

Sunday, March 25, 2012—Grace Life School of Theology—*Grace History Project*—Lesson 62
Dispensationalism and the Prophetic Bible Conference Movement

Introduction

- In Lesson 59, before we spent two weeks looking at advancements and refinements in the articulation of mid-Acts dispensationalism, we were looking at how dispensational theology had gone mainstream through its impact on American millenarianism.
- In this study we want to pick up where Lesson 59 left off and consider the relationship between dispensational theology and the prophetic Bible conference movement of the last quarter of the 19th century.

Origins of the Prophetic Conference Movement

- The foundation for what would later become The Niagara Bible Conference “originated with a group of men associated with the millenarian periodical *Waymarks in the Wilderness*. James Inglis, David Inglis, Charles Campbell, George S. Bishop, George O. Barnes, Benjamin Douglas, L.C. Baker, and George C. Needham held an informal private conference in New York City in 1868.” (Sandeen, 133)
- Craig L Blomberg and Sung Wook Chung, report that in addition to editing *Waymarks in the Wilderness*, James Inglis also organized the Believers’ Meeting for Bible Study in the late 1860s. After his death and brief hiatus, the Believers’ Meeting was restarted in 1875 and eventually became the famous Niagara Conference of Ontario, Canada. (Blomberg and Chung, 12)
- Concerning the origin of the Believers Meeting for Bible Study, R. A. Huebner wrote, “George C. Needham . . . introduced the idea of conference to the USA. He said that having profited by “Believers’ Meetings in Ireland, he came to the USA in 1868 and met James Inglis and Charles Campbell, among others. . . He introduced the idea of “Believers’ Meetings” and a small one was held in 1868. In Philadelphia, in 1869, James H. Brookes attended. The next one, in 1870, was even better attended. The 1871 meeting was held in Canada; and then James Inglis and Charles Campbell died which resulted in an interruption of these meetings.” (Huebner, 17)
- Sandeen reports that, “early in the seventies, James Inglis and several other leaders of this group died, and the meetings were interrupted for several years until younger men took up the task. After refounding in 1875 in Chicago, the conference met annually for one to two weeks in the summer usually in a resort setting.” (Sandeen, 134)
- “What has come to be known as the Niagara Bible Conference began in 1876 when a group of ministers and evangelists met for a private period of Bible study. . . According to A. C. Gaebelein, the Believers’ Meeting of 1876 was the result of an earlier private meeting of six men held near Chicago during the pervious summer. Four of the six were Nathaniel West, James H. Brookes, W.J. Erdman, and H.M. Parsons. W.J. Erdman also mentioned the 1875 meeting in his announcement of the meeting in 1879.” (Kraus, 76)

- A. C. Gaebelein, author of *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible*, summarized the history of the Believers' Meetings from 1875 to 1880:
 - "During the summer of 1875, a few brethren met by agreement in a cottage, not far from Chicago, to spend a week in Bible study. There were only six, among them Dr. Nathaniel West, Dr. James H. Brookes, Dr. W.J. Erdman, and Dr. H.M. Parsons. The blessing they received during that week was so great they decided to meet again the next summer.

The same brethren, with several others, among them Dr. A.J. Gordon, of Claredon Street Baptist Church, Boston gathered in fellowship at Swampscott, Mass. They had difficulty in obtaining a suitable meeting place, but finally they secured the chapel of the Congregational church. This was during August 1876. It became known that there were Bible study meetings going on in the chapel, and on the next day the chapel was crowded. Once more there was great blessing, and the brethren were greatly encouraged. The emphasis in these services was put on the return of our Lord, "looking for that blessed hope." As this great truth was but little known and preached, it attracted much attention.

