

# ORIGINAL SERMONS;

BY

**Presbyterian Ministers,**

IN

**THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.**

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Now, I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same things, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

PAUL.

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# SERMON XVI.

BY THE REV. JOSHUA L. WILSON, D. D.

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## THE SANCTUARY CLEANSED.

And he said unto me, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.\*' DAN. viii. 14.

DANIEL, one of the Lord's prophets, saw clearly and greatly lamented the pollutions of the sanctuary. The desolations of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the captivity of the Lord's people were ever present to his thoughts, as the dreadful effects of corrupting the worship of God, and presented before him a dark emblem of long desolations, in after ages, when the "holy city should be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, forty and two prophetic months."† The calamities then endured and those disclosed to him in the visions of God, were subjects of his solemn meditation, anxious inquiry, deep humiliation, and fervent prayers.

His investigations were not in vain; his prayers were not unanswered. And when he discovered 'by books,' that the end of the Babylonish captivity was near, he was *consoled*, in relation to distant events, around which prophecy had cast her mysterious mantle, by the kind assurance that he should rest and stand in his "lot at the end of those days." Dan. ix. 2, 3; xii. 13.

\* For the import of the term sanctuary, and its pollutions, see the foregoing discourse.

† Rev. xi. 2, 3; xiii. 5, 7. 1260 years.

That the *sanctuary* means the church of God, or visible kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, on earth; that the church has been greatly corrupted in all ages, by her own professed ministers and members; and that her purification will take place at the time appointed by Jehovah, are not now matters of discussion. The text places before us plainly two subjects of inquiry.

I. What is implied in the declaration, "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed?"

II. When shall this cleansing be accomplished?

I. What is implied in the declaration, "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed?"

The inspired writers have cherished in the bosom of the church an expectation, that at some period, remote from their times, she shall enjoy a season of transcendent purity, peace, and prosperity on earth.

Solomon, in his Song of Songs, makes this beautiful and sublime inquiry concerning the church,—“Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” Cant. vi. 10. And David had said before, speaking of Messiah’s kingdom, “There shall be a handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains, the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth; his name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed.” Ps. lxxii. 16, 17.

The prophet Isaiah closes a touching description of the triumphs of the church, with this remarkable declaration: “Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the

Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Isa. xxx. 26.

And again, speaking of the *villany*, and *iniquity*, and *hypocrisy*, and "ERROR AGAINST THE LORD," which had caused the land to be overrun with thorns and briers, and the palaces to be forsaken, he declared that this state of things should continue "until the Spirit be poured upon *us* from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest; then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Isa. xxxii. 15, 16, 17. And when it is foretold that venomous animals shall become harmless, and domestic cattle lie down in safety with beasts of prey, the delightful picture of *peace* receives the finishing touch of the divine pencil with this inimitable delineation: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the *earth* shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. xi. 9. And the Lord said by the prophet Malachi, "From the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen; saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. i. 11.

We are also taught to expect *this time of blessedness*, in the kingdom of our Lord, AFTER the *cleansing* of the sanctuary. Nebuchadnezzar's dream, embracing the existence, duration, and destruction of a great, bright, and terrible image, commenced with the head of gold, and ended with the stone cut out of the mountain, with-

out hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth—meaning a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, which should triumph over all opposition, and stand forever. Dan. ii. Daniel's vision of the four beasts and little horn ends in the people of the saints of the Most High possessing this kingdom. Dan. vii. 27. His vision of "THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH," including the overthrow of Persia, Greece, Egypt, and Syria, and the hopeless, helpless end of the "*wilful king*,"—explained by some to mean Napoleon, ends in the time of BLESSEDNESS. [See Cooper's Crisis, and Dan. x. 21; xi. 36—45; xii. 12.]

The vision of the ram and he-goat ends in the cleansing of the *Sanctuary*. Dan. viii. All these visions direct the eye of faith down through the vista of time, to one happy, grand, and glorious result—"THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD."

The prophecies of Ezekiel respecting the judgments of God upon Gog, terminate in this consolation: "Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." Eze. xxxix. 29.

Joel finishes his description of the return of the Jews and the gathering of all nations, with this interesting assurance: "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." Joel iii. 17. And Zechariah closes his prediction of God's judgments upon them, who oppose his people, with this cheering assurance: "In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the

altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be *holiness unto the Lord of Hosts*, and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts." Zech. xiv. 20, 21.

