

# UNFULFILLED PROPHECY

A Discussion  
on  
Prophetic Themes

BY  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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Solomon said, "*Of making many books there is no end,*" and we all know he stated the truth. But I doubt the introduction given by a preacher in introducing an oral debate, when, in giving his reasons for believing in debates, he declared: "The good Book says, "*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness;*" for Paul had no such thought in his mind when he dictated [1 Tim. 3:16](#). "*Controversy,*" such as we have on the following pages, sometimes clarifies and makes the truth the more easily seen, and I think this is always the case where both disputants are in a state of absolute surrender to God and want only his will to be done. But too often controversy mystifies and confuses because of a lack of honesty on the part of one or both disputants. I believe we can obey [1 Cor. 1:10](#) if we have the spirit of Jesus. This Scripture reads as follows: "*Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" "*Perfected together*" suggests the idea of growing together. That differences on different subjects would arise even among the best of men I believe the Scriptures indicate; but the Bible certainly teaches that the more good men study together a subject and pray over it, the closer together they grow. "*Come now, and let us reason together,*" is Jehovah's invitation to us to study with him, and it certainly suggests that this is the way God brings man into subjection to his own will. I pray God to let me live to see the day when the rule among us will be to meet and fast and pray and study our differences together in a private way rather than going before the brotherhood as a whole and the world with our differences. If in such an effort we should fail to come to see the question alike, we would get the next best thing--viz., we would come to see that the question is not a *vital one*, that it is not essential to our salvation or edification; hence, would agree to disagree on that question, keep our ideas to ourselves as far as justice and good sense will allow, and still be brethren. If Abraham in his day could so easily say, "*Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren,*" it seems that we, with the more ease, under the glorious light of the gospel of God's grace, should be able to say such when differences arise.

I thank God that we have had this discussion; and though these good men, my brethren in Christ, did not come to see the subjects they have discussed alike, they did accomplish the next best thing--viz., verified the motto, "*Let us agree to differ and resolve to love.*" I feel compelled here to insert the concluding words of these good men:

### 1. The concluding words of Brother R. H. Boll:

"The avowed purpose of this debate was, not to mark lines and partisan distinctions, but to set the questions under dispute in fuller, clearer light, so that the readers may weigh and judge for themselves; thus to remove any blind prejudice and antagonism and misconceptions concerning the issues that may have existed, and to foster good will and brotherliness among all who stand and ought to stand together upon the simple New Testament foundation of 'the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.'

"To my honored respondent, Brother H. Leo Boles, I wish to express my gratitude for all kind and brotherly utterances in the course of the discussion, of which I marked a number. And if in any matter I failed, in his judgment, to do him justice, or transgressed upon his patience [5] (as may too easily happen in debate), I beg, his forgiveness, and thank him for his forbearance and for every courtesy and kindness he has shown me. A public discussion is a severe test, and only by the grace of God can a man hold fast the 'Golden Rule' and the law of love and come out without smell of fire on his garments. I wish to express my kindest personal feelings toward my respondent and toward all the brethren of the Gospel Advocate. . . .

"But my heart's desire and prayer to God is that all differences among God's people on these and all other matters may be overcome in the love and fear of God, and through that brotherly love and fellowship which we have together in Christ while we 'walk in the light, as he is in the light.'"

## 2. The concluding words of Brother H. Leo Boles:

"I reciprocate the fraternal expression and high regard which Brother Boll has for me. I have had many discussion,; and many kinds of opponents, but I have never had a more courteous and brotherly opponent than Brother R. H. Boll. My high regard for him has been increased because of the discussion. I believe him to be sincere, pious, and a cultured, Christian gentleman. I entertain the kindest personal feelings toward him. We differ, as the reader knows; but our differences and a discussion of them do not keep me from esteeming him very highly as a brother in Christ Jesus. . . .

"We both yearn for the peace and unity of the body of Christ, and have kept constantly before us the fact that one purpose of this discussion was to help bring about a better understanding between brethren and heal sores and breaches that may have occurred at any time.

"May the Lord abundantly bless 'the Israel of God,' 'the seed of Abraham,' 'the household of faith,' and help us all to 'love his appearing' by maintaining good works and keeping 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'"

I would not know how to improve on what these good brethren have said above. I enlarge Brother Boles' prayer just a bit and pray that we all may be indeed "*the seed of Abraham*;" for, as our Lord has said, "*If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*" ([John 8:39, 40](#).) He loved peace and sacrificed for it. Never can we be indeed his *seed* when we do unlike he did or differently from the way he would do were he here with us to-day.

I am not entering into the merits of the discussion, so far as the different propositions are concerned. I care nothing for this just now. These brethren have discussed the propositions in their own way. You read what they say prayerfully, then join them in their concluding words, in which they so clearly declare that their regard the one for the other has been increased and not destroyed or lessened and in which they both pray for peace. The discussion is put in permanent form as a monument to this brotherly effort to see more clearly questions over which we have differed and as a living witness that brethren can discuss their differences in a way that reflects honor on such discussions.

As has been stated, they failed to get together, but accomplished the next best thing-- viz., *they love each other better now for the discussion, and can pray more earnestly than ever before that we may yet come to see alike on these questions.*

In concluding, I suggest that the next effort made for peace because of our differences on these or any other questions may not be a public discussion in the paper, but that we try out the better way still--viz., *meet as brethren and fast and pray till we get together.*

*"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" ([Mic. 6:8.](#))*

S. H. HALL

# PROPOSITION I.

## RESTORATION OF ISRAEL.

**Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that Israel (fleshly descendants of Abraham through Jacob) shall be nationally restored." R. H. Boll affirms; H. Leo Boles denies.**

### Chapter I.

#### R. H. BOLL'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.

If Paul thought himself happy for the privilege of speaking in the presence of King Agrippa, I am no less happy and sensible of this privilege accorded me by the Gospel Advocate in the opening of its columns to this discussion and inviting me to participate in it, and, most of all, in its selection for a respondent in the discussion of a man of such ability and Christian character as H. Leo Boles, president of David Lipscomb College, of Nashville, Tenn. I begin this first article of the series in the hope that through this discussion attention shall be turned to the great themes under examination, that mistaken and unfavorable impressions may be removed, that brotherly love and good will may be promoted, and that in all questions the truth may become manifest in love.

It is understood that in all discussions the disputants must proceed from common ground, and that without such a basis of agreement no intelligent discussion would be possible. In the present instance the basis of common agreement is very large, covering, indeed, the whole scope of the Christian faith, in so far as I know, every point of doctrine excepting such questions as now under investigation. Both Brother Boles and myself stand unequivocally [7] for the entire Bible as the word of God and as the only authority in matters of religious faith and practice. We both believe in the one body, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, established on the Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, which is God's kingdom on the earth to-day. We both hold one Lord, one faith, one baptism. We were together called in one hope of our calling; and we are, with all God's children, of "one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in all." The questions between us which are now under discussion are indeed not unimportant; they have great bearing upon the Christian's outlook, motive, and spirit of service, and I believe that a proper understanding of them will profoundly affect our conception of God's ways and plans and the whole of his revelation. The differences between us furnish proper themes for brotherly investigation and discussion, for mutual profit and in brotherly love. They do not, however, affect any outward act of religious practice, any act of obedience in work or worship; in fact, they do not refer *directly* to the *present*, but have reference to "the things that are to come," of which the Holy Spirit speaks. ([John 16:13](#).)

Our first proposition reads as follows:

*"The Scriptures teach that Israel (fleshly descendants of Abraham through Jacob) shall be nationally restored." R. H. Boll affirms; H. Leo Boles denies.*

By "the Scriptures" I understand the Bible--the Old and the New Testaments. The term "Israel" is defined in the proposition itself as the nation or people known by that name, which have sprung by fleshly descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. By "nationally restored" I mean that they shall be reconstituted in their own land, the land of their ancient heritage (which God by oath granted to their fathers for an everlasting possession) as a free and autonomous nation. This restoration involves the people, the land, and the city, Jerusalem, and necessitates in connection a spiritual restoration; for no one [8] would or should contend that the Jews will be restored in their present unbelief and disobedience or that fleshly Israel as such will be restored. The promise is *not merely* to a nation which is descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in fleshly lineage, but *to them* as a "*righteous nation*," forgiven, cleansed, regenerated, turned from ungodliness, and believing in Jesus Christ as their Messiah and King. But that this nation of Israel will some day be in such a case, nationally, and that they shall so obtain all the wonderful promises made to them in the Scriptures, I do earnestly believe and declare.

The present condition of Israel, a condition in which they have been for many centuries, is one of God's signs and marvels to the world, one of the sure testimonies to God's sure word of prophecy, in which their history was foretold long ago. It is twice marvelous. Aside altogether from the Scriptures, the history of the Jews is in itself a prodigy. Here is a race hoary with age, preserved amid incredible sufferings and vicissitudes, and their afflictions being precisely of the sort that would destroy and exterminate them; and this people, though at times terribly reduced, yet undiminished (of later times even greatly increased), still young and virile and powerful; and though scattered among all nations, without homeland or national base, kept nationally pure, intact, distinct, indestructible. "The history of the Jews," says Ernest Renan, "contradicts the whole philosophy of history." That is to say that the laws which account for the rise and the fall of nations do not seem to apply to them. Afflicted, hated, persecuted as no other people has been, scattered abroad throughout the whole world, driven from place to place, they have continued in existence--yea, have flourished--and without dispute have exerted an influence upon the world of mankind far more powerful and profound than any other nation has ever been able to exert. The Jew to-day is a living miracle. But answering to the miracle of the fact is the miracle of [9] prophecy. Their seemingly impossible career was minutely foretold. *Israel's history was written before it had fairly begun.* Before ever they entered their land, it was told them what evils would befall them if they obeyed not the voice of Jehovah their God; and Moses moreover predicted that they would not fail to quickly corrupt themselves, and that they would be persistently disobedient, and that all these evil things would come upon them: drought, famine, pestilence, oppression by their enemies, subjugation, finally captivity and world-wide dispersion under intolerable distress and persecution. Yea, he taught them *a song* (for a song remains with a people when other instruction is forgotten), that they might recall it in the latter days and realize that it was *Jehovah* that had done it, and that some day they might believe and return to Him who smote them and who alone is able to heal. (See [Lev. 26](#); [Deut. 28](#); [Deut. 31:14-29](#); [chapter 32](#).)

And how do we account for this double, miracle? The Jew is God's witness, inexplicable apart from Jehovah his God. It was he that called Abram, the nation's ancestor, out of Ur in the Chaldees, and gave him a son of old age, Isaac, and of him chose Jacob to be the forefather of the twelve tribes. The family of Jacob developed into a nation during their sojourn in Egypt; and from thence Jehovah brought them forth by the hand of Moses, and made a covenant with them at Mount Sinai, and brought them into their own land, because he *loved* them, and because be



would keep the oath which he swore unto their fathers. ([Deut. 7:8.](#)) But they proved themselves unworthy of his love and goodness. Nevertheless he wrought for them for his Name's sake ([Ps. 78; Ezek. 20](#)) in the wilderness and in Canaan and throughout their entire career, and he suffered not his faithfulness to fail. Their latest prophet told them that it was only because of Jehovah's unchanging love and faithfulness that they had not been destroyed. "I have loved you, saith Jehovah." ([Mal. 1:2.](#)) "For I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, [10] O sons of Jacob, are not consumed." ([Mal. 3:6.](#)) But with the same faithfulness he fulfilled his threatened chastisements upon them, stroke after stroke, until they were carried away into captivity--the northern kingdom first, and about one hundred and fifty years later the southern, the kingdom of Judah, also. Since that time (about twenty-five hundred years) they have never been an independent kingdom and country. After seventy years, there was a partial restoration, something less than fifty thousand returning to their land under Ezra, chiefly of Judah and Benjamin, with some Levites. ([Ez. 1:5; 2:64, 65.](#)) There they resumed their temple worship, and despite terrific sufferings and persecutions they again multiplied. But they crowned all their disobedience and rebellion against God at last by their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the refusal of the subsequent offer of mercy. ([Acts 2:7.](#)) Therefore, God gave them up, and the Romans came and destroyed their city, and they were scattered abroad, wanderers and fugitives upon the face of all the earth, the while the salvation they rejected went out to the Gentiles. Yet even this had been foreseen and foretold in the prophets. ([John 12:37, 38; Rom. 10:21.](#)) But all along Jehovah's faithfulness watched over them, and his loving care over them has not lapsed even yet. "He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." ([Ps. 121:4.](#)) "For I am with thee, to save thee," the Lord says to Israel. "For I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished." ([Jer. 30:11.](#))

That is why the Jew is with us still.

"Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: if these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the [11] seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, *then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah.*" ([Jer. 31:35-37.](#))

So long his power hath kept them; sure it still will lead them on,

O'er moor and fen,  
O'er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone."

And Israel's long night shall know its morning--"a morning without clouds, through clear shining after rain," though her darkest hour be just before the dawn.

If I were asked to trace, even in barest outline, the future history of any nation other than Israel, I should have to confess my utter inability to such a task; but it is not thus in the case of Israel. Her future is mapped out in God's word as clearly and minutely as her past had been

foretold before it came to pass. There are certain definite promises of God's word regarding Israel--the people, their land, and their city--which still await their accomplishment. The word of God teaches that the present rejection of Israel is not complete nor final, and that some day all of God's predicted plans and intentions concerning them shall be realized.

In the earliest prediction concerning the career of Israel, after enumeration of the fearful judgments that should fall upon the disobedient nation, Moses foretells their national repentance--the humble confession of their sins and acknowledgment of their punishment, and God's promise to regard them. (See [Lev. 26:40-45](#).) "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land." "And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them [12] utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah."

