiness awaits the resurrection, when it will be clothed upon with a house from heaven. (See carefully 2 Cor.v.1-9.) In other words, the Christian's hopes and prospects are all connected with resurrection, and *not with death*. But when will this take place?

* This is the correct translation.

For an answer to this important question we must turn to 1 Cor. xv. This chapter is entirely taken up with the subject of resurrection; first, that of Christ Himself, and then of the saints, that of the wicked is not mentioned from beginning to end.* There appear to have been some at Corinth who said that there was no resurrection (v. 12); but, reasons the apostle, if this be so, the whole gospel falls to the ground, our preaching is vain, we are found false witnesses of God, your faith is also vain; "for if Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins." (v. 17.) What stress he lays upon the resurrection of Christ! "If Christ

* The resurrection of the wicked is *indirectly* referred to in verse 26. Death is *destroyed* when the millennium is *over*, at the time of the judgment of the great white throne (Rev. xx. 12-15); it is *swallowed up in victory* (v. 54) at the coming of Christ, *before* the millennium commences.

be not *raised*." He does not say, "If Christ have not died." The resurrection of Christ was the clearest possible proof, not only of the *fact* that He had died, but also of the *value* of His death; it was the ground of their salvation, and the basis of their peace. "He was raised again for our justification," says the same apostle. May every reader of these lines be able to conclude with equal certainty, "Therefore being justified by faith, we HAVE PEACE WITH GOD." (Rom. v. 1.)

"But now is Christ risen from the dead." This then in itself proved the truth that there was a resurrection of the dead; but not only so, He has "become the first-fruits of them that slept."* (v. 20.) "But every man in

* Sleep is an expression Scripture uses for the death of a child of God. (See v. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14; John xi. 11-15.) It has reference only to the body, the soul never sleeps. We

his own order; Christ the first-fruits,"—this took place more than 1800 years ago. It was not possible that the Holy One should be holden of death; He was the first that should rise from the dead. "Afterward they that ARE Christ's, at His coming." (v. 23.) Here then is the answer to the question, *When* will the saints be raised? **AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.** Have they then to be judged, to see whether they are His? No; it is because they ARE His that they are raised at His coming. Have they then to be judged to decide whether they are to be in glory or not? No; they are **RAISED IN GLORY.** (v. 43.)

would also remark how this verse clearly proves the special character of the resurrection of the saints. Of what, we would ask, is Christ risen the first-fruits? Is He the first-fruits of sinners raised to be judged? Surely not. The harvest must partake of the same character and nature as the first-fruits. It is a resurrection of life and glory, not of judgment.

Christian reader, mark these words: The very act that raises you from the dead, *if you should die*, lands you in the glory. Clearly then, once in glory, no question of judgment can be entertained.

If the reader is surprised at the above clause, "If you should die," we would invite his attention to 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, where we learn that at the coming of the Lord two things take place: First, "The dead in Christ shall rise" (mark, not the dead in their sins); secondly, "We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." At His coming, then, those saints which are alive shall be caught up without having to pass through death at all.

Some people in reading this passage, as well as many others which treat of the coming of the Lord, imagine that

death is meant. They say, Does not the Lord come for us at death? But a moment's consideration of v. 16 will be enough to show that such a thought is erroneous. When a Christian dies he goes to be with Christ (Phil. i. 23); Christ does not leave the glory and come down into the clouds for him. But in this verse "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." Is death "the Lord Himself"? Does death come down from heaven with a shout? And further, the passage speaks not of death, but of *resurrection*; not of the time when the body is put down into the grave and corruption, but of the bright moment when "the dead in Christ shall RISE."

It may, however, be said, If the saints are raised at His coming, are we not told in the next verse that

“then cometh the end”? Does not this seem to imply that the resurrection of the saints is at the very close of this world’s history? At first sight this might appear so, but we must remember that in this passage the apostle is merely giving the *order* of the events; he does not here state the *amount of time* that elapses between them. It is also helpful to see that the word “then,” in v. 24, is the same word in the original as “afterward,” in v. 23, so that it might be read thus: “Christ the first-fruits: afterward they that are Christ’s, at His coming; afterward cometh the end;” but how soon afterward we are not here told. Now we have already seen that more than 1800 years have elapsed between the first half of v. 23 and the last; but if in this verse the word “afterward” includes such

a lengthened period, why may not the very same word in the next verse include a long one too? We take it for granted that the Christian reader is to a certain extent familiar with the innumerable prophecies, yet unfulfilled, of a time of unexampled blessing still future for this earth. The Old Testament abounds with such predictions, and foretells in glowing language a blissful period when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. (See Isa. xi.) We cannot attempt in the present paper to quote passages, or enlarge on this most interesting subject;* we would simply draw the reader's attention to the fact that such a time is coming, and moreover that it is ushered in by the return of the

* The reader wishing for further help is referred to a small book entitled, *Eight Lectures on Prophecy*, by the late W. Trotter.