That this period of predicted glory to the church, is yet future; that many believe it will never come; that the sanctuary was greatly polluted in the days of the prophets, of Christ, and of his apostles; that corruptions have been multiplied and greatly increased, by the "Mystery of iniquity," which then began to work, (2 Tim. ii. 7.) and that "*errors against the Lord*" are rapidly spreading at the present hour; are facts *undenied* and **UNDENIABLE**. But what said the second Elijah concerning *him* who must increase, until his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth?" John iii. 30; Zech. ix. 10. "He that cometh after me is mightier than I; whose *fan* is in his hand, and he will thoroughly *purge* his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Mat. iii. 11, 12. And what said the Master himself? "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and *them* which *do* iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear." Mat. xiii. 41, 42, 43. This means, as Christ tells us, "the end of the world," and no doubt *includes* the grand and public separation of the wicked from the righteous, at the day of Judgment; yet it certainly does not *exclude* that predicted purifying process by which the church shall gain a righteous triumph

over the whole earth; and it affords *us* a clue, by which we may arrive at a correct solution of the question before us. I say then, the cleansing of the sanctuary means the removal, from Christ's kingdom, of all *things that offend*. I am not here speaking of the conversion of the Jews, nor of the "fulness of the Gentiles," nor of the destruction of Mahometans, nor of the ruin of infidels. I am speaking of the purification of the visible church of God; of those, and those *only*, who in some way belong to that great visible, mixed, diversified society, denominated Christian—the Christian world—the church catholic. This is *the sanctuary polluted*. This must be cleansed before the day of blessedness.

#### I. THE MINISTRY MUST BE PURIFIED.

The ministers of religion have been the first and most efficient agents in corrupting the church; and they must be the first subjects of reformation. Jehovah of hosts said by his servant Malachi, "The Lord shall suddenly come to his temple! But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall *purify* the sons of LEVI,"—the appointed ministers of the sanctuary; "and *purge* them, as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Mal. iii. 1—3. [See Pool and Scott on this passage.] This fiery trial shall burn up those who corrupt the word and worship of God, and thoroughly purify such as are called of God to minister immediately in the services of the Christian church. They shall be vessels of honor, purified *indeed* for holy employments, offering "unto the LORD an offering in



righteousness; who can say in truth, "We are not as **MANY** who corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, speak we in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 17. No doubt there have been some "good men and *true*," in every period of the church. But the number has hitherto been small, compared with the "**MANY** who *corrupt* the word of God." If the church was preserved by the salt and directed by the light of grace, when she had but **ONE true prophet**, and *only seven thousand true worshippers*, what will be her increase and blessedness when her multiplied ministers shall all offer instruction, prayer, praise, and alms, in truth, purity, righteousness, and peace? Then shall be fulfilled that which was spoken by Isaiah, "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations.—Ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God." Isa. lxi. 4—6.

Then shall be sung in Zion, this song: "We will go into his tabernacles; we will worship at his footstool. Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength; let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy." Ps. cxxxii. 7—9.

As the words of the **PURE** are pleasant, and when fitly spoken, are like *apples of gold in pictures of silver*, we may confidently expect that, in the cleansing of the sanctuary, the Lord will fulfil to his Church that which he promised by his servant Zephaniah: "I will turn to the people a *pure language*, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to *serve him with ONE CONSENT*." Zeph. iii. 9. What a delightful and splendid exhibition shall be made in the *sanctuary* when "a live coal from the altar" shall be laid upon every mouth, and it shall be said to every minister of reconciliation, "Lo,

this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged!" Is. vi. 6, 7. Zion's watchmen shall no longer be *blind*, nor dumb, nor greedy; no shepherds shall remain in her that cannot understand. Their feet shall be beautiful upon the mountains, because they publish salvation. They shall lift up the voice; with the voice *together* shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Is. lvi. 10, 11. Com. ch. lii. 7, 8. As every vessel in the Lord's house and every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy, (Zech. xiv. 20, 21,) so all who minister in holy things shall be holy—"a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by JESUS CHRIST. I Pet. ii. 5.