More definitely he speaks in [Deut. 4:27-31](#): "And Jehovah will scatter you among the peoples. . . . But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice: for Jehovah thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them."

Again he points forward to the great day of Israel's turning and their subsequent restoration, in [Deut. 30:1-10](#): "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. . . . And Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. . . .

Like the "prodigal son," they will come to themselves in the far country, as it were, and to their God they shall turn, and he will bring them back to their own land, and [13] they shall again possess it as in the days of yore--only that their borders will be extended to embrace *all* the land Jehovah sware to their fathers; and the land itself, and most especially their city, will undergo a marvelous change. Moreover, Jehovah shall perform a spiritual work upon them, a circumcision of the heart, that they may love Jehovah their God with all their heart and soul and mind and strength.

This latter fact is strikingly declared by Ezekiel in a different way: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to

walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." ([Ezek. 36:26-28.](#))

From that restoration there will be no relapse. Once they are thus returned to their land, they shall never again be rooted up out of it, "neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first." ([2 Sam. 7:10.](#)) "And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God." ([Amos 9:15.](#))

The limits of this article forbid quoting even a considerable fraction of the Scriptures touching upon these things. Isaiah tells us of the restoration of the city ([Isa. 1:24-27; 4:1-6; chapter 60](#)); of the regathering "again the second time" of the outcasts of Israel "in that day"--that is, as the context shows, the day of the Messiah, the reign of Christ ([Isa. 11:1-12](#)). "For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land." ([Isa. 14:1.](#)) Jeremiah foretells of their regathering from the land of the north and from all the countries whither God has driven them, back to their own land, as an event so stupendous as to eclipse [14] utterly their glorious redemption from Egypt. ([Jer. 16:14, 15.](#)) In fact, this final restoration of Israel is always represented as the manifest and marvelous work of God, a feat of sovereign power and omnipotence, an accomplishment of the impossible, as a resurrection from the dead. ([Ezek. 37.](#)) All the nations will be amazed and convicted, and a world-wide recognition of the God of Israel will result. Nations from afar shall run unto them because of Jehovah their God. ([Isa. 55:5.](#))

In the passages quoted and referred to, an examination of the immediate or remoter context will show that it is the identical nation of Israel, long rejected and punished for their disobedience, but at last converted, that will be so regathered, restored, and exalted.

"For, lo, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah [the ten-tribe kingdom and two-tribe kingdom], saith Jehovah; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." ([Jer. 30:3.](#)) "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock." ([Jer. 31:10.](#))

It is not, then, *the church* of whom these things are spoken, nor some people other than that self-same nation that once possessed the land of Canaan, and whom for their disobedience God scattered abroad over the earth. Them, and not another nation of men, will Jehovah restore.

*"For thus saith Jehovah: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them."* ([Jer. 32:42.](#))

Many expositors (as witness the misleading chapter summaries in the older editions of the King James Bible) are willing to let the literal people have all the literal punishments, but the promised blessings they complacently spiritualize and appropriate to themselves. But the evil prophesied was literally fulfilled upon *that people*; and "*so will I bring upon them all the good that I have [15] promised them.*" There is not one evil denounced upon them, but in the promises of the restoration there is a corresponding blessing.

The New Testament also bears witness to the same general truth. "Your house is left unto you desolate," said the Lord Jesus, as he turned his back upon Jerusalem. "For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth *till ye shall say*, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." ([Matt. 23:38, 39.](#)) For indeed the day cometh when "they shall look unto him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son." ([Zech. 12:10.](#)) And "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." ([Luke 21:24.](#)) But "*then* shall Jerusalem be holy, and no stranger shall pass through her any more." ([Joel 3:17.](#))

For Israel did not stumble that they might fall, "but through their fall [their lapse--"It is a very soft word," says Wesley, "Notes on New Testament"] salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them [i. e., Israel] to jealousy. Now if their fall [their *lapse*, again] is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness? . . . For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" ([Rom. 11:11-15.](#)) For the olive tree of God's promise and covenanted blessing is theirs; and though for the time they are broken off, and Gentiles, wild olive branches, have been grafted in, yet, if they abide not in unbelief, God will graft them again into their own olive tree. "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, *until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. [16] As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, *they are beloved for the fathers' sake*. For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." (See [Rom. 11:17-32.](#))

Search then through Moses and the prophets and see the gifts God bestowed by promise upon the nation of Israel, and the destiny unto which God called them: not a jot or a tittle thereof shall fall to the ground.

In the Millennial Harbinger, 1856, page 275, Alexander Campbell says:

The unbelieving Jews were rejected and repudiated as the visible and formal people of God; and the believing Jews and Gentiles, harmonized and united, constituted the visible earthly people and kingdom of Jesus the Christ. Still, the unbelieving Jews exist as a *monumental* people; and, though no longer the depositories of the Oracles of God, they are, in their present position, the subject of special prophecy and of special promise.

But that we may be better prepared to appreciate the New Testament prophecies of this monumental people, we must sojourn for sometime in the tents of ancient Israel, and still more fully expatiate on the covenanted promises to the Abrahamic race, respecting their future position, according to the covenants and transactions on record in their own Oracles, so faithfully and benevolently transmitted to us.

We must, indeed, in order to our own edification and comfort, be fully assured that what is yet future, or unfulfilled in their history, will as certainly be accomplished as that their Messiah

came at the appointed time, and appeared in time, place and circumstances, in exact conformity to the predictions of their own prophets, and the symbols of their own institution.

Of the whole Jewish line of prophets in the Old Testament, no one, in fewer or more pointed words, has written concerning the then future destiny of the Jewish people, than did Hosea, in the latter end of the eighth century, before the birth of the Lord Messiah. His words are: "The children of Israel shall continue many days without a king, without a prince, and without sacrifice; without an image, without an ephod, and without teraphim:" or, according to the Septuagint, without a sacrifice, [17] without an altar, without a priesthood, and without oracles. "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David" (the beloved) "their King, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." ([Hos. 3:4, 5.](#))

This passage, though sought to be applied to the Jews in their captivity in ancient Babylon, cannot, as we judge, be sustained, and is only fully verified in their present and prospective future destiny.

Again, in a missionary address, speaking with reference to Dr. Barclay, pioneer missionary, sent from churches of Christ to Jerusalem, Alexander Campbell says:

But, as it is a settled point with us that Jerusalem is and ought to be our first choice, we presume not to argue her special claims upon our Christian benevolence. When we speak of "the rapidly waning Crescent," of the "drying up of the Euphrates," of Jerusalem as "one of the foci of Mohammedanism," anciently "the city of the great King," and long destined to be "the joy of all the earth," "a city not forsaken," "of the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion," "the Mount Zion which God loves for his servants' sake," we do not argue these glorious and sublime indications of her destiny as though any of us doubted our premises, her influence or her destiny. Jerusalem's fall is already written, and her future rise and glory occupy a large space in the visions of the future. Toward the end of the Babylonish captivity, in the prophetic visions of that day, as presented in [Ps. 102](#), we have some joyful indications of the rise of Jerusalem. (Quoting [Ps. 102:13-16 and 18-21.](#))

It is good to love Jerusalem and to seek her peace and prosperity, so sang and prayed the Jews in their songs of degrees. (See [Ps. 122.](#))

Jerusalem, indeed, has long been given up to desolation, and it is to continue, according to Daniel, "till the consummation determined," or until the purposes of God respecting it are accomplished. Our Lord, by Luke, speaks still more plainly: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This is our index to the prophecies concerning the Jewish reign. "The times of the Gentiles" yet continue. God permitted them to destroy Jerusalem, and thereby to crush its persecuting power. Its fall contributed much to the spread of the gospel throughout the world. Hence, Paul reasons: "If the casting off of the Jews" from their [18] relation to God "became the reconciling of the world [the Gentiles], what will the resumption of them be but life from the dead?"

The fall of the Jews became the rise of the Gentiles. The Gentiles have yet their times. And "blindness," not total, but "in part," has happened to the Jews, and will continue "till the fullness

of the Gentiles" be come in. Then will come the fullness of the Jews. "For the Redeemer shall come out of Zion," the city of David, "and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

This mystery is now revealed. It was, in the Hebrew style, *mystery*, a thing bidden or concealed. It is no longer so. The Jews, as a people, are still beloved, because of their fathers, though long punished, as was threatened; for, said Jehovah, by his prophet, "Thee, O Jerusalem, have I acknowledged" more than the Gentiles; "therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities." But the time "to favor her" is not far distant.

For thy servants take pleasure in her ruins,  
And show a tender regard for her very dust."

Hence, David sings:

"Then shall the Gentiles fear thy name, Jehovah, and all the kings of the earth thy glory."

With Paul, we rejoice in the prophetic drama, and, therefore, anticipate a glorious triumph of grace in the redemption of ancient Israel according to the flesh.

Our duty on all the premises is plain. During these times of the Gentiles, we have a dispensation of the gospel committed to us. We have, therefore, established a mission in Palestine, in the literal city of David. It is not designed merely for the Jews residing in their own hallowed metropolis or visiting it, but also for the Gentiles now sojourning in this great center of mingled attractions." ("Popular Lectures and Addresses," pages 525-527.)

We have seen from the testimony of the Scriptures:

1. That the nation of Israel scattered by God's hand shall by his hand be recovered and regathered and restored to their own land.
2. That they shall accept their Messiah, be converted and saved.
3. That all the blessings and promises shall come unto [19] that people just as surely and as literally as their predicted punishments have come upon them.
4. That once so restored, they shall never again fall away or be removed from their land.
5. That their national conversion and restoration will be a blessing to all the world.

The Scriptures do with abundant clearness and fullness teach "that Israel (fleshly descendants of Abraham through Jacob) shall be nationally restored."

But here I must close, to resume the argument in the next article. [20]



## H. LEO BOLES' FIRST NEGATIVE.

I join Brother Boll in thanking the Gospel Advocate for opening its columns to an investigation of these questions over which much disturbance and confusion exist to-day in the church of our Lord. This discussion is begun with prayer that the greatest possible good may be accomplished, and that it may be the means of coming to a better understanding of questions which have disturbed the peace and harmony of the body of Christ. We ask the reader to follow the investigation patiently and prayerfully to its conclusion.

Brethren should study and investigate any question revealed in the word of God for their own mutual benefit and for the public welfare without impugning each other's motives or breaking the fellowship between the Lord's servants. These discussions shall be fraternal; no harsh or unkind words shall be written. It is not the desire nor the purpose of the participants in these discussions to discuss personalities or the mistakes of any one; only the issues as set forth in the propositions shall claim our attention. Brother Boll and I are brethren in the Lord and hold each other in very high esteem, "in honor preferring one another." We both know how brethren should treat each other in a prayerful study of God's word, and the reader need not fear that the discussion will be marred by any harsh or unpleasant epithets. We are determined to continue and conclude the discussion with the same kindly feeling for each other that we have in the beginning of it. We trust that our readers may cultivate for all of God's people the same feeling, "giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

While the discussion will be kind and fraternal, yet the issues of each proposition will be discussed frankly, and fallacies in reasoning will be analyzed and pointed out, "private interpretations" of prophecies will be exposed. [21] Truth demands this. Kindly feelings for each other shall not keep either of us from pressing the issue and keeping it clearly before the reader. The duty of the negative is to follow the affirmative; to examine the proofs submitted by the affirmative; to point out fallacies and offer rebuttal arguments on the negative side of the proposition. We shall try to be faithful to this task. The issue must be kept clear and definite before the public, that no evasion, conscious or otherwise, may lead the mind of the reader astray; the issue must not be obscured by specious interpretations of prophecies. The discussion will result in the greatest good if both of us stick to the question and discuss only the issues involved in the proposition.

Some rules or canon of Bible study should be reviewed here. First, no "private interpretations" are worth anything in this discussion. Peter said: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation." ([2 Pet. 1:20.](#)) Second, an important rule for the correct understanding of God's word is this--namely, the Scripture must be its own interpreter. This rule requires that when there is a question concerning the meaning of any Scripture, that the true sense must be searched out and ascertained from other Scriptures that speak more clearly on that point. All Bible scholars recognize two classes of Scriptures--plain and simple Scriptures, and obscure or difficult Scriptures. The obscure and difficult Scriptures must be interpreted by the plain and simple Scriptures. Third, that in the interpretation of Scriptures we are to restrict ourselves to what is expressly revealed or declared in the Bible. If these rules are observed, it will help us to arrive at the truth. Divine truth is so important that we cannot afford to ignore the rules which will lead us into a fuller knowledge of God.

Brother Boll has satisfactorily defined the terms of his proposition and has stated very accurately much of the common ground that we both occupy. There is so much in common with us that we both can live faithful to God, [22] enjoy Christian fellowship, die and go home to heaven, whether we ever agree on all the issues which are involved in our proposition. Brother Boll has very specifically and clearly conceded that "the differences between us . . . do not affect any outward act of religious practice, any act of obedience in work or worship." That is, we can do all the work the Lord requires of us without knowing or believing the present proposition. He concedes that we can worship God acceptably without believing his proposition--that is, his proposition does not involve faith on the part of any child of God in his acceptable obedience to the will of the Lord. I do not quite agree with him in regard to all the propositions which we are to discuss; however, I am glad for him to say that these differences "do not refer directly to the present, but have reference to the things that are to come." Since, according to Brother Boll, his issue "does not refer directly to the present," and since it "does not affect our work and worship," then we should not let them disturb the present. Where do such questions belong? Let us seek to keep them where they belong and not disturb the present with them.