The meetings during the summer of 1877 were held in Watkins Glen, N.Y., with a far greater attendance. Then followed the meetings during the month of June in 1878, 1879, 1880. They were held in Clifton Springs, N.Y. . . ." (Gaebelein, 31-32)

- "From 1883 to 1897 the conference met at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, and thus acquired its customary name. Virtually everyone of any significance in the history of the American millenarian movement during this period attended the Niagara conference. The names of over 120 leaders and speakers are known from the published proceedings and descriptions. The founding father and controlling spirit of the conference was Reverend James Hall Brookes . . . he was known to millenarians through his writing in *Waymarks in the Wilderness*; he had spoken at early pre-Niagara conferences arranged by James Inglis. When the Believers' Meeting was begun in 1875, Brookes was sought as the principal speaker; he attended almost every one after that date until his death, serving as the president of the conference." (Sandein, 134)

The Dispensational Theology of Niagara's Founders

- "Because of the brevity of these early reports, and because they deal only with the formal discussion, it is difficult to determine just how much emphasis was given to the discussion of "dispensational truths." There are, however, indications from the first that it was a live issue. In 1876 a note is made that H.M. Parsons was unable to attend for the first few days, and that "the interval was occupied with readings on 'Dispensational Truth,' and kindred subjects, the notes of which are not preserved. In the same report one finds other indications of its presence. For example, in his topic, "Person and Work of the Holy Spirit," Brown discussed "when the Dispensation of the Spirit began and when it will end. . ." J.H. Brookes taught a pretribulation, secret rapture. . . In the report of the 1877 conference it is noted that "The coming of the Lord in its bearing upon Israel, the Church, and world at large, received much attention, and of course it was found to be a most profitable subject for study and meditation." Brookes said, however, that there was "not a shadow of truth" in the idea that the second coming of Christ was the only topic discussed." (Kraus, 78-79)

- *Henry A. Parsons* (1828-1913)--was one of the charter members of the group which would later come to be called the Niagara Bible Conference. He appeared regularly on the platform of the prophetic conferences and in the Niagara Bible Conferences. In addition, he served as the pastor of a Presbyterian church in Buffalo, NY as well as in Toronto, Ontario. Parsons has left us two dispensational outlines from different periods in his own development. The first one appeared in the paper which he read at the Prophetic Conference in 1878. The second was presented to the Believers' Meeting at Niagara, Ontario, in 1885. The main difference between the two outlines lies in the more precise delineation of the ages found in the second one.
- The following outline can be found in Parsons' paper, "The Present Age and Development of the Anti-Christ," which was read at the Prophecy Conference in 1878. (Kraus, 31)
 - Antediluvian Age—from the casting out of Adam from the Garden to the deliverance of Noah.
 - Patriarchal Age—Noah to Israel's deliverance from bondage.
 - Mosaic (Jewish) Age—Moses to the "manifestation" of Christ.
 - Christian Age—Pentecost to the Present
 - A period or age to come called "Judaic dispensation." (Kraus, 31-32)
- In addition to the preceding outline, Parsons offered the following explanation of the first four ages:
 - "We have here in order, First—the revelation of Grace, increasing in fullness and light to the end of the age. Second—The same principles of sin which destroyed the peace and life of Eden is seen in its bitter opposition increasing in power and strength, by the side of, and among the children of God. Third—This content increases till, to save the Divine Seed, judgment supernaturally interposes—destroying the wicked—and the ark carries over the flood the seed of the race to enter a new Age.

Substantially, these principles will be found ruling through the Patriarchal and the following Mosaic age. With such accuracy do we find the history of these two ages repeating the same divine order, that we thus discover and derive the analogous order of our own age." (quoted in Kraus, 32)
- "The fact that Parsons uses the word "age" rather than "dispensation" is not entirely incidental. His outline is essentially historical in character." (Kraus, 32)
- By 1885, Parsons had expanded the number of ages or dispensations to eight as follows:
 - *Holiness*—this was the indefinite period of time during which Adam lived in the Garden of Eden in perfect righteousness.
 - *Antediluvian Age*—this age lasted from 1650 years and marked "the introduction of sin and man's condemnation, and also the revelation of the redemptive plan."
 - *Postdiluvian Age*—lasted 450 years and covers the years from Noah to Abraham.
 - *Patriarchal Age*—also lasted 450 years covering the time from Abraham to Moses.