## 2. THE CHURCH SHALL BE PURIFIED IN HER ARTICLES OF FAITH.

When the sons of Levi are purified, all radical errors must be blotted out from church creeds. When there is *one Lord* and his name *One*, acknowledged and obeyed by *all* who "*minister and serve the altar*," there must be *one system of faith* and *one mode* of Christian administration. Where this "*one faith*" is now to be found among church creeds which shall stand the fiery trial of purgation, and be subject to the fewest razures, it is not my prerogative to decide. I have identified my name and interests with a defined and published system, by which I must stand or fall. I feel confident that if I have embraced and taught a system not sustained by the word of God, I am utterly undone. Until I can see a better way, I must honestly pursue that which I have chosen, should it land me in perdition. I know "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the ways of death." Prov. xiv. 12.

xvi. 25. And I know also that a system *given* by “inspiration of God,” to which none can add, from which none can take away, with impunity—a system *made profitable* for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness—a system *designed* by infinite wisdom to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, cannot possibly contain adverse schemes of doctrine and contrarieties in modes of worship, ordinances, and discipline. Men may call it liberality, or charity, or what name they please, to suppose that all doctrinal theories and practical administrations under the Christian name, are alike safe, provided their votaries be sincere; but, in the end, they will find multitudes destroyed by deriving hope from false systems and vain theories. Can it be *possible* that Protestants and Papists, Trinitarians and Unitarians, all varieties of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, High and Low Churchmen and Episcopalians, all kinds of Methodists and the endless grades of Baptists, can *all* stand, when the sanctuary shall be cleansed? Without stopping now to name hundreds of sects, whose systems are more absurd, and some of them more impious, than any I have mentioned, I ask *emphatically* can *any two* of the whole number stand, when “every thing that offends” shall be removed from the sanctuary? particularly when a *corrupt* ministry and all *false* creeds are utterly destroyed? No, no! is the only consistent answer to this question. How solemn is the thought that *He* whose *fan* is in his hands “*will thoroughly PURGE HIS FLOOR!*”

3. EVERY CHURCH MEMBER WILL KNOW, LOVE, AND OBEY THE TRUTH.

When the Sanctuary is cleansed, the ministry of

reconciliation being all “pastors after God’s own heart,” all feeding his flock with knowledge and understanding—all false articles of faith being expunged, and all erroneous modes of worship abandoned—a corresponding improvement must take place in the visible holiness of Zion’s citizens. It is written, “I will make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls salvation and thy gates praise——*Thy people also shall be all righteous.*”\* Our attention is called to this delightful prospect by a prefatory announcement, no less cheering. “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit which is upon thee and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed; nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever.” Isa. lix. 20, 21. And the prediction closes with this divine consolation—“Thy people shall be *all righteous*; they shall inherit the land forever, *the branch of MY PLANTING, the work of MY HANDS, that I MAY BE GLORIFIED.* A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will *hasten* it in his time.”† The proof texts

\* Isa. lix. 17—22. If this prediction relates to the restoration of the Jews and the salvation of the Gentiles; still it proves the point before us, that the church must be pure and peaceable, greatly improved in practical piety, when the Sanctuary is cleansed. Read the 60th chapter through and see.

† Isa. lix. 21, 22. Compare chap. iv. and lii. 1. on the blessedness of Christ’s kingdom. There will then be no dispute about who does the work.

on this animating subject are numerous; but I shall adduce only one or two more. Paul tells us that "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having a spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 25—27. And Peter says, to the church—"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a *holy nation*, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9. From these and similar passages, we may confidently expect, that, when *the sanctuary is cleansed*, and the people are *all righteous*, and all *know the Lord*, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them" the church will *do whatsoever she hath "learned and received, and heard, and seen"* by the *purified ministry of reconciliation*, and that whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, will be themes of meditation, topics of discourse, and matters of practice, throughout the whole church.\*

4. *Whilst the purifying process is advancing, and shortly before the work is completed, we are taught to expect A DAY OF UNCOMMON TROUBLE!*

Before Isaiah was permitted to dip the pencil of peace in the rainbow of mercy, he was commanded to brandish the forked lightnings and hurl the thunders of heaven. "None calleth for justice nor pleadeth for truth—they hatch cockatrice eggs and weave the spider's web—transgression is multiplied in lying against

\* Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Com. Heb. viii. 11. and Phil. iv. 8, 9.

the Lord and departing from our God—we stumble at noon day as in the night—we roar like bears and mourn sore like doves—and judgment is turned away back, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment, and he saw there was no man and wondered there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him; for he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmit of salvation upon his head; and he put on the *garments of VENGEANCE for clothing*, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, FURY to his *adversaries*, RECOMPENSE to his *enemies*.” Isa. lix.

When Jeremiah was led, by the Holy Ghost, with joy to predict the latter day glory of Immanuel’s kingdom, he was required also to perform the painful duty of declaring the righteous judgments of God. “And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them and he shall approach unto me, saith the Lord; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” But—“BEHOLD! the *whirlwind* of the Lord goeth forth with *fury*, a *continued WHIRLWIND*; it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: IN THE LATTER DAYS ye shall consider it.” Jer. xxx.