Brother Boll, in discussing and defining his proposition, interprets it in the following terse way: The proposition simply means, by his interpretation, that at some future time, it may be very soon, the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" will be restored to Palestine. He claims that the Scriptures teach that the Jews will be nationally converted to Christ and then nationally restored to the land of their fathers. Now, if the Scriptures so teach, we ought to be able to find a Scripture that states specifically and definitely that the Jews as a nation are to be converted to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" are to be restored to Palestine. We ought to find a plain and simple passage of Scripture which so teaches; we are not to find [23] an obscure Scripture and give to that obscure Scripture a "private interpretation" to support this proposition.

It will be noticed that Brother Boll's interpretation of his proposition easily breaks into two parts: the first part, the Jews as a nation are to be converted to Christ; the second part, the Jews, after conversion, "as a righteous nation," are to be restored to Palestine. I do not believe that our brother can prove either part of his proposition. I do not believe that the Scriptures teach either part of his proposition. He has a twofold burden to bear, and either part is greater than he can bear. His first burden is to find the Scripture which teaches that the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ; his second burden is to find the Scripture which teaches that the Jews "as a righteous nation" are to be brought back to Palestine. Now, I confess that I know of no plain, simple passage of Scripture which teaches that the Jews as a nation are to be converted to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" are to be restored to the land of their fathers. Since no plain and simple Scripture can be found which so teaches, the best that can be done will be to take some obscure Scriptures and give them an interpretation which supports the proposition. The strongest proof text that may be employed falls in the class of the obscure Scriptures, if, indeed, any text at all can be found.

When it is claimed that the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ, it is proper to ask, By what means will they be converted? Will they be converted by the gospel of Christ? I know of no other means for conversion than the gospel. I know that no other gospel can be preached without bringing condemnation on the angel or person who preaches another gospel. (See [Gal. 1:8, 9](#).)



The gospel dispensation does not in conversion deal with nations, but with individuals. There was a time during the patriarchal age when God dealt with people by families; then, under the Mosaic dispensation, he dealt with nations; but now he deals with people in conversion [24] individually. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." ([Acts 10:34, 35](#).) If the Jews are ever converted to Christ, this must be done by the gospel, and that *individually*. I know of no Scripture which teaches that the Jews as a nation are to be converted to Christ by the gospel. Will the affirmative please quote the Scripture which teaches that the Jews as a nation will be converted? There is no more promise that the Jews as a nation will be converted by the gospel than there is that the Gentiles as a nation will be converted to Christ. Neither the Jewish nation nor the Gentile nations are to be converted *nationally* to Christ. If the affirmative should succeed in proving the latter part of his proposition, he will utterly fail in proving the first part of his proposition.

True, the Jews are now scattered; there is no civilized nation but that has its Jews. I accept the beautiful description that Brother Boll gives of the present condition of the Jews. They are a distinct people wherever they dwell. They are a monumental race; they have been preserved through all of the vicissitudes of time. It is one thing to prove that the Jews have been preserved and quite another thing to prove that they have been preserved in order to be *nationally* converted and restored to Palestine. The proposition calls for support that they have been preserved in order that God may convert them nationally and restore them to Palestine.

Another difficulty arises. Since the Jews are scattered in all nations and since Brother Boll claims they are to be converted *nationally*, may we ask, Will they be converted in their scattered condition, or will they be gathered into some place and then converted to Christ? If they are to be converted *nationally*, will they not have to be gathered into some place before their conversion? May we inquire, What place is to be the rendezvous of the Jews? If they [25] are to be converted before they are brought together, then they are not converted *nationally*; they are converted *individually*. It is easy to understand that the Jews may be converted *individually* and then brought together, but it is difficult to understand how they may be converted *nationally* while in their scattered condition. Let the affirmative tell us whether the Jews will be gathered together before their conversion or whether they will be converted in their present condition, scattered among the nations. Let the affirmative produce the Scripture which teaches the answer to the question.

I believe that God will keep all of his promises to the Jews or to any one else. Some promises are conditional, and the conditions must be met before any one may hope for the blessings of the promise. But the question must be pressed--namely, Has Jehovah promised to convert the Jews nationally and then take them "as a righteous nation" to Palestine? I believe all the Scriptures which Brother Boll quotes in his article, but I do not believe that he has correctly applied them. We now notice these Scriptures, and for convenience they are listed according to the order of the books in the Bible.

[Lev. 26:40-45](#). This Scripture was fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. (See [2 Chron. 36:21](#); also, [Jer. 25:9, 12](#); [26:7, 8](#); [29:12](#).) These Scriptures show that the prophecy of Leviticus applied to the Babylonian captivity and the Jews' return from it.

[Deut. 30:3-10](#). This prophecy was fulfilled in the return from Babylonian captivity. Nehemiah, who led a company out of captivity, quotes this prophecy from Deuteronomy and applies it to the Babylonian captivity. Unfortunately for Brother Boll, we have an inspired writer making the application and pointing to its fulfillment.

[2 Sam. 7:10 and Amos 9:15](#). These Scriptures do not sustain the proposition of the affirmative. Not one word is said in these Scriptures about the Jews as a nation [26] being converted to Christ and "as a righteous nation" being restored to Palestine.

[Ezra 1:5; 2:64, 65](#) tell of the return from Babylonian captivity, but not one word is said about the conversion of the Jews, and their return after their conversion to Palestine.

[Ps. 78](#). This psalm recites God's guidance of his people in spite of their unfaithfulness, but nothing is said that sustains the affirmative side of the proposition as interpreted by Brother Boll.

[Ps. 121:4](#) proclaims Jehovah's ever watchfulness over his people, but not a word is said about the Jews' being converted as a nation and then restored to Palestine.

[Isa. 1:24-27; 4:1-6; 11:1-12; 14:1; 55:5; and chapter 60](#). All these prophecies are quoted by Brother Boll. Isaiah is called the "Messianic prophet." He prophesied in Judah about the time the kingdom of Israel was destroyed. None of these prophecies sustain the affirmative side of this proposition. Again, unfortunately for the affirmative, Paul quotes one of these Scriptures as fulfilled in Christ and not fulfilled in the conversion of the Jews as a nation. (See [Rom. 15:12](#).)

[Jer. 16:14, 15; 30:3, 11; 31:10, 35-37](#). Jeremiah prophesied at the close of the kingdom of Judah, just before it was carried into Babylonian captivity. He encouraged the Jews to go into Babylon and promised them that they should be brought out again and restored to their former home. These Scriptures were fulfilled in their being brought out of Babylonian captivity and restored to the land of their fathers. Not one word is said about the Jews as a nation being converted and then restored to Palestine. [Jer. 32:42](#) states that God's word cannot fail; that God will bring all the good to pass upon the Jews who are faithful as sure as he brought the evil upon them for their disobedience. God's word cannot fail. The Jew can be blessed in Christ now and receive all the good that has been promised to him. [27]

[Ezek. 20; 36:26-28; and chapter 37](#). Ezekiel prophesied while the Jews were in Babylon. He kept their faith alive and their hope bright that God would bring them out of Babylonian captivity. [Chapter 20](#) recites the history of the race. This was done to keep them encouraged. He points out the blessings which they shall receive after their return from Babylon and the ultimate blessing to come to them and all others through Christianity. No reference is made to the Jews' being converted as a nation and restored to Palestine.

[Joel 3:17](#). He prophesied before the kingdom of Judah was carried into Babylonian captivity and speaks of the cleansing of Jerusalem. No reference is made to the conversion of the Jew and his restoration to Palestine.

[Zech. 12:10](#). This has reference to the crucifixion of Christ. It is quoted in [John 19:37](#) as fulfilled in Christ and has no reference to the conversion of the Jew and his restoration to Palestine.

[Mal. 1:2; 3:6](#). This Scripture has no reference to the proposition, as may be seen by reading its context.

[Matt. 23:38, 39; Luke 21:24; John 12:37, 38; 16:13](#). These Scriptures say not one word about the Jews' being converted to Christ and then being restored to Palestine. Luke records Christ's foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and mentions "the times of the Gentiles." It matters not just here what is meant by the expression, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," we know that it says nothing about the Jews' being converted and then restored to Palestine.

[Rom. 10:21; 11:11-15, 17, 32](#). Whatever interpretation may be given to Paul's language in Romans, we know that no statement is definitely made that the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ and then restored to the land of their fathers.

All of the proof texts used by Brother Boll have been examined, and not one of them states clearly and, definitely that the Jews are to be *nationally* converted to Christ and [28] then restored to Palestine. These Scriptures, when applied by the rules of interpretation, are found to be, at least in part, fulfilled in the restoration of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. May we insist that the laws of interpretation be obeyed in our investigation of this question; may we insist further that no "private interpretation" be given to these Scriptures.

Brother Boll's summary of his first article is put under five heads. A close examination reveals the fact that he has not sustained them. He claims that he has proved "that the nation of Israel, scattered by God's hand, shall by his hand be recovered and regathered and restored to their own land." We have shown that the Scriptures which he gave to sustain this point have been fulfilled in the Jews' being gathered from Babylonian captivity and brought back into their own land. He claims further that he has proved "that they shall accept their Messiah, be converted and saved." No Scripture has been given which says that the Jews *as a nation* will accept Christ and be converted and saved *as a nation*. He has failed in sustaining this point. Again, he claims as his third point, "that all the blessings and promises shall come unto that people just as surely and as literally as their predicted punishments have come to them." It is conceded by the negative that God will keep his promises to do good as surely as he will keep his promise to do evil to a people; but the question for Brother Boll to prove is, Has God anywhere promised that the Jews *as a nation* will be converted to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" restored to the land of their fathers? He has not met this point. He further claims that he has proved "that once so restored, they shall never again fall away or be removed from their land." This point has not been proved; and if it could be proved, it would mean that literal, fleshly Israel would forever and ever dwell in the land of Palestine. It means that if such should be the case with the Jews, that [2 Pet. 3:12, 13](#) could not be fulfilled. [29] The last point which he claims he has proved is "that their national conversion and restoration will be a blessing to all the world." We have shown that the gospel converts *individuals* and not *nations*; hence, if the Jews are to be converted *nationally*, then it must be done with some other power than the gospel.

## REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS.

If the Jews are converted, then their nationality will have been destroyed. Paul tells us in [Eph. 2:14-17](#) that the "middle wall of partition" has been abolished, or broken down, which means that that which made the Jews a distinct nationality has been removed in Christ. So, if the Jew should be converted, he is then a Christian with his Jewish nationality destroyed.

Again, if the Jews are converted to Christ, they become Christian; they are in Christ. And if they are in Christ, "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all." ([Col. 3:11.](#)) Again, we see that when the Jews are converted they become as other Christians and lose their distinctive features as a nationality.

When the Jews become Christians, why should they be gathered in Palestine? There is no more reason for the converted Jew of to-day or to-morrow being restored to Palestine than there was for the Jews converted in the early days of Christianity being brought back to Palestine. Why should the converted Jew be restored to Palestine? What good can he do in Palestine?

In [John 4:21-24](#), Jesus teaches the woman at the well that the time would come when Jerusalem would not be the center of worship. He says: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the father." Clearly and definitely the Savior here points to the time when [30] Jerusalem should be no longer necessary to the successful worship of God; he points to a time when mere locality should form no element in the true religion. Under the Christian dispensation one place is as good as another to worship God. Jerusalem or Palestine has no advantage over any other place. America has equal advantages with Judea. When Jews become Christians, then they will appreciate the fact that locality is not an essential element in Christian worship. The converted Jew will lose his desire for Jerusalem as a place of worship.

If the converted Jew should be restored as a nation to Palestine, what advantage will he have? What kind of government will the Jew adopt in Palestine? Will the converted Jew try to revive the old Jewish theocracy? As Christians, they cannot go back to the law of Moses; they cannot revive the priesthood of Aaron; they cannot rebuild the temple and restore animal sacrifice in worship without rejecting Christ as a sacrifice. What will Judea be to Jews without their ancient priesthood, their ancient temple and its imposing ceremonies? Every memory which now endears them to the promised land and to Jerusalem will have been destroyed by the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Should the Jews as Christians return to Palestine, they will have become a new people, under entirely new laws and in a new institution which destroys the old law and old sacrifices and old institutions. No Scripture can be found which sustains such a position as converting the Jew to Christ and restoring him to the land of his fathers. [31]

## Chapter II.

### R. H. BOLL'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE.

I greatly appreciate the kindness and fairness of the opening remarks of Brother H. Leo Boles' first reply, and the courtesy and straightforwardness throughout his negative. He is wholly in the right when he says that brethren should study and investigate any question revealed in God's word for their own good and for the public welfare, and that in brotherly kindness and in loving fellowship; and he speaks my heart also when he voices his determination to maintain such attitude throughout the discussion and unto the end. Nor is he wrong when he says that such kindly feeling must not keep either of us from pressing the issue and keeping it clearly before the reader, each of us being faithful to his task, for truth and right's sake. It is by such means that Christians grow into a better and fuller understanding of God's word.