- *Jewish Dispensation*—includes the period from Moses to Christ, which he figures as 1450 years.
 - *Christian Age*—is reckoned as 2,000 years beginning with Christ's ascension and ending with His second coming.
 - *Millennial Dispensation*—1,000 years follows and ends in the final victory of Christ.
 - *Holiness*—return to the pristine state which existed before the fall. (Kraus, 32-33)
- “It should also be noted that while Parsons still is inclined to use the word age in his outline, he defines the word dispensation in this discussion and defends its use to designate time periods.” (Kraus, 33)
 - *James Hall Brookes* (1830-1897)--was undoubtedly the outstanding leader of the Bible conference movement from 1875 to the time of his death. Cameron says that after the death of James Inglis “Dr. Brookes became the accepted leader of a large circle of pastors, evangelists and Christian workers.” For years he was the chairman of the committee planning the Niagara Conference, and through his magazine, *The Truth*, he spread its witness beyond the conference grounds. (Kraus, 36)
 - According to Arnold Elhert, Brookes divided the dispensations according to the outline of Professor Bayne of McGill University. (Elhert, 74) Kraus reports that Professor Bayne was a Plymouth Brethren Dispensationalist. (Kraus, 37) Following Bayne's lead, Brookes articulated the following outline:
 - *Eden Dispensation*
 - *Antediluvian Dispensation*
 - *Patriarchal Dispensation*
 - *Mosaic Dispensation*
 - *Messianic Dispensation*
 - *Dispensation of the Holy Ghost or of the Gospel*
 - *Millennial Dispensation* (Elhert, 74)
 - “The fact that Brookes does not develop an outline of his own cannot be taken as evidence that he was not a full-fledged dispensationalist. On the contrary, it is evident that he was under Plymouth Brethren influence at least as early as 1874. . . In 1871 Brookes himself published an article in Inglis' magazine which shows clear dispensational influence. There can be little doubt that the teaching and writings of Brookes did a great deal to make the dispensationalist interpretation the predominant one in the conference movement by 1900.” (Kraus, 39)
 - According to Kraus, Brookes “used the dispensational argument in the usual way to prove the postmillennial position wrong, but he developed other facets of the argument, too. He held, along with most of the men in his fellowship, that the Church dispensation is a 'dateless, timeless period or parenthesis, during which the Holy Ghost is gathering out from all nations the elect, who are to be the body and bride of Christ.” This parenthetical character of the Church age is developed from an interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel, according to which he held that God does not count time for Israel when they are outside of their own land. The Church is the parenthesis inserted between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. It is a period of individual regeneration; it is to be distinguished from the Kingdom which is a period of regeneration for the nations. Further, he held that

“it is the failure to recognize the marked difference between the two dispensations which has led to such utter confusion in reading the Scriptures, and to the wretched habit of spiritualizing the plainest testimonies of the word concerning the divine purpose with respect to the Jews.” (Kraus, 39)

The Niagara Norm

- “Niagara was, of course, virtually the first Bible conference in the United States; but Americans had had a great deal of previous experiences in outdoor religious services such as the camp meetings and tents of the evangelists. . . The spirit was . . . aiming to manifest the primitive, New Testament idea of an ecclesia. To put it more concretely, the Niagara conference represented J.N. Darby’s theology. . . at Niagara denominations could be and were consistently ignored; the minister became the Bible teacher and the sermon was transformed into the Bible reading. . . strongly and seriously the millenarians advocated the literal interpretation of the verbally inerrant Scripture. The Scriptures were God’s word, they declared, and were their own best interpreter. The real need of every man was to listen to God’s word, and the first requirement for every preacher was that he not substitute his own thoughts for God’s word. The method of exegesis which resulted from this line of reasoning was the Bible reading.” (Sandeem, 136-137)
- “Brookes, for example, divided an address (1882 Conference) on the second coming into seven points, supporting each point by a group of texts to which he expected his audience to turn in their Bibles as he gave them a brief exegesis. The first point (It is a personal coming) Brookes supported by reference to passages in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, 1 Thessalonians, and Revelation. In this fashion Brookes discussed the other six points.
 - It is the hope set before us in the gospel.
 - It is held as a powerful motive and incentive.
 - It is presented as our consolation amid sorrow and trial.
 - The state of the world at the time of our Lord’s return, and during the entire interval of His absence from the earth, shows the folly of the common expectation of a spiritual millennium, or the conversion of the nations by the Church.
 - The personal coming of the Lord may occur at any moment.
 - The judgments. (Sandeem, 138-139)
- “From the outline it is quite apparent that Brookes was teaching not only by the Brethren method, but also the Darbyite any-moment coming. In Brookes’ other writings it is clear that he accepted most of Darby’s dispensationalism, including the secret rapture of the church and the distinction between the spiritual role of the church in this age and the earthly role of the Jewish nation. . . Brookes was not alone in advocating the theology of dispensationalism at the Niagara conference. Although not every Niagara participant can automatically be assumed to have accepted these views, most of the speakers and leaders of the conference do seem to have accepted the Darbyite view of the second coming for a time at least. One of the members of the executive committee, Robert Cameron, a Brantford, Ontario, Baptist pastor, stated that the 1884 conference witnessed a special emphasis upon the doctrine of the any-moment coming.
 - At the 1884 Conference it came to be the “fashion” of every speaker to “ring the changes” on the possibility of Christ coming any moment—before the morning