Zechariah has declared that in the period of the church’s prosperity, “The Lord shall be king over all

the earth. In *that day* there shall be *one* Lord and his name *ONE*." But in the same breath he denounced the judgments of God, and predicted a day of unprecedented trouble. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people, that have fought against Jerusalem—their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in *that day*, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them." Zech. xiv.

When Malachi foretold the purification of the ministry and the pleasant offering of God's people "in righteousness," he recorded also Jehovah's declaration of judgment. "And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorceress and against the adulteress, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn away the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts." "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. iii. 5. iv. 1.

Our blessed Lord having predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews among all nations, (Luke xxi. 20—24,) carried the minds of his disciples forward to a day of his "*power* and **GREAT GLORY**." In this connexion he told them of "distress of nations" upon the earth, "with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for

fear, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken;" and he added, "Verily I say unto you, this *generation* shall not pass away till all be fulfilled."\*

The progeny or race of the Jews has been so wonderfully preserved—they *have not passed away*, notwithstanding their dispersion has continued for nearly eighteen hundred years. We believe that "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but Christ's words shall not pass away."

Since the destruction of the old world by water, great calamities have taken place, dreadful evils have been endured. They have been occasioned by wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, and a few signal, *supernatural* displays of divine vengeance. But all these have been local, partial, and circumscribed, in comparison of the *distresses* which are predicted in connexion with the cleansing of the sanctuary. These will be unparalleled in extent and diversity, but short in duration.

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." "Who is wise and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: But the transgressors shall fall therein." Dan. xii. 1. 10. and Hosea xiv. 9. I now proceed to enquire—

## II. *When shall the sanctuary be cleansed?*

The time is specified in our text. "And he said unto me *until two thousand and three hundred days*, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

\* Luke xxi. 25--33. *Generation*--Gr. *genea*; Lat. *progenies*; Eng. progeny, or race.



In an attempt to ascertain the beginning and end of these *prophetic days*, it is necessary to make a prophetic computation, counting "a day for a year." Ezek. iv. 6. The period, then, is 2300 Jewish years, each year containing 360 natural days, and of course the conclusion of the calculation will differ from our dates just as much as the Scripture date differs from the common or vulgar chronology. Besides this long period of 2300 years, the visions of Daniel disclose two other periods of time, which are very remarkable. "Seventy weeks" or 490 years, (Dan. ix. 24.) and "a time and times and the dividing of time," (Dan. vii. 25,) or 1260 years. One week is 7 days, and 70 weeks are 7 times 70 days, make 490 days or years. "A time, and times and half a time," or "the dividing of time" is a period of "a thousand two hundred and three score days," that is, 1250 years. Rev. xii. compare the 6th and 14th verses. This period is also called "forty and two months." Com. Dan. xii. 7, with Rev. xii. 2. Forty two months of thirty days each, Jewish time, are 42 times 30—1260 Jewish years. These two shorter periods of "seventy weeks" (490 years) and "a time and times and the dividing of time," (1260 years,) are, as I shall show, comprehended in the long period of "two thousand and three hundred days" (years.) The "seventy weeks" being the beginning, and the "time, times and a half," the end, leaving a middle period of 550 years from the end of the 70 weeks, till the beginning of the forty-two months—that is, as I understand it, from the time of the calling of the Gentiles till the commencement of the reign of Antichrist. If this be correct, the downfall of Antichrist will be complete when the sanctuary is cleansed.

Having thus premised, or given my method of computation, I undertake to show—That Daniel's "70 weeks" is the beginning or first part of the "2300 days," allotted for cleansing the sanctuary; that Daniel's "time, times, and a half" is the last or concluding part of the "2300 days;" that the "70 weeks" commenced 453 years before the birth of Christ and ended in A. D. 37; that the "time, times, and dividing of time" or 1260 years began in A. D. 587 and shall end with the termination of the "2300 days" or years, in 1847.\*

When the angel Gabriel explained this vision to Daniel, he gave the following statement. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to annoint the Most Holy." Dan. ix. 24. Whatever difficulty any may have found in explaining this verse, all evangelical commentators must agree in these points of interpretation; that within 490 years from a date not stated here, Messiah, the Most Holy, should *come*, and by means of an effectual offering for sin, supersede the legal sacrifices and terminate the Jewish dispensation. "*Thy people and thy*

\* It is not a little remarkable, that William C. Davis, of South Carolina, Th. R. Robertson, of Indiana, and Wolf, the Jewish Missionary, in calculating the times specified in the Books of Dan. and Rev. all have fixed the end of the 2300 days, in 1847. Mr. Davis, thought this would be the "commencement of the Millennium;" Mr. Robertson viewed it as "the downfall of the Pope;" and Mr. Wolf confidently expected "Christ's personal appearance in Jerusalem." How far these men were indebted to each other, I cannot tell. I am indebted to them all—not for the expectations mentioned, but for pointing out a clue by which I can arrive at certainty as to the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary.