Lord in judgment, and not, as is often supposed, by the preaching of the gospel. "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. xxvi. 9.) Thus Psalms xcvi. and xcvi. which are filled with joyful anticipations of this bright and glorious day, close with the solemn words, "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad . . . before the Lord; for He cometh, for He cometh TO JUDGE THE EARTH."

Not only will this period of earthly blessing be introduced by the coming of the Lord in judgment, but it will be characterized all through by His personal reign. "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness" (Isa. xxxii. 1); "The Lord shall be King over all the earth." (Zech. xiv. 9.) These and many other prophecies (see Ps. lxxii.), I need hardly say, are yet to be ful-

filled. He who is to reign has already entered this world; but He has been rejected and cast out. Instead of a crown He received a cross; instead of a throne, a grave. Nevertheless "He SHALL reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 33.) Yes; the despised and rejected Nazarene "MUST reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet." (1 Cor. xv. 25.) But when He reigns He will not reign alone. In Daniel vii., just after hearing of the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days, and receiving at His hands a kingdom and dominion which was to take the place of all other kingdoms, we are told that the *saints* of the Most High possess the kingdom. (Dan. vii. 13, 14, 18, 22.) We are cheered, too, with

the promise that, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. ii. 12.) And lastly, in Revelation xx., we are told of certain who live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

This latter passage is of such immense importance that we would earnestly invite the reader's attention to it for a few moments. It is here that we are told so distinctly what will be the duration of this reign. It will be one thousand years (hence called *the millennium*); during it Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit (*v. 2*), not yet finally judged in the lake of fire (*v. 10*), and Christ Himself shall reign, a company of saints also living and reigning WITH HIM (*v. 4*), not reigned over *by* Him, but reigning *with* Him. Who are these? Reader, mark it well, they are those who have part in the FIRST RESURREC-

TION. If, then, these saints reign with Him, it must clearly be after their resurrection, and hence after His coming, that this reign takes place; consequently the whole period of the millennium intervenes between verses 23 and 24 of 1 Cor. xv.

But if there is a *first* resurrection there must be a *second*; and how long elapses between them? ONE THOUSAND YEARS. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (v. 5.) Not only is the doctrine of the two resurrections here clearly taught, but the time intervening between them is even told us.

During the whole period of the millennial reign of Christ and the glorified saints, "the rest of the dead"—that is, all those who have died in their sins—remain in their graves; and at its close they rise to be judged

before the great white throne, there to receive their final doom, and be cast into the lake of fire. Here again is further confirmation of the truth, already seen in John v., of the difference in the two resurrections as to their object. The first is a *resurrection of life*. "They lived and reigned with Christ." The second is a *resurrection of judgment*. They rise to stand before the great white throne, to be *judged* according to their works.

Let us now briefly enquire who form part of the first resurrection. In v. 4 we find three distinct classes of saints. (1) "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them:" (2) "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God," (3) "and [those] which had not worshipped the beast,"

&c. In order clearly to understand who these three classes represent, it is necessary to take a retrospective glance at the book of Revelation. John is told (chap. i. 19) to write (1) "the things which thou hast seen," (2) "and the things which are," (3) "and the things which shall be after these" (not hereafter). This threefold division of the book is most important to bear in mind for a true understanding of its contents. The first division is the subject of chap. i., the second is treated in chaps. ii., iii. In these two chapters we are given a prophetic outline of the history of the Church as a responsible witness for Christ on this earth from the days of John right on to the coming of the Lord, when the true believers being caught up to meet Him in the air, the mere professors will be spued out of His mouth as intolerable to

Him. The things which must be after these (chap. iv. 1) are the subject from chap. iv. to the end of the book.

As we have said, chaps. ii., iii. give us the present history of the Church *on earth*. Earth is the sphere in those two chapters; but in chap. iv. 1 "a door was opened *in heaven*," and we there see the whole company of the redeemed in glory. It is almost universally admitted that the twenty-four elders are symbolical of all the glorified saints that are either raised or changed at the coming of Christ. They include not only the Church, but all the Old Testament saints, and they are here seen sitting on thrones (in v. 4 the word "seats" should be "thrones"); perfect peace and repose characterize them, even in presence of the thunderings and lightnings which proceed from the throne. The over-

whelming judgments about to fall on the earth have no terror for them; they are about to live and reign with Christ; they are the first company seen in chap. xx. 4 sitting on the thrones.

Between chaps. iii., iv. the coming of Christ *for* His saints has taken place; for in chap. iii. they are on earth, whereas in chap. iv. they are in heaven. From chaps. vi. to xix. the earth is once more the scene of God's dealings, and therein is contained a minute and solemn account of all the judgments that will be poured upon it between the coming of the Lord *for* His saints into the air and His appearing *with* them on the earth (chap. xix. 11, 14), judgments terrible in their beginning, but increasing in their severity until they reach their climax at the destruction of the beast and the kings of the earth with their

armies, who are smitten before Him, and trodden under His feet as grapes in the winepress.