I would like to forestall a misconception. It was not intended to leave the impression that because these matters under discussion concern future rather than present things, that they are therefore superfluous and might as well be ignored; but, rather, to show that differences on such questions should not raise barriers between brethren who in the foundations of the faith and in all principles and acts of obedience are at one. But I also pointed out that these matters are not unimportant--that they affect the spirit and motive and outlook of the Christian and thus may at any time come to have a great practical bearing. A man may get through without *knowing* these and many other things taught in God's word; yet Christian teaching should not therefore be restricted to the irreducible minimum of the faith: the whole word of God is the proper and God-given province of the Christian's study, faith, and teaching. ([2 Tim. 3:16.](#)) I would not [32] say that my proposition "does not involve faith on the part of any child of God in his acceptable obedience to the will of the Lord," lest some one get the impression that the part of God's word which deals with these matters is useless and worthless, and so come to despise it or feel that he ought to ignore it and cast it aside. As Brother Boles says, "*divine truth is important.*" He is right also when he says that these matters should not be permitted to create disturbance. There is nothing inherent in these and such like differences which may arise between brethren in their study of the Word to necessitate a disturbance (in the sense of clash and alienation). With Brother Boles, I deplore all such disturbance, and any manner or attitude that would tend to provoke it. Might we not hope that this discussion may itself be a means to help brethren everywhere to study, weigh, and discuss these teachings without allowing them to disturb their harmony and love and Christian fellowship?

Brother Boles suggests the need of proper rules of Biblical interpretation. Among some rules which in substance I first published in the Gospel Advocate of October 28, 1909, and have used all along in my own work and study, I have this:

1. Interpret Literally.--The first presumption is always that God meant just what he said. The prophecies that were fulfilled were fulfilled literally and exactly.

2. As to Figurative Language.--Make the same allowance for figures of speech in prophetic writings as in all other Scripture and literature. But consider nothing figurative without valid reason.

3. Symbolic Prophecy.--The Scripture itself must give us the explanation of its symbols. But nothing is to be called "symbolic" as symbolic without clear reason. Be sure also that the "explanation" is true and Scriptural before you adopt it and rely on it.

The rules which Brother Boles suggests are good within certain limits. I would not wholly indorse them. True, the Scripture must be its own interpreter. But that might [33] be taken to justify the bad practice of nullifying Scripture with Scripture. And, again, we may not rule a Scripture out of court because it seems obscure to us. A passage may be quite plain, and yet, because it transcends our present conception or clashes with our idea of things, we may think it obscure, set it aside, and fall back upon a Scripture that is more nearly to our notion. I do not at all say or mean that Brother Boles has done or would do that. But I would suggest that it is good to take up every passage in its context, and treat it according to its own fair meaning, as best we can, lest we be prejudiced beforehand against anything God has said.

In a debate on Bible subjects it should probably not be demanded that either disputant should produce a passage of Scripture which states his position in incontrovertible terms, for in such a case there could hardly be a debate. When, for example, we affirm that the church was established on Pentecost, we are not required to bring forth a passage which directly says so. But in the present instance, one could come very near to doing even that, as may presently be seen. Yet, whether or not, I believe that the joint testimony of the Scriptures presented amply sustains the proposition in hand.

My respondent takes up the Scripture passages I advanced, in order of the books of the Bible from which they were taken, and one by one declares that they do not say that Israel is to be nationally converted and restored to their land. In regard to a number of these texts he is correct, for they were not all intended as *direct* proof of that proposition. Let me run over some of them again in the order in which I gave them, and I will point out the purport of each.

[John 16:13](#) was quoted to show that the Holy Spirit revealed things that are to come; so that no one may think we are out of order or wasting time in studying and discussing such things, even though they do not deal with immediate practice and duty. [34]

[Mal. 1:2 and 3:6](#) were quoted to show Jehovah's unchanging and unalterable love and care over Israel, eternal as himself.

[John 12:37, 38 and Rom. 10:21](#) were cited to show that even Israel's rejection of Christ and of the gospel were foreseen from of old; yet the promises of the final conversion and restoration were made, and the assurances that Israel should not be cast off forever were given *in full foreview of all Israel would do*.

[Ps. 121:4](#) declares Jehovah's watchful care over that people, and explains why they have not perished and cannot perish as a nation before their restoration come.



[Jer. 30:11](#) was quoted for the same intent, as also the exceedingly emphatic passage, [Jer. 31:35-37](#).

[Lev. 26:40-45](#) shows that though the worst come to the worst, Jehovah would not forget them nor the covenant he had made with their fathers; but in their repentance would take them up again, and would not abhor them nor destroy them utterly. That this had an application in the restoration from Babylon is not denied, but the promise was not thereby exhausted.

[Deut. 4:27-31](#) goes even further and declares that in the latter days they most certainly *will* repent and return to their God; and so, of course, God would be enabled to fulfill all those great promises to them. This is brought out still more fully in the next passage, [Deut. 30:1-10](#), in which their repentance and consequent restoration are plainly predicted. I call attention to the fact that the promises given there have never as yet been fulfilled. Since their great captivity Israel have never again *possessed* their land. They lived in it as tenants and servants for a while ([Neh. 9:36, 37](#)); and since then, for more than eighteen centuries, they have been scattered abroad, in a dispersion worse than any previous one, hunted, hated, persecuted, robbed, and distressed, in all the earth. But Jehovah will cause them to return to the land that he [35] gave to their fathers, "*and they shall possess it.*" ([Jer. 30:3](#).)

This same passage, [Deut. 30:6](#), as well as [Ezek. 36:26-28](#), foretells a profound spiritual change in the nation, which will insure their perpetual obedience. Therefore, [2 Sam. 7:10](#) and [Amos 9:15](#) could predict their everlasting settlement in the land, for there will be no more occasion to remove them. (Comp. [Isa. 54:8-10](#).) Nothing like this has ever come to pass. The contingent that returned from Babylon quickly declined again, as is shown in Malachi, their last prophet; and what their condition was when Christ came four hundred years later every one knows, as also what awful judgments befell them subsequently.

Now, of the other passages I cited, [Isa. 1:24-27](#) and [4:1-6](#) and [chapter 60](#) show the destined cleansing, renewal, and exaltation of Jerusalem (the context showing that the reference is to the same city, that once was wicked and was destroyed); and such is the fashion of this promised renewal and exaltation that it would not be possible to refer these prophecies to anything that has ever occurred in the past. This, therefore, is yet to be accomplished. It was shown that the future restoration of the city, the land, and the people itself will be so tremendous an act of God as to eclipse the memory of their marvelous redemption from Egypt (so declares [Jer. 16:14, 15](#))--such a demonstration of almighty power as to be comparable only to the impossible and supernatural feat of the assembling and reviving of a valley full of dead, dry bones ([Ezek. 37](#)).

Now, I believe that these declarations of God's word have a bearing upon the question whether Israel is to be nationally restored, and that they afford complete proof thereof. Brother Boles frankly allows that "God will keep his promises to do good as surely as he will keep his promises to do evil to a people." Well, then: "Like as I [36] have brought all this great evil upon this people," says Jehovah, "so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." ([Jer. 32:42](#).) "This people" is Israel. "All this great evil" came upon the nation of Israel, literally and fully. That is undeniable. In just the same way and with the same exactitude will all these promises of return and restoration, which are

peculiar to the nation of Israel, be fulfilled unto them. From that there is no appeal, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

In using the terms, "national conversion," I did not mean anything else than that the individuals constituting the nation would each and all accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and King. Whether they would be gathered in one place or whether they would accept him in their dispersion, whether within one day (as, comp. [Isa. 66:8](#)) or within some relatively short time, does not affect the question in any wise. It is not the time and place, nor the how and why, so much as *the fact of the conversion of the entire nation*," however or wherever accomplished, that is the essential point under consideration.

This wonderful event is foretold in the New Testament also. "But the same fact [i. e., Israel's conversion to Christ] is plainly predicted by Christ and by the apostle Paul," says J. W. McGarvey. "Christ, in his lamentation over Jerusalem, said: 'Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.' ([Matt. 23:39](#).) But no unbelieving city could welcome the return of Christ in these words. It is implied that when Christ comes again, Jerusalem will say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah,' and this necessarily implies that it will be occupied by a believing or a Christian population. Again, in predicting the fall of Jerusalem, Jesus said: 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' ([Luke 21:24](#).) This latter clause implies that the time for the Gentiles to tread Jerusalem under foot [37] will come to an end, after which it will be no longer trodden under foot; that is, oppressed by a foreign foe. After that, it must be a Jewish city and a free city. These two predictions of our Savior, although not as specific on the main point as those of the Old Testament prophets, are, by implication, equally unambiguous." (Christian Standard, 1903, page 696.)

In the eleventh of Romans, Paul tells of the rejection of the disobedient nation at the present time, and the hardening of their heart and the blinding of their eyes ([verses 8-10](#)); but is careful to point out (lest Gentile brethren become wise in their own conceit and lift themselves up against the Jews) that though Israel has stumbled, it was not unto a "fall," unto final ruin. In fact, it was *because of their failure* that salvation has gone out to the Gentiles, and that for the purpose of provoking Israel to jealousy. "Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?" Yea, Paul was the more diligent in his ministry among the Gentiles, that thereby he might have some little part in provoking Jews to jealousy. "For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? ([Rom. 11:11-15](#).)

From this it appears as though Jews were deserving of very special attention, and as if the saving of Jews were the most practical and concentrated sort of missionary work, the most direct course toward the goal of worldwide blessing.

As yet, it is only the *remnant* of Israel that is saved, and the nation on the whole rejected. But the apostle speaks of the ultimate receiving of the *nation* and the glorious result that will follow. The "receiving" of them will be like a resurrection to all the world. Will they some day be so "received?" Paul says: "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has [38] befallen Israel, until the fullness of the



Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved:<sup>1</sup> even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." ([Rom. 11:25-27.](#))

"We are deeply penetrated," says Alexander Campbell (Millennial Harbinger, 1856, page 697), "with the idea that Christianity [by which evidently he means the present order of things] being a new dispensation of the Holy Spirit to Jews and Gentiles under Christ, a dispensation *not of the letter*, but of Spirit, must continue until the '*fullness of the Gentiles*' be consummated. But this clearly intimates that it is not to be forever, or to the final consummation of the drama of Christianity. That the Redeemer shall come out of Zion and turn away 'ungodliness'--impiety, the fuel of unbelief--'from Jacob'--is an express oracle indicative of some special and glorious interposition of the Lord Jesus--which may usher in what we usually call 'the personal reign of Christ'--the subjection of all nations to him." He adds that "of the moral certainty of such an interposition we should not dogmatically affirm in advance of a most cautious and prayerful investigation of both the Jewish and Christian oracles;" and refers to the series of articles on prophecy from Professor Milligan as expressing views which he, Campbell, himself had "warmly cherished," and that "for many years;" and which indeed, as regards the destiny of Israel, I, too, heartily cherish.

May I explain just here that quotations from Campbell, Scott, Lard, Milligan, McGarvey, and other honored and scholarly leaders in the church, are, of course, not meant for authority or for proof of the propositions in hand, but by way of side light and corroboration of the positions taken. Neither does the writer intend to leave the impression that [39] because he quotes from any of the great and good brethren that they necessarily agree with him on everything. No agreement is to be assumed other than the quotation justifies.

Since Brother Boles does not think that I have established the items enumerated in the final summary of my first article, let us examine those points once more.

1. That the nation of Israel, scattered by God's hand, shall by his hand be recovered and regathered and restored to their own land.

This is stated *in so many words* in [Jer. 30:3; 31:10; and Isa. 11:11, 12](#). (See also [Ezek. 36:24, 28.](#))

2. That they shall accept their Messiah, be converted and saved.

This was shown from [Hos. 3:4, 5; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 26:26-28; and Rom. 11.](#)

3. That all the blessings and promises shall come unto that people just as surely and as literally as their predicted punishments have come upon them.

[Jeremiah 32:42](#) alone, in my judgment, settles that.

4. That once so restored, they shall never again fall away or be removed from their land.

This was brought out in connection with [2 Sam. 7:10](#) and [Amos 9:15](#); [Isa. 4:4, 5](#); [Joel 3:17](#).

5. That their national conversion and restoration will be a blessing to all the world.

This is evident from [Isa. 55:5](#); [Isa. 60](#); and [Rom. 11:15](#).

These clear and definite Scriptures (and they are but a fraction of what might be quoted and cited on this subject) could be controverted, so far as I see, upon only one of three grounds.

1. It might be said that the promises to Israel are conditional, and that Israel never fulfilled the conditions.

2. That they found their fulfillment in the past, in the return from the Babylonish captivity.

3. That they are to be taken figuratively, and spiritually applied to another people. [40]

But such contentions are all forestalled in the promises themselves; for (1) the promises declare that the time is coming when Israel *will* turn to the Lord, and all conditions shall be met; (2) the facts show that these promises were not fulfilled in the return from the Babylonian captivity; and (3) that the good promised them will come upon *them* as certainly and exactly as their predicted evil has befallen them.

Now a word as to Brother Boles' rebuttal arguments.

The Jews' nationality will not be destroyed by their conversion. The Scriptures quoted and cited in this article show that converted Israel will be *Israel*, as before. Indeed it is true that in Christ national distinctions are now wiped out; for all have the same standing, access, and privilege, whether they be Jew, Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, male, or female. But the gospel does not destroy the fact of their nationality, nor their peculiar position in the world, nor their station nor sex. There is nothing to prevent God from converting the nation of Israel and giving them a special place and function in the time to come, even as he promised.

As for the land promise: It may not be evident to us why Israel should be restored to their own land, but whether we can or cannot see the use and purpose of reinstating converted Israel in the land of their fathers would not alter the fact that God has so promised. We would not discredit those prophecies and promises merely because we could not see the good of them. Sufficient that God swore this land to Israel's fathers and to their seed after them for an everlasting possession, and that he promised that Israel shall have it and shall dwell in it forever-while sun and moon and stars do shine ([Jer. 31:35, 36](#)) and the earth remains. And when the first heaven and the first earth are passed away, even in the new earth they shall have their peculiar place and special mention, for the names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be written on the gates of the new Jerusalem. ([Rev. 21.](#)) [41]

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<sup>1</sup> "Of course not all Israel of preceding ages but all Israel of that and subsequent ages." (J. W. McGarvey, *Christian Standard*, 1903, page 696.) [39]



## H. LEO BOLES' SECOND NEGATIVE.

The study of these questions should do great good. I am sure that I want no victory over Brother Boll; I do not think that he wants any victory over me. We are both praying that in this investigation truth, divine truth, may prevail; that truth--the highest order of truth, Scriptural truth--may triumph over error. We are both yearning for such a victory.