*holy city*" must mean the Jewish church. "To finish the transgression and make an end of sin," or as Gabriel explained it, "to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness," means the atonement of the cross. "To seal up the vision and prophecy" means to accomplish and fulfil what was written in the law and prophets concerning Messiah. "To anoint the Most Holy or Holy of Holies;" this was the name of the Sanctuary or inner part of the temple, a pattern of heaven, into which Christ entered when he had offered himself a sacrifice for sin, and sprinkled the most holy place with his own blood. The name Most Holy, or Holy of Holies is here properly given to Messiah, who was greater than the Temple, because in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead, and God anointed him: Christ is God's holy and anointed one.

Thus we plainly see that the "seventy weeks" were to continue till the close of the Jewish dispensation and no longer.

The angel having given this general statement, proceeded to particulars, and divided the 70 weeks into three parts. "Know therefore and understand, from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build (Heb. *build again*) Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, SEVEN WEEKS (49 years) and THREE SCORE AND TWO WEEKS, (434 years,) and *after* 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off; and he shall confirm the covenant with many, *for* (during) ONE WEEK (7 years) and in the *midst* (middle) of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease," (Dan. ix. 25, 26, 27,) that is, supersede the legal dispensation by the one offering of himself on the cross. Let us note the specifications of the angel in the order of time.

	<i>years.</i>
Part 1. <i>Seven weeks</i> , to build again Jerusalem, . . . . .	49
“ 2. <i>Sixty-two weeks</i> , till the public inauguration of Messiah, . . . . .	434
“ 3. One week, Messiah cut off in the midst, . . . . .	7
Total, <i>Seventy weeks</i> , . . . . .	490

We know that Jerusalem was built again in 49 years, (seven weeks,) “the street and the wall,” “even in troublous times,” as the angel said.\*

Messiah was publicly inaugurated when he was 30 years old, (Luke iii. 23.) 434 years (62 weeks) after the rebuilding took place.

In the middle of the *one week* or last 7 years which remained of the whole 70 weeks, Messiah was cut off by the death of the cross. The last half of this week was spent by the apostles and others in preaching the gospel to the Jews *only*, (Acts viii. 4. com. xi. 19.) who were first converted to Christianity; and thus, by the public ministry of Christ, during three years and a half, by his death at that predicted period, and by the preaching of the gospel to the Jews, the remainder of the week, three years and a half, “beginning at Jerusalem,” (Luke. xxiv. 47.) Messiah “confirmed the covenant with *many*† for *one week*,” which evidently ended in A. D. 37. This ended the Jewish dispensation, and

\* Vide Ezra and Nehemiah. The Jews said 46 years, John xi. 20; but they must, if they spoke accurately, have left out the years in which the work was hindered by Artaxerxes, Ezra, iv. 21, 24.

† Acts. xxi. 20. Thou seest, brother, how *many thousands* of Jews there are who believe. Gr. *posai muriades*; Lat. *quot decem millia*; Eng. how many myriads or tens of thousands. Com. Acts ii. 41—there were added three thousand—iv. 4. Many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand, vi. 7. And the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

the gospel was preached to the Gentiles.\* And then followed what was stated by Gabriel, (Dan. ix. 26, 27,) *the people of a prince should come for the destruction of Jerusalem, and bear down all before them, like a deluge of waters; for unto the end desolations were determined.*

That the 70 weeks was the beginning of the 2300 days, is evident, 1st. Because the angel gave the explanation of these weeks as a clue to the interpretation of the whole vision, which was to extend till the cleansing of the sanctuary. 2. Because these 70 weeks or 490 years, closing three years and a half after the death of Christ, must have commenced 453 years before his birth; this, of course, included the Grecian empire, next to the Persian, and a considerable part of the Roman, which was in its glory in the time of our Saviour, Augustus Cæsar being on the throne of the empire. So that the design of introducing the 70 weeks was to designate the first part of the vision.