dawned, before the meeting closed, and even before the speaker had completed his address.” (Sandeen, 139-140)

- “. . . it is interesting to note that the meetings were patterned after the Bible study meetings which Darby had held at various churches throughout the United States and Canada. The topics for discussion also show this new influence. When we recall that Darby himself had been in the States for an extended ministry in the years immediately preceding the rise of the Bible conference movement, and, further, that he had ministered in the pulpits of the very man who gave the initial impetus to the movement, there can be little room for doubt that Darby and other early Plymouth Brethren preachers gave direct stimulus and at least indirect guidance to the movement.” (Kraus, 79)
- “The leaders at Niagara followed Darby’s lead, furthermore, in strenuously opposing the doctrines of the perfectionists and annihilationists. . . . After the 1877 conference, where controversy seems to have broken out over these issues, Brookes drew up a creed which he published in the *Truth* with the comment, ‘If they (who oppose) do not stand upon it, and yet choose to attend, they are expected to keep silent. We do not deny the right of those who hold that what are known as ‘annihilation views,’ to assemble when and where they please. . . . controversy hereafter will not be allowed under any circumstances.’ ” (Sandeen, 140)
- “The creed which Brookes drew up in 1878 served, apparently, as an unofficial guide to the teachings of the Niagara conferences until 1890 when it was officially adopted. The creed must have done its work, for Brookes happily reported that at the 1882 conference “no countenance whatever has been given to the unscriptural and mischievous notions, now so widely spread, of annihilation, soul-sleeping, restoration of the wicked, and perfectionism in the flesh.”
- “The fourteen-point Niagara Creed (see Appendix A) provides an index to the concerns of the millenarians. Bracketed between the first article affirming the verbal inerrancy of the original autographs and the last affirming the premillennial second advent, Brookes placed a very conservative Calvinistically oriented group of articles affirming human depravity (Arts. 3 and 4) and salvation by faith in the blood of Christ (Arts. 5, 6, 7), combined, however, with the derogation of the church and the sacraments characteristic of nineteenth-century evangelicalism (Arts. 5, 6, 10). Although it seems odd to find it in a creed, Brookes felt it necessary to affirm his own method of biblical interpretation in a separate article (Art. 9). All of the Bible, including the Old Testament, Brookes affirmed, centered on Christ and all of it was designed to convey “practical instruction” to the reader. Articles 11 and 12 emphasized the personality of the Holy Spirit and the need for personal holiness. . . . The millenarian article (14) is quite general and does not commit the Niagara participant to any particular Darbyite or futurist position, but affirms simply that the world cannot be expected to improve, that Christ will return personally and premillennially, and that Israel will be restored to Palestine.” (Sandeen, 141)
- “Although the Niagara creed was tolerant of various millenarian beliefs, the leaders and speakers at the conference consistently advocated the doctrine of the any-moment coming of Christ and followed Darby’s interpretation of prophecy until the 1890s.