Brother Boll and I want to be fair with the issue and frank with each other and the public. The brotherhood in many sections has been disturbed for some time over these questions which we are now discussing. It has been claimed by some that Brother Boll's views on these questions have been misunderstood and consequently his teaching on these questions has been misrepresented in our religious papers. Brother Boll now has an opportunity to speak fully and freely on these disputed subjects. Fairness to himself and candor to the public demand that he *now* express his "most radical views," that he keep nothing back that he believes and teaches on these subjects. The tense situation brought about over these questions and the keen interest manifested in this discussion make it imperative that Brother Boll "out with everything" that he may believe and teach on these subjects, in order that his respondent may have opportunity to examine all of his views or teachings. The brotherhood and readers should have no occasion to say that Brother Boll did not present in the discussion all that he preaches. The greatest good may be done in this discussion in restoring peace and Christian fellowship by Brother Boll's exercising the greatest candor and fairness in presenting these much-disputed questions. I believe that Brother Boll will be perfectly frank and full in his expression on these questions. I believe that he has nothing which he desires to keep from the public, but is anxious for the public to know his honest position on all of these things. [42]

The readers' attention is called again to the proposition. Brother Boll has very clearly interpreted his proposition to mean that the Scriptures teach that the Jews as a nation will be converted to Christ, and then, "as a righteous nation," be restored to Palestine. Again we call attention to the fact that this interpretation of the proposition makes it a double proposition. The first burden which the proposition imposes upon him is to prove that the mass of Jewry is to be converted to Christ; that is, "that the individuals constituting the nation will each and all accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and King." The second burden which he has is that after their conversion they are to be restored "as a righteous nation" to the land of their fathers. This double task weighs heavily upon Brother Boll. Has he met this double responsibility?

Brother Boll has classed all of these questions and set them to one side, saying that they "do not affect any outward act of religious practice, any act of obedience in work or worship; in fact, they do not refer directly to the present, but have reference to the things that are to come." However, he claims that they are important questions and "that they affect the spirit and motive and outlook of the Christian and thus may at any time come to have a great practical bearing." Since these things belong to the future, we want to avoid making them a test of fellowship and not disturb the present with things which belong to the future. We may raise the question, How important are they? Or, How important may they be "at any time?" Who is to evaluate their importance? All divine truth is important; but does the issue of this proposition lie in the realm of divine truth? We both believe that brethren should not let these things "raise barriers between brethren;" but when "barriers" have been raised over them, what should be done with them?

I am glad that Brother Boll has submitted three rules of study or interpretation of Bible questions. I commend them to Bible students. Just here permit me to restate [43] with an additional rule the ones which I have already suggested:

1. No "private interpretations" should be given to any Scripture.
2. The Scriptures must be interpreted by Scriptures; the Bible is its own commentary.
3. Figurative language must always be interpreted by literal, or in harmony with nonfigurative Scripture. Dean Trench, in commenting on this rule, says that "from the literal to the figurative, from the clearer to the more obscure, has ever been recognized as the law of Scripture interpretation." ("Notes on the Parables," page 43.)
4. In the interpretation of Scripture, we are to restrict ourselves to what is expressly revealed or declared in the Bible. (We are not to go beyond that which is written.)

Now, Brother Boll and I have clear and definite rules to guide us in arguing this proposition. We should not violate these rules. We cannot be led into a fuller knowledge of revealed truth, neither can we guide the reader into truth divine, if we violate these laws of interpretation.

The study of prophecy is a very interesting study. However, great caution should be had that we violate no plain, simple passage of Scripture in this discussion. It will help to clear the issue if we remember that there are two classes of prophecy in the Bible. The first class is fulfilled prophecy. A large portion of the prophecies in the Old Testament have been fulfilled. Such prophecies to us now have become history. Indeed, prophecy may be defined as history written before the events occur.

The second class of prophecy is unfulfilled prophecies. Much of this class of prophecy is expressed in symbols and figures. "Symbolic prophecy" is difficult to understand. Unless Jehovah gives the meaning of the symbols, no one can determine their meaning. We cannot depend upon any "private interpretations" of symbolic language. No one can know the exact meaning of unfulfilled prophecy or how it will be fulfilled. Only God can see the end of prophecy. Hence, inspiration is needed for its [44]interpretation. Look how far all the scribes, doctors, lawyers, and even the whole mass of Jewry, together with the apostles, misinterpreted the nature of Christ's kingdom. Even prophets and kings and angels did not see the things which belong to the first advent of Christ. (See [Luke 10:23, 24](#); [1 Pet. 1:10-12](#).)

Now, with the prophecy of the Bible classified into the two great classes, fulfilled and the unfulfilled, we may determine to which class the prophecies which Brother Boll wishes to use in support of his proposition belong. From the very nature of the issue involved and the admission of Brother Boll, all of his proof texts are to be found in the class of unfulfilled prophecies. The best that can be claimed for Brother Boll's position is that his proof belongs to the class of unfulfilled prophecy. Since it is not in the power of man, unaided by inspiration, to know how an unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled, and since all of Brother Boll's proof texts admittedly belong to the class of unfulfilled prophecies, then he can never know, nor can the reader ever know, whether he has given the correct interpretation of the unfulfilled prophecies which he uses

as proof of his proposition. No man can ever be sure that his interpretations of an unfulfilled prophecy is absolutely correct. Therefore, Brother Boll can never prove his proposition. No proposition which depends wholly upon unfulfilled prophecies for its proof can ever be established. The negative could let the matter rest at this point and be absolutely safe, because weak, frail man with finite mind, unaided by inspiration, can never establish a proposition which depends entirely upon the interpretation of unfulfilled symbolic prophecy for its proof.

Brother Boll admits that some of his Scripture quotations do not prove his proposition. On this point we both agree. He says that "in regard to a number of texts" I am "correct, for they were not all intended as direct proof of the proposition." Now, by this admission we have two classes of his proof texts. One class, which was [45] not "intended as direct proof of the proposition;" and the second class, those which he intends as proof of his proposition. For the sake of clearness and to avoid confusion, it would be well for him to classify his proof texts and tell the reader which ones support his proposition.

We notice again his proof texts, taking them in the order which he gives them.

[John 16:13](#). The context of this Scripture shows that Christ is here speaking to his disciples about sending the Holy Spirit to them after he ascends to his Father. [Verse 14](#) makes this clear. The Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth, and all that the Holy Spirit taught after Pentecost belongs to those things which Christ said "are to come." Certain it is that the Holy Spirit said nothing about the national conversion of the Jews and then, "as a righteous nation," restoring them to Palestine.

[Mal. 1:2; 3:6](#). This may show God's "unchanging and unalterable love and care over Israel;" but these Scriptures do not say anything about the Jews' being converted as a nation to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" restored to the promised land. This Scripture is quoted by Paul in [Rom. 9:12, 13](#).

[John 12:37, 38; Rom. 10:21](#). A simple reading of these Scriptures shows that not one word is said that can be fairly construed to support the proposition.

[Ps. 121:4](#). I quote this Scripture that the reader may see that it has no reference to the issue involved in the proposition under discussion: "Behold, he that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

[Jer. 30:11; 31:35-37](#). Nothing is said in these Scriptures which supports the proposition. The reader may verify this declaration by reading these Scriptures.

[Lev. 26:40-45](#). This Scripture is quoted in [2 Chron. 36:21; Jer. 25:9, 12; 26:7, 8; 29:12](#), as being fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity and the restoration of the Jews from that captivity. [46]

[Deut. 4:27](#). This Scripture also was fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity.

[Deut. 30:1-10](#). This Scripture has reference to the restoration of Israel from Babylonian captivity and is so quoted in [Neh. 1:8-10](#). It is applied by Nehemiah to the restoration of the Jew from Babylon.

[2 Sam. 7:10](#); [Amos 9:15](#). These Scriptures say absolutely nothing about the Jews' being converted to Christ as a nation and then "as a righteous nation" being restored to Palestine.

[Ezek. 36:26-28](#). This Scripture is quoted by Paul in [1 Thess. 4:8](#) as being fulfilled in Christianity. Nothing is said in support of the proposition.

[Zech. 12:10](#). This is declared to be fulfilled in Christ. (See [John 19:37](#).)

[Isa. 11:1-12](#) is quoted as being fulfilled in Christianity. (See [John 7:42](#); [Rom. 15:12](#); [2 Thess. 2:8](#); [Rev. 5:5](#); [19:11](#); [22:16](#).)

[Isa. 14:1](#). Brother Boll said in *Word and Work*, 1918, page 65, concerning this Scripture: "The day of Babylon's fall and the destruction of Babylon's king is also the day of Israel's restoration and reinstatement." Hence, according to Brother Boll, this prophecy was fulfilled in the restoration from Babylonian captivity. When he now applies it to a time yet future, he contradicts his former interpretation of it.

The restoration (if it may be called a restoration) of the Jews as presented in the [eleventh chapter of Romans](#) is the restoration of Jews to the favor and grace of God and not a restoration to Palestine. Israel as a nation was not cast off. (See [Rom. 11:1-5](#).) John the Baptist had warned the Jews that they would be rejected if they did not accept Christ. (See [Matt. 3:9, 10](#).) Paul tried to get them to accept Christ. ([Verse 14](#).) The gospel is declared to be the power of God unto salvation, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." There has never been [47]

a time when Jews could not accept Christ. If "grafting in" means the Jews are to be converted nationally, then the "grafting in" of Gentiles means that the Gentiles are converted nationally; again, if "grafting in" means that the Jews are to be restored to Palestine, then it must mean that Gentile Christians are to be given a home in Palestine, for the Gentiles were "grafted in." According to this reasoning, all Christians are to get a trip to Palestine.

Brother Boll gives quotations from Campbell, Scott, Lard, Milligan, and McGarvey, but he wants us to know that he is not to be held as indorsing all that these men say on other questions. We shall not attempt to get him to indorse what they say on other things. However, if these men, with their piety and scholarship, cannot be relied upon in regard to other propositions, by what reason or logic can we accept them on the point now at issue?

We now examine the points in his summary which he claims he has proved.

1. In his claim on this point he commits the fallacy of "petitio principii;" he merely begs the question.

2. This point has not been sustained. The [eleventh chapter of Romans](#) states that they are not debarred from accepting Christ; but if they should accept him, they will be restored to his favor on the basis of faith in Christ, as the Gentiles are.

3. This point is conceded. God will keep his promise to bless as surely as he will keep his promise to punish. But it has not been proved that God has promised to restore the Jews as "a righteous nation" to Palestine. This point must be proved.

4. This point has not been sustained by the Scriptures.

5. This point is only assumed and declared, but has not been proved.

Brother Boll anticipates the negative and states that his proof texts may be controverted upon three grounds. [48] First that "it might be said that the promises to Israel are conditional, and that Israel never fulfilled the conditions." This is true in regard to some of God's promises and prophecies. (See [Jer. 18:9](#).) The second, "that they found their fulfillment in the past, in the return from Babylonian captivity." This is true, as we have shown with some of his proof texts. (See [Lev. 26:40-45](#); [2 Chron. 36:21](#); [Jer. 25:9, 12](#); also [Deut. 30:3-10](#); [Neh. 1:8-10](#); [Zech. 12:10](#); [John 19:37](#).) The third ground, "that they are to be taken figuratively, and spiritually applied to another people." Some of his Scriptures are controverted on this ground, as they find their fulfillment in Christ and Christianity when God's people are declared to be the seed of Abraham by faith in Christ.

#### SOME THINGS THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS FAILED TO DO.

First, the affirmative has failed to show how the Jews are to be converted as a nation. They are now scattered among every nation under the heavens. The affirmative has failed to tell us whether they are to be gathered together and then converted or whether they will be converted in their scattered or dispersed condition and then brought together. In either case an insuperable difficulty is met. If they are to be converted in their present dispersed condition, then they are not converted *nationally*, but *individually*, and so his proposition falls.

But Brother Boll says that he means by "national conversion" that "the individuals constituting the nation would each and all accept Jesus as their Lord and King." That this point may be cleared up, I should like for him to give attention to these questions: Are the Jews to be gathered in some rendezvous before their conversion, or are they to be gathered after their conversion? Are they all to be converted at the same time? How long are they to remain out of Palestine after their conversion before they are restored to it? Are they to be restored all at [49] one time, or are they to be restored just a few at a time? How are the occupants at the time of their restoration to be dispossessed of Palestine? Are other means to be used in their conversion than are used in converting Gentiles? Have you not taught that the Jews are to be gathered back to Palestine and then converted? (This position contradicts the present contention that they are to be converted first and then restored to Palestine.) Have you not taught that the present movement among the Jews to go back to Palestine, known as the "Zionist Movement," is a fulfillment of the prophecies which you have quoted in this discussion?



Second, the affirmative has failed to recognize the double task which his proposition places upon him--namely, first to show that the Jews are to be converted nationally; and, second, to show that "as a righteous nation," after their conversion, they are to be restored to Palestine. The logic of the situation demands that the affirmative meet both members of his proposition.