3. Because the angel considered both as one vision, (V. 26.) “And the vision of the evening and of the morning, which was told, is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision: for it shall be for many days.”

Now, that “the time, times and a half,” or 42 months, making 1260 years, was the end of the vision, is evident from these facts: that the antichristian power, which should arise after the ten kingdoms of the fourth beast, should begin and end with this period of 1260 years; that his dominion, at this appointed time, should be consumed and destroyed; “and the kingdom and do-

\* See the conversion of Saul to be the apostle of the Gentiles, Acts ix. Peter preaching to Cornelius, Acts x; and the address of Paul and Barnabas to the Jews. Acts xiii. 46, 47.

minion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," (Dan. vii. 23—27;) so that it is perfectly manifest that the end of Antichrist (whoever he be) and the end of the cleansing of the sanctuary occur at the same time.

Here then is the grand clue. 1. The whole vision contains 2300 years. 2. It is impossible, by the most accurate dates we have in history, to find the beginning of those years, nor can we tell by our best chronological tables, whether the "commandment," mentioned, "to build again Jerusalem," was the decree of Cyrus, Darius, or Artaxerxes; all of which are recorded by Ezra. Ezra i. 1—4; vi. 8—12; vii. 11—15. But, 3. We have found that the 70 weeks or 490 years ended A. D. 37. 4. We can now calculate exactly, either backward or forward, and so form an intermediate point, ascertain with mathematical exactness, both the beginning and the end. 5. By this method we find precisely the times of the rise and fall of Antichrist. 6. This will demonstrate that the sanctuary shall be cleansed when Antichrist goes to perdition.

Now see the calculation.

TABLE I.

	<i>years.</i>
Daniel's 70 weeks, each 7 days, a day for a year,	490
These ended A. D. 37: Messiah being inaugurated A. D. 30; cut off in the middle of the last week, A. D. 33½; the gospel preached to the Jews 3½ years—end the Jewish dispensation, A. D.	37
Subtract 37 from 490—leaves	453
before the Christian era; the time of the decree to build again Jerusalem.	
Subtract 453 from 2300, the whole time of the vision, and you have the end A. D.	1847
From 1847, the end of the vision, subtract a "time, times and a half," 1260, the period marked for the reign of Antichrist, and you have the beginning of his reign, A. D.	587

## TABLE II.

	<i>years.</i>
From the first of the vision to the birth of Christ,	453
From the birth of Christ to the beginning of the reign of Antichrist,	587
Antichrist reigns 42 months, and falls,	1260
These added make the whole time of the vision	2300

From the above tables, you see that “from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem,” to the birth of Christ, were 453 years. From the birth of Christ to the end of the Jewish dispensation and the calling of the Gentiles, were 37 years, which closed Daniel’s 70 weeks or 490 years. From the birth of Christ to the beginning of the reign of Antichrist, 587 years; from thence to his downfall, 1260; which brings the overthrow of Antichrist and the cleansing of the sanctuary to the same point of time, A. D. 1847. This is according to the scripture date, and may vary a year or two from the vulgar date; but as it rests on the correct account of the Bible, it may be relied on as authentic. We must not conclude that the Bible has given us descriptions and numbers for nothing. If any think that to calculate is arrogant, let him look at the *data* fairly, and not hastily suppose that things cannot be known because great and good men have made mistakes. Daniel was directed to “go his way and rest,” (Dan. xii. 13;) but before the 70 weeks expired, many anxiously expected the Lord to come *suddenly* to his temple, (Mal. iii. 1;) and when Messiah, *in the midst of the last week*, by his death, confirmed the covenant, and caused “the sacrifice and oblation to cease,” the church had a clue by which she might have calculated, with perfect precision, the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the rise and fall of Antichrist.

There is an obvious reason why the cleansing of the sanctuary and the downfall of Antichrist form a synchronism. We are not taught to look for Antichrist *out of* the church, but *in the church, sitting in the temple of God.* 2 Thes. ii. 4. His distinguishing features are *hypocrisy, tyranny, idolatry, and intolerance.* Dan. vii. 21. 25; Rev. xix. 20. This antichristian power *was to rise* within the limits of the Roman empire, after pagan Rome was taken out of the way, (Dan. vii. 24; com. 2 Thes. ii. 7;) *was to arise* within the church, with all "deceivableness of unrighteousness," 2 Thes. ii. 10;) and *was to fix* the seat of ecclesiastical domination in the city of Rome. Rev. xvii. 9. 18, and Hurd on the prophecies, Sec. vii. viii. Boston ed., 1809.