During this interval God will be dealing with the Jewish nation, who will have returned to their own land in unbelief. The remnant of whom we read so much in the Psalms and Prophets will then be called out to be a testimony for God amidst the increasing evils of apostate Christendom. This evil, unchecked by the presence of the Spirit of God, removed with the Church at the coming of Christ (2 Thess. ii. 6, 7), will rapidly rise to a head, and the remnant will suffer unparalleled persecutions at the hand of Antichrist and the Beast or resuscitated Roman empire. We cannot stop to go into the scripture proof of all this; that has been abundantly done elsewhere. All we desire is to

awaken a spirit of enquiry in the heart of every Christian who may read these lines, and who may not already have considered these subjects.

It is during this time of terrible tribulation that the two remaining companies in chap. xx. 4 are martyred; namely, between the rapture of the saints at the coming of Christ, and His appearing with them in chap. xix. just previous to His millennial reign. The first of them is noticed in chap. vi. 9-12, the second in chap. xiii. 15. We are not told at what precise moment they will be raised; but one thing is clear, they will form part of the first resurrection.

Sometimes it is said that the living and reigning with Christ simply means a great revival of the principles for which the early Christians suffered martyrdom, leading to the

spread of the gospel through the world, and the universal conversion of mankind. Nobody in the smallest degree familiar with the teaching of the New Testament could for a moment entertain such an explanation of the chapter. Instead of the gospel spreading and converting the world—Christendom—that vast system of religious profession is rapidly hastening on to the complete apostasy from Christ and the truth, foretold so unmistakably in the word of God (see 2 Thess. ii; 1 Tim. iv. 1-4; 2 Tim. iii. 1-10, &c.), and induced so inevitably by the combined influences of worldliness, infidelity and popery. Besides, how could *principles* be called *priests* of God? (v. 6.) No, beloved reader, those mentioned in verse 4 are real living *persons* reigning with Christ in resurrection glory.

But at the end of the thousand years Satan is loosed out of his prison, and the heart of man is seen to be still unchanged, and as ready as ever to turn against God. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and unless born again even in millennial times will be sure to rise in open revolt. We need hardly say that those who join in this last rebellion against God are those amongst the nations of the millennial earth who never have been born again.

We are next told of the judgment of the WICKED DEAD before the great white throne. *After* the saints have been glorified, *after* they have lived and reigned with Christ, *after* the first resurrection—yes, *one thousand years after*—"the rest of the dead" come forth from their graves. A part of the dead (namely, "the dead in

Christ") had been raised at the commencement of the thousand years; "the rest of the dead" are raised at its close; they stand to be judged according to their works. The first was a resurrection of life, the second a resurrection of judgment. ALL who stand before the great white throne are cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death. (v. 14.)

Earth and heaven having fled away, all vestige of sin removed, the new heavens and the new earth will be established, and the eternal state commence, in which God will dwell with men (xxi. 1-6), and He will be ALL IN ALL. (1 Cor. xv. 28.)

We have now briefly and very imperfectly gone over this deeply interesting subject, and we trust it has been made clear to the Christian reader that the two resurrections are (1) of a

completely different character, (2) for a widely different object, (3) according to a totally different principle, and (4) at an entirely different time.

It is of growing importance in these days for every servant of Christ rightly to divide the Word of truth (2 Tim. ii. 15), and we would affectionately urge all our readers to compare the statements made in the foregoing pages with that unerring guide. May it also be increasingly the desire of our hearts to be able honestly to use the language of the apostle: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from among the dead." * (Phil. iii. 10, 11.) What he ardently longed for

* This is the correct translation.

was a deeper acquaintance with the person of Christ in this world, and a perfect conformity to His image in resurrection glory. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection *from among* the dead," not merely *of* the dead. To rise from the dead was no special attainment; for all, as we have seen, will rise. But what he sought was that particular character of resurrection which was similar in its nature to that of Christ Himself; namely, a resurrection out from among the dead, which would place him in glory like his Lord. For this coveted prize he was running, and to that glorious goal he was hastening, at all cost to himself, even at the risk of suffering, and a martyr's death. But when would he reach it? At death? No; but in the resurrection, when his long-looked-for Saviour would come,

and change the vile bodies of the saints, and fashion them like to His own body of glory. (*vv.* 20, 21.) Beloved Christian reader, may this blessed hope likewise fill our hearts, brighten our lives, and energize us in His service until He come.

“O happy morn! the Lord will come
 And take His waiting people home,
 Beyond the reach of care;
 Where guilt and sin are all unknown:
 The Lord will come and claim His own,
 And place them with Him on His throne,
 The glory bright to share.

“The resurrection-morn will break,
 And every sleeping saint awake,
 Brought forth in light again.
 O morn, too bright for mortal eyes!
 When all the ransomed church shall rise,
 And wing their way to yonder skies,
 Called up with Christ to reign.

“O Lord, my pilgrim spirit longs
 To sing the everlasting songs
 Of glory, honour, power!
 When heaven and earth and all things yield,
 My Saviour will be still my shield;
 For He has to my soul revealed
 Himself, my strength and tower.”