Third, the affirmative has failed to tell us what advantage is to be had by restoring the Jews to Palestine. He has failed to tell us what government they will inaugurate when they are brought back to Palestine as Christians. He has failed to tell us if they will attempt to rebuild the temple, restore the ancient worship with its Aaronic priesthood and animal sacrifices. He has failed to tell us why the Christian Jew should be separated from the Christian Gentile. He has failed to show why the Jew as a Christian should have special favors and blessings in Palestine, while the Gentile Christian is deprived of these blessings.

Fourth, he has failed to meet the argument which was based upon the lesson taught by Christ to the woman of Samaria--namely, that under the Christian dispensation locality is not an essential to Christian worship, and [50] therefore no advantage is gained by the Jews' being restored to Palestine and Jerusalem.

#### MORE REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS

Paul teaches in [2 Cor. 5:16](#) that now "we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more." Since in Christ, or as Christians, we are to know no one after the flesh--that is, national distinctions in Christ are destroyed--then Christian Jews are not to be known as Jews, nor Christian Gentiles as Gentiles; they are to be known to each other as brethren in the Lord. But if Brother Boll's proposition is true, then the Christian Jews will be known "after the flesh," which contradicts Paul's statement. Therefore, Brother Boll's proposition contradicts plain, simple Scriptures and his interpretation of the prophecies cannot be correct.

The chief things which made the Jewish race a peculiar nation were circumcision, the law, genealogy, and the covenant of the Messianic hope. (See [Rom. 9:4, 5](#).) If these chief things are fulfilled or removed, then the Jews have nothing left to make them a peculiar people; or, rather, the peculiar features of their nationality have been taken from them. Circumcision of the flesh has given place to circumcision of the heart. ([Rom. 2:29](#); [Col. 2:11](#).) The law has been nailed to the cross. ([Col. 2:14](#).) Genealogies, the means of identifying them with fleshly Israel, have been abandoned by divine authority. ([1 Tim. 1:4](#); [Tit. 3:9](#).) Christ has come and fulfilled the promises of blessing the world through Abraham's seed. Now, when the Jews are converted, the old marks of their nationality are done away, and they become simply Christians on a par with all other faithful children of God. If they are restored to Palestine, then they will have to violate the inspired instruction which was given to the Christian Jew of Paul's day. Again we see that the [51] interpretation that Brother Boll gives the prophecies violates New Testament teachings and, therefore, cannot be true.

In *Word and Work*, 1917, page 387, Brother Boll says: "Israel is back in their land just before the Lord's glorious coming; the temple is rebuilt, its service resumed." This shows that Brother Boll believes, or did believe in 1917, that after the Jews are restored to Palestine they

will rebuild the temple and resume the worship. If the Jews are converted to Christ by the gospel, they become Christians, and as Christians, if they go back to their former worship, they repudiate Christ and nullify Christianity. The book of Hebrews was written as a condemnation of those who would go back to the law and its ancient worship. Hence, again, Brother Boll's position contradicts the Scripture. We must know, then, that his interpretations of the prophecies quoted are fallacious. His proposition cannot be true. [52]

### Chapter III.

#### R. H. BOLL'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE.

My dear brother says a number of things good and true in the exordium of his second negative, things with which I heartily agree--as, for example, that we are both striving for truth, not for victory, or, rather, that we both are striving for the victory of the truth. Amen. May the Lord hold us steady to this high aim. Also, that both want to be fair with the issue and frank with each other. I should be sorry if his admonition that I come "out with everything" that I believe and teach on these subjects, and that fairness to myself and candor to the public demand that I *now* express my "most radical views," should be understood by anybody as an intimation that perhaps I have not *been* frank or open, or that I hold and teach some dark, hidden doctrine which I might only breathe in secret. I want to assure the reader that such is not the case, and that surely Brother Boles meant to leave no such impression. What I have taught is open to all men. For nearly seven years on the first page of the Gospel Advocate, for more than eleven years in the Word and Work, I have spoken frankly, freely, all I believe the word of God to teach, as best I knew and could; and in secret spake I nothing. The public may be assured that in the present discussion I shall endeavor to bring out all I believe the Bible to teach on the propositions in hand. And I trust that Brother Boles will have no occasion to censure me for lack of frankness, unless by mistake he should think that I teach things which I never have believed or taught, and would expect me to "come out" with them. That I wouldn't promise to do. But I'll not shrink from bringing out "the whole counsel of God" to the best of my knowledge and ability as the proposition may demand. [53] All my desire for good will and harmony shall not prevent me from that.

Another incidental matter deserves brief notice. Brother Boles makes repeated reference to a "tense situation" that has arisen. I have been trying to make it clear that there is nothing inherent in these questions that necessitates a tense situation, or any disturbance among brethren. I have endeavored to show that these issues, not directly affecting any fundamental of the faith or outward act of obedience or Christian practice, and having reference chiefly to the things to come--that differences on such questions may exist among brethren simultaneously with loving Christian fellowship and kindly tolerance. If they occasion trouble, it must be due to a failure of Christian love somewhere; and that is far more serious than a mistake in such matters as these. For "if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge. . . . but have not *love*, I am nothing." With Brother Boles, I deplore all dissensions, alienations, strife, disturbance among brethren over any of these matters, and would be ready to help prevent or remedy such to the limit of my ability. Brother Boles is wholly right when he says that such things should not be made a test of fellowship. I hold with him absolutely in this. And when he says that no barriers should be raised between brethren over such differences as these, he is right and only right. But what if the barriers have already been raised? he asks. Then let's tear them down. Whatever has been wrongfully done ought to be undone. That is the meaning of repentance. It matters not who they are, or where, that have done such things, they ought to repent and undo the wrong.

In perusing the volumes of the Millennial Harbinger, I was deeply impressed with the freedom and frankness with which brethren of those days presented and discussed their findings in the Book of God, and that without a trace of mutual disparagement or diminution of love [54] and esteem one for another. For example, I could produce the whole affirmative argument on this proposition, the restoration of Israel, verbatim, from the columns of the Millennial Harbinger (as see, for example, the articles by J. T. Barclay, a man highly esteemed and commended by Alexander Campbell, in Millennial Harbinger, 1861, pages 61-69, and 121-128; or by President Milligan, in Millennial Harbinger, 1856, pages 569-571, and on the conversion of the Jews, pages 601-607, 664-667). Whatever dissent there may have been to such teaching among those great and worthy brethren certainly caused not a ripple of disturbance in the churches of Christ. Every man in those days felt that he was under no man's doctrinal domination. They were a free people. They proved all things and held fast that which was good, and, being agreed among themselves upon the foundations of the faith, they went along together in brotherly love. Such an attitude should be possible to-day.

Brother Boles misunderstands my reasons for quoting from Campbell, Milligan, McGarvey, and others. I explained that I did not quote them for authority, as though their diction settled a matter. We have never called any man "rabbi." But it would settle this much: that great and good brethren have held such teachings and expressed them freely, and were not held chargeable for heresy or having "wrought folly in Israel." And when I said that my agreement with the brethren quoted was not to be assumed beyond the limits of my quotation of them, it was purely lest any man should charge that I tried to leave an impression that those brethren agreed with me in everything I believed and taught. They do in most matters, I think. But neither Brother Boles nor I accept any man *in toto*--not Alexander Campbell, not McGarvey, not David Lipscomb; though we very greatly respect them. However, as says Isaac Errett (Millennial Harbinger, 1861, page 411), "when great workers like the senior editor of the Harbinger, and Dr. Barclay, [55]undertake, as earnest, practical men, to lead us into such an acquaintance with the letter and spirit of prophecy as may confirm our faith, exalt our faith, exalt our hopes, and quicken our energies, we cannot but feel a deep interest in their communications."



The most serious and far-reaching utterance thus far on the part of the negative is what was said to the effect that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood without special inspiration from God. This is so vital and radical as to demand all our attention. If that were so, we might as well drop the whole discussion right here. If Brother Boles believed this from the outset, he ought never to have entered into the discussion of these propositions at all. Indeed, if that is the case, if man cannot know apart from divine inspiration what the meaning of unfulfilled prophecy is, the negative certainly *can* rest its case right there, and the affirmative, too, and the whole thing may cease at once. If that was in Brother Boles' mind, he should have told me, for in that case there would have been but just one thing worth discussing with him, and that is whether unfulfilled prophecy can at all be understood by uninspired man; and I would have been ready, as I am ready right here and now, to drop everything else and to take the affirmative on this most fundamental question and discuss it to a finish; for apart from an agreement on this point all else we can say is utterly futile, a waste of time, words, and labor. This *must* be settled, else all our work is in vain; for if we are debating about a thing that, as Brother Boles holds, cannot be

known and understood, we have no ground left at all from which to reason. Our propositions deal with unfulfilled prophecy, not with the fulfilled; and if a man cannot understand unfulfilled prophecy without being inspired, and since neither Brother Boles nor I am inspired, the discussion cannot go on, unless Brother Boles recedes [56] from this position. I await his reply to this. The rest of the discussion depends on it. If he cannot alter his position on this matter, we must take up this question first, before we go on to anything else. I depend on the simple, straightforward meaning of God's word in the prophecies for my faith as to these matters and for the proof of these propositions; and if that is all set aside to begin with, the discussion cannot go on, for there can be nothing to discuss about, or worth discussing, except only this question whether unfulfilled prophecy can be understood by uninspired man.

The Church of Rome has for centuries discredited the Bible to the common people, virtually taking it out of their hands by telling them that only an infallible church (ultimately the infallible Pope alone) can say what it means, and that all the meaning common individuals can get out of it is "private interpretation," and worthless; that the infallible Book requires an inspired, infallible interpreter. I thought I had got away from that sort of thing when more than thirty years ago I left the Church of Rome and became a simple Christian, taking the whole Bible for my creed. If we should now take up with that Romanist idea, it would not leave us even an infallible pope's interpretation. We would be deprived of Scripture and interpretation both, and prophecy would be worse than a blank, for a blank would not lead any one astray; but God's word of prophecy, if uninterpretable by uninspired man, would lead any uninspired man that would attempt to understand it into error. I believed that *all Scripture* inspired of God is profitable for teaching and for instruction in righteousness, and that all of it is needed to furnish us completely unto every good work. Was I wrong? Has it come to the pass, as God foretold in his word, that "all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed: and the book is delivered [57] to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned?" ([Isa. 29:11, 12.](#)) Do we again excuse ourselves from God's word in such fashion? I trust not.

And if God's word of unfulfilled prophecy were not to be understood by uninspired man, why did the Lord *blame* Israel for not understanding it? For "because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath," they "fulfilled them by condemning him." ([Acts 13:27.](#)) It was then, as now, not so much a question of interpreting, but of *believing* what God had said. "Ye search the scriptures," said the Lord Jesus to the Jews, "and these are they which bear witness of me." ([John 5:39.](#)) And again: "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he wrote of me." ([Verse 46.](#)) "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe *in all* that the prophets have spoken!" ([Luke 24:25.](#)) The reason why priests, scribes, disciples, etc., had any misconceptions of Christ and his kingdom was not laid to their inability to understand, but due to their failure to believe in *all* that their prophets had spoken. Some things they *did* believe and had no trouble. For example, they told Herod instantly where the Christ was to be born; and although they were uninspired, and although they had nothing to show for it but an unfulfilled prophecy from Micah, and although they had no knowledge of any actual fulfillment of such a thing, they understood it perfectly, and their interpretation was entirely correct, because they took God's word at its plain meaning. ([Matt. 2:4-6; see Mic. 5:2.](#)) In certain other matters (for example, Christ's humiliation--[Isa 53](#)) they were not so willing to believe God's word of prophecy just as it

stood, but fixed things up more to their liking. Hence their errors. But God's word of predictive prophecy was given to be understood and believed at its own fair meaning. Indeed, all that we know and believe and teach of the hereafter, of the coming of Christ, of our [58] resurrection, of judgment, of the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, of heaven, of hell, of eternity, are matters of unfulfilled prophecy. And we have taken them very much as they stood. But if those statements cannot be understood by uninspired man, we are left in the dark concerning much that our hearts hold dear.

Nor am I at all going to concede to my respondent that "much" of unfulfilled prophecy is "symbolic." Some of it is; but not all, nor even the most. Nor would I concede that even symbolic prophecy cannot be understood; for in most cases the significance of the symbol is pointed out to us in the Scriptures. If by "private interpretation" Brother Boles means arbitrary, irresponsible, lawless imputations of meanings which the language does not warrant, I am opposed to that as much as he is, and with all my heart. But I am not willing to wipe out any Scripture or class of Scriptures, *a priori*, as uninterpretable, and therefore as worthless for purposes of testimony.

(Brother Boles will not, of course, make a point of his statement that "no one can know the *exact* meaning of unfulfilled prophecy, or *how* it will be fulfilled." We may know few things outside mathematics with absolute exactness; and no Scripture is known in all its infinite profundity; but we can know statements of unfulfilled prophecy with the same degree of correctness as we know other truths of God's revelation. And as to the *how* of fulfillment, that is of very secondary moment, though sometimes even that is revealed; but the first and most important thing we are after is the *what* of it.)

I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not saying that the debate must stop, or that I want it to stop; I do not, for it is a precious opportunity to bring out the teachings of God's word before many readers on points of great and growing interest. But this I say: before we can go on to anything else, this point must be cleared up. Brother Boles must concede that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood according to the common standards [59] that govern the interpretation of Scripture, and, indeed, of all language. I ask for no privilege of "private interpretation;" but I do insist upon an acceptance of God's word as testimony to the proposition, in accordance with the fair meaning of its statements. If that be denied, we have no standing ground left for further discussion of these subjects.