We know that such a power *did arise.* After the downfall of the Western Empire, the Bishop of Rome reared his head, and amidst the ruins of that mighty power, found means to advance himself into the sovereignty of Rome, and of the Christian world; fixing his residence, not in the "chair of St. Peter," but in the very seat and throne of the Cæsars.

The papal power rose to its height in the 11th century, when Berengarius, a man of note, called the Church of Rome *the seat of Satan*, an apocalyptic name of Antichrist. In the preceding century, Arnulphus, Bishop of Orleans, speaking of John XV., who then governed the church of Rome, appealed to the whole council in these words: "What think ye, Rev. Fathers, of this man, seated on a lofty throne, and shining in purple and gold? Whom do ye account him to be? Surely, if destitute of charity, and puffed up with the pride of science only, HE IS ANTICHRIST, sitting in the



temple of God, and showing himself that he is God." Pascal II. sat upon the papal throne, in the beginning of the 12th century; at which time the marks of Antichrist were so visible, that St. Bernard, the most eminent person of that age, said, that "The beast of the apocalypse had seated himself in the chair of St. Peter."\*

You all know the opinions of the Reformers on this subject; and you all must see, that as Antichrist took his rise and has continued his domination in the church, pretending to be the successor of Peter, and the Vicar of Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary is not accomplished till the downfall of Antichrist is complete. This long looked-for period is just at hand. This event, so long the subject of prophecy and promise, of prayer and expectation, must take place within a period less than twenty years.† I make allowance for the difference between the Bible dates and the vulgar dates.

And now, with godly fear, and an unshaken faith in the scriptures of truth, I say, in the name of Christ, to the church, WATCH and PRAY, lest that day come upon you as a snare. Luke xxi. 34—36.

Some will say, "the time is too short. There is too much yet to be done before the sanctuary is cleansed. Popery, with all its errors, superstitions, impieties, and horrors, to be destroyed! Intemperance, Sabbath-break-

\* Hurd, pp. 184, 185. St. Bernard was under a mistake. Peter was never at Rome. See an unanswered and unanswerable argument on this point, published in the PANDECT, vol. i. 1828—9. See also Paul's epistle to the Romans, ch. xvi., in which he sends his love to every body but Peter. If Peter had been Bishop of Rome, would Paul have overlooked him?

† 14 years, if the Bible date and the vulgar date agreed.

ing, slavery, freemasonry, idolatry, war, and all erroneous creeds to be eradicated and blotted from the church of God! Oh! it cannot be done in twenty, no, not in fifty years!" No, my brethren, if these were works for man to accomplish, it could never be done. But Jehovah has said, "I the Lord will hasten it in his time." Isa. lx. 21, 22. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Gen. xviii. 14. Remember that haughty unbeliever who fell in the gate of Samaria! 2 Kings vii. 2. 17. 20. Behold! See! Shall not the church of Jesus Christ be suddenly surprised with his fiery indignation against his enemies, and the smiles of his countenance on all his friends! But I must remind you that the angel discovered to Daniel two other periods *after* the cleansing of the sanctuary, of great importance to the church. The first is 1290 days or years from the time that "the abomination that maketh desolate shall be set up," and the second period is 1335 days or years from the same time. Dan. xii. 11, 12. We know that "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet," was the power of Rome, pagan, when Jerusalem was compassed with armies, (Mat. xxiv. 15, Mark xiii. 14; compare Luke xxi. 20,) in the siege and destruction of that devoted city by Titus. But we know also that invasion and desolation was but an emblem of the power of Rome papal, "wearing out the saints, given into his hand, a time, times, and the dividing of time," during which period of three years and a half, forty and two months, or 1260 years, "Jerusalem should be trodden under foot of the Gentiles." It is plain then that these two periods both begin with the commencement of the reign of Antichrist. The first extends beyond the time of the

cleansing of the sanctuary, 30 years; the second extends beyond these, 45 years more. These two periods together make 75 years, which, added to the 1847, the time when the sanctuary shall be cleansed, carries us down to the year 1922, for the day of blessedness, or rather the dawn of the Sabbatical thousand years of the world; the sunrise of which, as I anticipate, will be at the close of 6000 years from the creation, and two thousand after the birth of Christ. My expectation is founded on the present calculation and the scriptural use of the number seven. Be this as it may, the two periods of 30 years and 45 years, after the cleansing of the sanctuary, are fully sufficient for the conversion of the world, Jews and Gentiles; and this must be evident to all who consider what changes have taken place in the last thirty years.\* It is evident the world cannot be converted to God till the sanctuary is cleansed, (John xvii. 21. 23,) and then the progress of the gospel will be attended with very signal and rapid effects. Its light and truth will go forth conquering and to conquer. Papists, infidels, Jews, and nominal Christians must all yield to its divine energy, or be broken in pieces, like a potter's vessel. All churches that are radically wrong shall tumble to ruin. All founded on bigotry shall be lost in disgrace. All having combustible matter mingled with truth shall be purged as by