Niagara Bible Conference and Fundamentalism

- “In assessing the influence of the conference, one must add to the list of methods and doctrines some notice of the new spirit of Niagara—the manifestation of “the primitive, New Testament idea of an ecclesia.” Much of this spirit was generated by the personal contact and delightful atmosphere of the summer conference by the lake. But whether intentionally or not, the Niagara conference leaders taught their millenarian views as part of a coherent theology, not as a special emphasis or single-issue movement, and they taught them as part of a complete theology—the foundation for a new sect. But later years of the century, when the turmoil of higher criticism had alarmed and discouraged many ministers, Niagara was able to offer an alternative view of both the church and the world. The report of the 1898 Niagara conference carried this testimony:
 - The Rev. Mr. Ayers, from Illinois, mentioned how he had wandered through the mazes of the higher criticism until he came to disbelieve in what he had held dear, and finally began to consider the question of leaving the ministry. But God was very gracious to him and sent the showers of his Holy Spirit upon his dry heart. He told of the refreshment of his spirit, his acceptance of premillennial truth, the full inspiration of the Bible, the coming back of his love for the Word, and his faith in all he had previously held dear, and how he was continually preaching the doctrine of the premillennial coming of the Lord.” (Sandeen, 145)
- When we have come this far, the foundations of Fundamentalism have already been laid.
- Regarding the connection between the Niagara movement and Fundamentalism, C. Norman Kraus states, “. . . it is quite clear that we have here a principal root of the fundamentalist movement which was to reach its flaming climax some fifty years later. All this seems to indicate that the Believers’ Meeting was also an attempt, consciously or unconsciously, to form a line of defense against the new thought which was beginning to offer formidable opposition to conservative theology.” (Kraus, 80)

Works Cited

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Appendix A The 1878 Niagara Creed

Written in 1878 by James H. Brookes and formally ratified by the conference in 1890

So many in the latter times have departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; so many have turned away their ears from the truth, and turned unto fables; so many are busily engaged in scattering broadcast the seeds of fatal error, directly affecting the honor of our Lord and the destiny of the soul, we are constrained by fidelity to Him to make the following declaration of our doctrinal belief, and to present it as the bond of union with those who wish to be connected with Niagara Bible Conference.

1. We believe "that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole of the book called the Bible; nor do we take the statement in the sense in which it is sometimes foolishly said that works of human genius are inspired, but in the sense that the Holy Ghost gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old; and that His Divine inspiration is not in different degrees, but extends equally and fully to all parts of these writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic and to the smallest word, and inflection of a word, provided such word is found in the original manuscripts: 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:13; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Acts 1:16; 2:4.

2. We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience: Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 5:3, 4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6.

3. We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of his disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil: Gen. 1:26; 2:17; John 5:40; 6:53; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8.

4. We believe that his spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the man Christ Jesus alone excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of Divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God, and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law: Gen. 6:5; Psa. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9 John 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19; 8:6,7.

5. We believe that owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainment in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies however useful, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Ghost through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation: Isa. 64:6; John 3:5, 18; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:4-9; Tit. 3:5; Jams. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.

6. We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin, and made a curse, for us, dying in our room and stead; and that

no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood, or to the merit of that finished work, wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper divinity with perfect and sinless humanity: Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18,19.

7. We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Savior we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved, and having His place and portion, as linked to Him, and one with him forever: John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:30; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:4-6, 13; 1 John 4:17; 5:11, 12.

8. We believe that it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience: Luke 10:20; 12:32; John 6:47; Rom. 8:33-39; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6-8; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 John 5:13.

9. We believe that all the Scriptures from first to last center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming; and hence that no chapter even of the Old Testament is properly read or understood until it leads to Him; and moreover that all the Scriptures from first to last, including every chapter even of the Old Testament, were designed for our practical instruction; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2, 3; 18:28; 26:22, 23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11.

10. We believe that the Church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God, that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and thus being members one of another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently: Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:32-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14,15.

11. We believe that the Holy Spirit, not as an influence, but as a Divine Person, the source and power of all acceptable worship and service, is our abiding Comforter and Helper, that He never takes His departure from the Church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy us with Him, and not with ourselves nor with our experiences: John 7:38, 39; 14:16, 17; 15:26; 16:13, 24; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 3:3.

12. We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the Spirit that we should not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; but the flesh being still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name: Rom. 8:12, 13; 13:14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9.

13. We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him

forever in the glory; but the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power: Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6:7; Rev. 20:11-15.

14. We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation, but is fast ripening for judgment, while there will be a fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body; and hence that the Lord Jesus will come in person to introduce the millennial age, when Israel shall be restored to their own land, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord; and that this personal and premillennial advent is the blessed hope set before us in the Gospel for which we should be constantly looking." Luke 12:35-40; 17:26-30; 18:8 Acts 15:14-17; 2 Thess. 2:3-8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 1:11-15).