This being my last affirmative on this proposition, I present once more the sum of all I believe I have established from God's word. The proposition was: "*The Scriptures teach that Israel (fleshly descendants of Abraham through Jacob) shall be nationally restored.*"

At the close of the first affirmative I stated:

We have seen from the testimony of the Scriptures:

1. That the nation of Israel scattered by God's hand shall by his hand be recovered and regathered and restored to their own land.
2. That they shall accept their Messiah, be converted and saved.
3. That all the blessing and promises shall come unto that people just as surely and as literally as their predicted punishments have come upon them.
4. That once so restored, they shall never again fall away or be removed from their land.
5. That their national conversion and restoration will be a blessing to all the world.

On the first of the above items my respondent says it is a "*petitio principii*"--that is, "begging the question." Does he mean that no proof, or no valid proof, was offered? Here is the Scripture proof I presented:

"For, lo, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will turn again the captivity of *my people Israel and Judah* [the ten-tribe kingdom and the two-tribe kingdom], saith Jehovah; and I will cause *them* to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall *possess* it." ([Jer. 30:3.](#)) "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock." ([Jer. 31:10.](#)) [60]

Who scattered Israel? Who, then, shall gather him? To what land will he cause them to return? Shall they then *possess* it? Have they ever been so regathered? Have they ever *possessed* their land again since the king of Assyria and Nebuchadnezzar took it away from them twenty-five hundred years ago? Have these things ever been fulfilled? No--not on the return from Babylon nor at any other time. I challenge my respondent to show that they have. Unless he disavows the manifest meaning of these Scriptures which they bear on the face of them, he must admit that the first item of my summary is true.

On the second item he says: "This point has not been sustained." [Rom. 11](#) is the answer. There it is stated, not only that the Jew is "not debarred from accepting Christ," but that some day "all Israel shall be saved."

The third item he concedes. [Jer. 32:42](#) is crystal-clear and conclusive on that point. But he says that it has not been proved that God has promised to restore the Jews as "a righteous nation" to Palestine. Well, items one and two are sufficient for that. I note here my respondent's insistence that I explain whether the Jews are "to be gathered in some rendezvous before their conversion, or are they to be gathered after their conversion? Are they all to be converted at the same time?" etc. But, what has that to do with our point? I contend only that the Scriptures teach that they will be restored, and that, in order to that restoration, they must first be converted and *will* be. *Regathering* in itself is not necessarily *restoration*. The Jews are regathering to their land now to a very marked extent; yet they are not restored nor being restored. "Have you not taught," Brother Boles asks me outright, "that the present movement among the Jews to go back to Palestine, known as the 'Zionist Movement,' is a fulfillment of the prophecies which you have quoted in this discussion?" I happen to have taught the exact opposite of that, as Brother Boles

may [61] see by turning to my words in Word and Work, volume of 1926, page 229: "It should be clearly understood that no one claims that the present returning of Jews to Palestine fulfills the restoration promises made to Israel in the Old Testament prophecies."

On item 4 he says: "This point has not been sustained by Scripture." That again depends on whether the passages adduced are to be taken at their manifest meaning. [2 Sam. 7:10 and Amos 9:15 and Joel 3:17](#) show that Israel's ultimate happy estate will be permanent. The very fact that they shall not be rooted up nor removed from their land any more forever shows that they will forevermore be true to their God. (Comp. [Jer. 32:39, 40; Ezek. 37:23](#).)

Regarding item 5 he says: "This point"--that Israel's conversion and restoration will be a blessing to all the world--"is only assumed and declared, but has not been proved." Here again the simple statement of [Rom. 11:11, 12, and 15](#) is sufficient. Speaking of disobedient and rejected Israel, Paul says: "I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? . . . For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" The conversion of Israel therefore marks a turning point in the affairs of the world.



I have reached or even exceeded the limit of my article. I would, in conclusion, point out that my respondent should not set aside any passage of Scripture as having nothing to do with the proposition because it does not bear *directly* on the issue. There is contributory evidence as well as direct. None of the passages I have quoted at [62] any time is without more or less vital reference to the proposition.

A passage of prophecy may have application in many instances of analogous situation in past or present, but such applications do not do away with the full, fair sense of the prophecy. It is never finally fulfilled or exhausted until it is fulfilled in all its meaning.

Brother Boles, referring to Word and Work, 1917, page 387, says: "This shows that Brother Boll believes, or did believe in 1917, that after the Jews are restored to Palestine they will rebuild the temple and resume the worship." My respondent seems to assume that the mere regathering, such as we are witnessing now, is the same thing as their "restoration." They may go back, indeed they are going, and to a greater extent, no doubt, will go back, in unbelief. But that is *not* the restoration. The latter involves their conversion, regeneration, possession of their own land by way of divine gift, and all the promised glory and blessedness. An examination of the connection from which he quotes me will show that I was speaking of unbelieving, not of converted and restored, Israel. In the preceding article on the same theme (Word and Work, 1917, page 354) the point is more fully set forth.

In a similar way Brother Boles quotes me from Word and Work, 1918, page 65, as saying that [Isa. 14:1](#) was fulfilled in the restoration from Babylonian captivity, and says that when I now apply it to the future I am contradicting my former interpretation of it. But the very next few



words following say that "the time-note in [Isa. 14:3](#) shows *that this refers to nothing in the past;*" and then I went on to show that it was *not* fulfilled in the return from Babylonian captivity. (Word and Work, 1917, pages 65, 66.)

The Scriptures brought forward in Brother Boles' rebuttal argument please me well. I do believe that all [63] Christians have equal standing and access, and that we know no man after the flesh; that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, male or female; that Christ is all and in all. Yet this fact does not destroy the fact of race or position. Jewish brethren were recognized as such in the church, even specially honored in some regards (as see [Rom. 15:26, 27](#)); and bond servants in Christ were to be subject to their masters, all the more so when these were brethren ([1 Tim. 6:2](#)); and the husband was made the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and wives were admonished to be in subjection to their own husbands, as unto the Lord ([Eph. 5:22, 23](#)); and to each in his special relation special duties and privileges are assigned. If these things are true, and in view of the inequalities in the matter of advantages and position which have always existed among those who are Christ's from the first, and which do not conflict with the Scriptures referred to by Brother Boles, I would see no reason why God should not appoint a special place and function to the converted nation of Israel, especially since he has over and over promised to do so. [64]

## H. LEO BOLES' THIRD NEGATIVE.

This closes the discussion on the first proposition. Three articles each were to be written on this proposition. The reader now has before him all the proof that Brother Boll has to offer in support of his proposition.

In his last article no new argument is made, no new Scripture presented. All that is germane to the proposition has been answered, and I am willing to let the public be the judge as to whether the Scriptures teach that the Jews will be converted to Christ nationally and then "as a righteous nation" be restored to Palestine.

I did not intend to intimate that Brother Boll would not be frank and fair in expressing himself on these questions. I regret it if any one received such an impression. In concluding the paragraph I said: "I believe that Brother Boll will be perfectly frank and full in his expression on these questions. I believe that he has nothing which he desires to keep from the public, but is anxious for the public to know his honest position on all of these things."

One other point needs attention just here. "The tense situation" in the brotherhood is the cause of the keen interest now manifested in this discussion. This is very evident. It does not come within the scope of the duty of the negative to say who is responsible for the present disturbed condition. We both know that there exists alienation and disturbance in the brotherhood. We both deplore the strife and division which exist and are trying to discover the proper field for these questions. We have found that they do not "directly affect any fundamental of the faith or outward act of obedience or Christian practice;" that they "have reference chiefly to the things to come." Brethren should not be disturbed over these questions; churches should not be divided over them. I do not believe that the Scriptures teach that the Jews will be converted to Christ nationally and then "as a righteous nation" be restored to Palestine; Brother Boll [65] does believe this; yet this is no ground for our breaking fellowship with each other. Since these questions "do not directly affect any fundamental of the faith or outward act of obedience or Christian practice," they should not disturb any one; and "if they occasion trouble, it must be due to a failure of Christian love somewhere," or a failure to keep these questions where they belong. Brethren do wrong in letting these things disturb the peace of God's people. In matters of opinion, we should adopt this motto: "Let us agree to differ and resolve to love."

I agree with Brother Boll that brethren differed seventy-five years ago as widely on these questions as brethren differ now on them; yet they esteemed each other then as brethren in the Lord and worked and worshiped in full fellowship with each other. Brethren should do the same to-day. Yet the older brethren recognized the danger of human interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy, for Isaac Errett said: "There is what Isaac Taylor calls 'the enthusiasm of prophetic interpretation;' of which we have a great horror, for we have seen much of its mischievous workings." (Millennial Harbinger, 1861, page 410.) He recognized that much harm could come from "private interpretation" of unfulfilled prophecy, and we should be warned to-day of "its mischievous workings."

The negative has pointed out the fact that there are two classes of prophecy in the Bible—fulfilled and unfulfilled. It was further emphasized that Brother Boll must rely entirely upon the

interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy for the support of his proposition. Brother Boll now admits that all of his proof texts fall in the class of the unfulfilled prophecies. The statement was made that God only can see the end of prophecy; hence, inspiration is needed for a correct interpretation of it. Now, since it is not in the power of man, unaided by inspiration, to know how an unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled, then [66] no one can know whether a correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy has been given; no one can ever be sure that his interpretations of an unfulfilled prophecy are absolutely correct. *No proposition which depends wholly upon interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies for its proof can ever be established.* Therefore, Brother Boll can never prove his proposition.

Brother Boll feels the force of this argument. He asks that I recede from this position. I cannot. I believe it to be true. If it be true, Brother Boll is correct when he says: "This must be settled, else all our work is in vain." If this be true, then he "has no ground left at all from which to reason." He proposes to drop his present proposition--in fact, the entire discussion--and take up this new issue and debate it. This shows that he feels the mighty, crushing force of this argument upon his proposition. But I am not willing to let him escape just here and discuss a new issue now. I shall be glad to discuss that issue with him later, if he so desires, but cannot let him now detour around an insurmountable difficulty. I cannot recede from this argument, neither can I let him escape from his present embarrassing situation. This is no time for mercy or leniency to be given to his proposition. Truth demands that error must surrender unconditionally. Brother Boll sees clearly and frankly admits that he cannot prove his proposition until he has proved another proposition. He admits that he has not proved the other proposition, but is now willing to stop and prove it. Since the proof of his present proposition depends upon the admitted unproved proposition, he thus admits that he has not proved and cannot prove his present proposition. Again we both agree.

I am glad that Brother Boll has narrowed, limited, and restricted his field of Scripture proof texts to the class of unfulfilled prophecies. He must now busy himself with interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy. What guarantee can he give us that his interpretations are [67]

I believe in studying the Bible, the entire Bible; I try to teach the entire Bible; I try to teach the prophecies. I have never discouraged any one's studying any portion of the Bible. Brother Boll errs in his reasoning on this point. His fallacy is called "ignoratio elenchi"--ignores the point in dispute. I stated that finite man, unaided by inspiration, could never know when the correct interpretation of an unfulfilled prophecy was given. Brother Boll changes this point and leaves the impression that I claim that man is unable to understand the Bible without an inspired interpreter. The reader will see the difference in my claim for an inspired interpreter of unfulfilled prophecies, which are a small portion of the Bible, and inspired interpretation of the entire Bible.

The prophecies concerning Christ's first advent were not understood until after their fulfillment; they were not even understood by the prophets who uttered them. Take this one for example: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and [68] bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." ([Isa. 7:14.](#)) This prophecy was fulfilled in Christ; but no uninspired Jew who knew that the word of God abounded in metaphors and figures of speech could have told just how it would be fulfilled. No one could have detailed the

visit of the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, his appearance to Mary, her espousal to Joseph, the trip to Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus, and his manger-cradle. Even if he had foretold all of this in his interpretation of that prophecy, how would the people then living have known that it was a true interpretation? We know it now because inspiration has said: "Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet." ([Matt. 1:22.](#)) Again, take this prophecy: "Thus saith Jehovah: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not." ([Jer. 31:15.](#)) The fulfillment of this prophecy was a real occurrence, but it was not fulfilled according to the natural import of words. Instead of its being in "Ramah," it was in Bethlehem; and instead of "Rachel," one woman, weeping, many mothers wept. Could any Jew without inspiration see hundreds of years beforehand that Herod would order all the male children under two years old in Bethlehem killed and thus fulfill this prophecy? The language of this prophecy is figurative, and no one could know of its fulfillment had not Matthew said: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet." ([Matt. 2:17.](#)) Many other examples could be given.

God has seen fit to keep some things in mystery. He said: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end. . . . And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end." ([Dan. 12:4-9.](#)) In commenting on [Isa. 29:11, 12](#) as quoted by Brother Boll, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say: "Prophecy remained [69]comparatively a sealed volume until Jesus, who alone is worthy to open the seals." Truly, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." ([Rev. 19:10.](#))

Brother Boll's reference to [Luke 24:25; John 5:39, 46; and Acts 13:27](#) does not weaken this position. The difference between those mentioned in these Scriptures and us is that Christ with the apostles fulfilled the prophecies and pointed it out to those people and told them that Christ was fulfilling the prophecies, but they would not believe him. The prophecies which Brother Boll is using are not fulfilled, and his interpretation of their fulfillment is not guided by inspiration. If an inspired man were with us and telling us that these unfulfilled prophecies were being fulfilled and we refused to believe it, then we would be in the class with those mentioned above. They did not know Christ because they did not believe that he was fulfilling their prophecies; he was not fulfilling the prophecies as they understood them. Their rejection of Christ is stated here as the cause of their failure to understand the prophecies which were fulfilled in him.