\* The calculation is thus made :

	<i>years.</i>
Reign of Antichrist is - - - -	1260
Which deduct from 1290, (Dan. xii. 11,) and you leave -	30
for the conversion of the Jews.	
Again, take 1290 from 1335, and you leave - -	45
for the "fulness of the Gentiles," and the dawn of the brighter time of blessedness. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days."	
Dan, xii. 12.	

fire, and perhaps the very best shall have some parts of their venerated creeds crossed and condemned! All nominal Christians must turn to God, or be suddenly destroyed by Jehovah's vengeance!

Who among us is prepared for the signal displays of the divine power and glory? "Gird up now thy loins;" "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Sleep not, but *watch*. Do you not feel the tremendous earthquake which now shakes the whole world? Is not *every* political, *every* ecclesiastical community shaken to its centre? Is not truth fallen in the streets and equity cannot enter? Do you not see the drying up of the great river Euphrates—the Ottoman empire? Floods, fires, tornadoes, famines, earthquakes, in divers places; the pestilence, walking in darkness; the destruction, wasting at noon-day, have all spoken, and still speak, in the ears of this generation!

What is our duty as Christians in this solemn crisis? If we would avert from our country and from our beloved Zion, those judgments which are coming on the earth; if we would secure the divine favor and protection in the time of unprecedented trouble, already commenced; let us with unabated zeal *protest*, solemnly *protest* against the corruption of the church and the impieties of the state. Let us fortify ourselves against the insidious attempts which are artfully made to render error plausible, by an improved spirit and amended character. Let us remove to a greater distance and show more decidedly by our conduct, that we have come out and are separate from those who *corrupt the word of God*, and from those also who use their political power to promote the desecration of Christian institutions, and elevate to honor and influence the ministers

of Antichrist. Let us more diligently disseminate at home and abroad the Oracles of God. Let us strive to enlighten and instruct mankind in the truth of the Gospel by a *form of sound words*. Let us spread around us the principles and blessings of genuine liberty, by moderating the violence of political animosities, and of religious dissensions; by breaking every yoke and letting the oppressed go free; by increasing our efforts in the cause of injured humanity, till we have purged away the foulest blot remaining on our national honor and Christian character. Let us permit and teach the degraded and demoralized slave to rejoice in the privileges of a freeman and a Christian. Let us put away all our iniquities, act up to our Christian principles, being instant, constant, and fervent in prayer for the church of God, her purity, peace, and prosperity, and for our beloved country, that she may not be swept away in the day of God's vengeance.

Let us wait in expectation of the approaching day of our Lord, that it may be said of us, "Because thou hast made the Most High thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee"\*—"in the shadow of his wings shall be thy refuge, until these calamities be overpast."†

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P. S. The substance of this sermon was delivered in the 1st Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, in the summer of 1828. It was repeated in three churches in Philadelphia, twice by request, in 1831. It has since been preached, by request, in Wheeling and Louisville. A request was made two years ago for its publication; but the author had no time then to prepare it for the press, having delivered it from short notes. He now has written it out—and he gives it to the Church with his fervent prayers, that those

\* Psalm xci. 9, 10. The Security of the Godly.

† Psalm lvii. 1—11. A psalm of David when he fled from Saul.

who read may understand. The uninspired authors to whom he is indebted are Mede, Hurd, E. Cooper, W. C. Davis, Th. R. Robertson, and J. Wolf.

If there be any thing incorrect in this discourse, the grateful acknowledgments of the writer shall be tendered to any one, who, in a proper manner, will point out his mistakes.

It is proper to apprise our patrons, that in regard to subjects and the manner of discussing them, there has been no concert among those, who have furnished sermons for this little volume. Thus it is evident, that without conference or correspondence, or even personal acquaintance, there are ministers in the Presbyterian Church, who *can* and *do* speak the same things—who *can* and *do* speak the language of the *true reformers* in all ages. May the Lord increase their number, purity, piety, zeal, and success, till “the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun as seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.” Isa. xxx. 26.

THE END.