Brother Boll fails to distinguish between a promise and a prophecy. We can believe the prophecies will be fulfilled and yet reject "private interpretation" of prophecies. I do not class what is taught in the New Testament about heaven, hell, eternity, the judgment, etc., in the same class of unfulfilled prophecies to which the restoration of the Jews belong; however, all that we know or can know now about heaven, hell, resurrection, judgment, eternity, future life, and the second Advent of Christ must be learned only from *inspired writers*.

#### BROTHER BOLL'S FIVE POINTS.

1. His Scriptures quoted here were fulfilled in the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. He has not proved beyond a doubt that they refer to a future time. [70] 2. [Rom. 11.](#) The Jews who are converted to Christ are restored to his favor on the basis of faith in Christ as all

Gentile Christians are. "All Israel shall be saved." If this means that the Jews are to be converted to Christ nationally, then "the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" ([verse 25](#)) means that all Gentiles will be converted nationally. So we will have universal salvation. The ten tribes, as a nation, had no hand in the rejection and crucifixion of Christ; hence, they are not included in Paul's discussion in the [eleventh chapter of Romans](#).

3. This point was conceded, but it has not yet been established that God has promised to convert the Jews to Christ nationally and then restore them "as a righteous nation" to Palestine, and until this is done this point cannot be claimed to support Brother Boll's proposition.

4. [2 Sam. 7:10](#); [Amos 9:15](#); and [Joel 3:17](#) do not teach this point. If this point could be proved, then it would prove the impossibility of God's children apostatizing or falling from grace. It would mean that fleshly Israel should continue in Palestine forever and forever. Then what about Peter's statement which says, "by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?" ([2 Pet. 3:12, 13](#).) If Brother Boll could establish this point, it would destroy the possibility of "new heavens and a new earth," or else the "new earth" would have a province called "Palestine" filled with Jews. I do not believe that the Scriptures teach this.

5. [Rom. 11](#) does not prove this point, and Brother Boll has not written a dozen sentences trying to prove this point.

#### MORE REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS.

Be it remembered that Brother Boll has interpreted his proposition to mean that the Scriptures teach that the Jews are to be nationally converted to Christ and then [71] "as a righteous nation" restored to Palestine. Attention is now called to the fact that two and one-half tribes of Israel never had an inheritance in Palestine; the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh were never located in Palestine, they received no inheritance in Palestine, and therefore they never could be restored to Palestine. A people who had never been in Palestine, had never received an inheritance in Palestine, could not be "restored" to Palestine. So Brother Boll's proposition falls when he attempts to include all fleshly Israel in his proposition.

Again, the northern kingdom or the ten tribes were completely lost when they were carried out of Palestine. They were never to be restored. The prophet Hosea said: "For yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and I will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease. . . . For I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, that I should in any wise pardon them." ([Hos. 1:4, 6](#).) The prophet continues and says: "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them." ([Verse 7](#).) "Maurer translates according to the primary meaning, 'no more will I have mercy on the house of Israel, so as to pardon them.'" (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown.) So the ten tribes were destroyed; their kingdom was to cease; and Jehovah would never pardon them. Brother Boll cannot include either the two and one-half tribes which located out of Palestine or the ten tribes which constituted the kingdom of Israel in his proposition. Again his proposition fails.

No Jew was entitled to any part of Palestine, except the portion of his father. The Jews were not permitted to transfer the inheritance of their fathers from one tribe to another. (See [Lev. 25:14-17, 25-28.](#)) This is emphasized in Naboth's refusing to sell his vineyard to King Ahab. ([1 Kings 21:3.](#)) When the Jews came out of Babylonian captivity, they observed this law and [72] sought out the cities and estates of their fathers. (See [Ez. 2:70.](#)) Ezekiel said to the Jews while they were in Babylonian captivity that Jehovah would restore them and cause each one to "inhabit after your former estate," or "after your old estate." ([Ezek. 36:11.](#)) Now, since the Jews have lost their genealogies, and as Christian Jews are forbidden to keep up their genealogy, then how can they be restored to Palestine and given their father's estate according to genealogies?

The genealogy of the Jew has been lost. Where would he go should he return to Palestine? In 1919 Brother Boll taught that "the country, being under control again of the Jews, regathered in unbelief (as we see them regathering to-day), would be under Jewish law," etc. (Word and Work, 1919, page 37.) Here he teaches that the Jew will be gathered back to Palestine "in unbelief." Now he argues that they are to be converted to Christ first and then "as a righteous nation" restored to Palestine. Which position is correct? It will not do to try to make a distinction here between "gathered back" and restored.

Dr. J. T. Barclay says: "That Israel, thus territorially reinstated, is to be also politically reestablished and completely reënfanchised, is sufficiently obvious from the declarations of the Lord already cited." (Millennial Harbinger, 1861, page 13.) He then quotes the same Scriptures which Brother Boll has used in support of his proposition. Brother Boll interprets his unfulfilled prophecies to mean that the Jews are first to be converted to Christ nationally and then "as a righteous nation" restored to Palestine. Dr. Barclay used the same Scriptures and interpreted them to teach that the Jews will be "territorially reinstated" and then submit to the supreme authority of the King of kings. Which shall we believe to have the correct interpretation, if either?

Jacob Creath used the same Scriptures to prove that [72] the Jews will first be restored to Palestine and then converted to Christ that Brother Boll uses to prove that they will first be converted and then restored to Palestine. (Millennial Harbinger, 1854, page 326.)

Robert Milligan said in 1856: "The general conversion of the Jews may not be far distant; and from the chronology of Daniel, we are inclined to the opinion that it will take place about A. D. 1922, or sixty-six years from this time." (Millennial Harbinger, 1856, page 607.) He has the Jews gathered back in Palestine and then has them converted. (Millennial Harbinger, 1856, page 663.) Brother Milligan used the same Scriptures which Brother Boll has used in this discussion. He interpreted them to mean that the Jews would be converted nationally after their restoration to Palestine, and fixed the date in the year 1922. The year 1922 has passed and we are five years this side of that date, and Brother Boll is interpreting the same Scriptures differently, and must necessarily look to a different date for their fulfillment. Which interpreter shall we accept?

I stand corrected by Brother Boll on his comment in Word and Work of 1918 on [Isa. 14:1.](#) But he does say that "Israel is back in their land just before the Lord's glorious coming; the temple is rebuilt; its service resumed." (Word and Work, 1917, page 387.) This shows that at that

time Brother Boll taught that the Jews were to be brought back to their native land and that they would rebuild the temple and resume their worship; that this would occur just before the glorious coming of our Lord. In affirming his proposition, he has repeatedly stated that they are to be converted to Christ first and then restored to their native land. It has been pointed out that if they are converted to Christ by the gospel, they cannot go back to the temple worship without repudiating Christ. They cannot exist in Palestine "as a righteous nation" and at the same time reject Christ. [73]

#### SUMMARY.

1. Brother Boll's proposition imposed upon him two heavy burdens: the first, to prove that the Jews were to be converted to Christ nationally; the second, that they were "as a righteous nation" to be restored to Palestine after their conversion. Has he sustained his proposition under these two burdens?

2. The negative has showed that the gospel of Christ does not convert people *nationally*, but it converts people *individually*. Hence, Brother Boll fails to prove the first part of his proposition.

3. The Jews are now scattered among all nations. It is impossible for them to be converted nationally without bringing them together as a nation. The affirmative has failed to tell whether they are to be converted before they are gathered together or after they are gathered into some rendezvous.

4. The affirmative has failed to show whether the Jews will be restored to Palestine a few at a time or as one large colony transferred to Palestine. This is germane to the proposition, since he claims that they are to be restored "as a righteous nation" to Palestine.

5. The New Testament teaches ([Eph 2:14-17](#)) that the "middle wall of partition" which separated Jews and Gentiles has been broken down, so that no distinction is to be made between Jew and Gentile Christian. If the Jews are converted to Christ, they are to be known no longer as Jews, but as Christians.

6. Again, it has been urged that there is no more Scripture or reason for the converted Jew of to-day or to-morrow being restored to Palestine than there was for the converted Jews in the early days of Christianity to be restored to Palestine. Why should the Christian Jew of to-morrow have any advantage over the Christian Jew of Paul's day? The affirmative has failed to answer this.

7. The argument was made on [John 4:21-24](#) that Jesus [75] taught that the hour would come when locality would not be an essential element in Christian worship; hence, no advantage to be gained by going to Jerusalem or Palestine to worship. The affirmative has not even referred to this argument throughout this discussion.

8. Again, the affirmative has been urged to tell what kind of government will be adopted by the Jews when they "as a righteous nation" are restored to Palestine. The Jews now speak no



common language in their dispersed condition. If they go back to Palestine, what will be their common language? What will be their official language?

Many insuperable difficulties have impeded the progress of the affirmative in this discussion. His other propositions depend upon the proof of this proposition. We let the reader judge if he has proved this one. [76]

## Chapter IV.

### R. H. BOLL'S FOURTH AFFIRMATIVE.

#### REBUTTAL.

Having been granted the privilege of a short rejoinder by way of reply to the new matter in Brother Bole's third (and final) negative, I proceed to notice the additional arguments brought forward.

1. It is argued that two and one-half tribes of Israel never had any inheritance in Palestine--to wit, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, whose inheritance lay beyond the Jordan. But the land of the promise was not confined to the Palestine west of the Jordan. It extended "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." ([Gen. 15:18](#).) A glance at the map will reveal how vast an area beyond the Jordan belongs to Israel's promised land.

2. In the very same chapter in which God says by Hosea that he will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel (the northern kingdom) he predicts also their future restoration. "The children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel." Then the judgment of "Lo-ammi" ("not my people") and "Lo-ruhamah" ("not shown mercy") will be rescinded for them: "Say ye unto your brethren, *Ammi*["my people"]; and to your sisters, *Ruhamah* ["shown mercy"]." The entire context shows this. For Hosea is especially prophesying to and about the northern kingdom--i. e., the ten tribes--and predicts their restoration. ([Hos. 2:14-23](#); [3:4, 5](#).) This reunion of Israel with Judah and their joint restoration is also and plainly foretold in [Jer. 31:1](#); [50:4, 5](#); [Ezek. 37:21-24](#); [Isa. 11:11-13](#), a prophecy not of any past event, but of Messianic times ("in *that* day"--that is, [77] according to [Isa. 11:1-10](#), in the time of Christ's reign). This is yet to be fulfilled.

3. "The genealogy of the Jews has been lost," says Brother Boles. "Where would he go should he return to Palestine?" The difficulty is God's, not ours. If God said, "Lo, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will turn again the captivity of my people *Israel and Judah*, . . . and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it" ([Jer. 30:3](#))--why, I have no doubt God will have his own ways and means to carry out his promise to the letter, even though it may seem impossible to our eyes. "Is anything too hard for Jehovah?"

4. Even if Brethren Barclay, Creath, and Milligan had differed radically on those Scriptures (I do not see any serious differences), that would not discredit those Scriptures nor prove them uninterpretable. Among our own circle of brethren I can collate widely differing views on important Bible subjects; yet we hold that the Scriptures can be understood. Again I must remind my brother that it matters not at all when, where, how, Israel is regathered or converted. I think I could easily justify all my former utterances on the subject and show how an unbelieving contingent shall have gone back to the Land before the great restoration takes place, and how I distinctly pointed out in the Word and Work that such a regathering as the present one, for

instance (nor any mere return in unbelief), is not the promised restoration. But what has that to do with the proposition and the issue before us? [78]

## H. LEO BOLES' FOURTH NEGATIVE.

When the discussion began, Brother Boll and I agreed to write three articles each on "The Restoration of Israel." There was no agreement as to conforming to any rules of discussion. Each regards the other as a Christian gentleman; neither wishes any advantage over the other. The negative brought in new matter in his last, and Brother Boll asked for a reply to the new matter that was introduced. This request was cheerfully granted; hence, this additional matter is submitted to the public.

The negative could let what Brother Boll has said pass without any reply whatsoever, because he has failed to prove his proposition and has failed to meet the arguments which the negative has presented. When Brother Boll interpreted his proposition to mean that Israel would be converted "nationally" to Christ and then "as a righteous nation" restored to Palestine, he shouldered a double burden. He could not carry either burden. He has failed to prove that the Jews are to be "converted to Christ nationally;" he has failed to prove that the Jews "as a righteous nation" are to be restored to Palestine after their conversion. So the negative could very well make no reply to this last brief affirmative. But, for the sake of clearness, a few comments are given in reply to his additional affirmative.

1. The argument was made that two and one-half tribes were never located in Palestine, and therefore that portion of Israel could not be "restored" to Palestine. The additional argument was made that Brother Boll could not prove his proposition, since his proposition required that he prove that *all Israel* would be restored to Palestine. He replies by saying that Jehovah has promised land east of the Jordan to Abraham's seed. This is true, but the promise was conditional. (See [1 Sam. 2:30](#).) Israel never fulfilled the conditions, and therefore never [79] received as an inheritance all that was promised to Abraham. True, David and Solomon reigned over the country eastward to the river Euphrates, but Israel never received it as an inheritance. The nations which occupied it only paid tribute to David and Solomon. It is one thing for Jehovah to promise the land conditionally to Abraham's seed and quite another thing to promise to "restore" Israel *unconditionally to a land which they had never inherited*. Brother Boll fails to make this distinction.

2. The argument was made that the northern kingdom, or ten tribes of Israel, had utterly been destroyed and that Jehovah had said: "I will . . . cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease." ([Hos. 1:4](#).) Jehovah said also: "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, that I should in any wise pardon them." ([Hos. 1:6](#).) The northern kingdom of ten tribes should be destroyed (and was destroyed) and Jehovah would never pardon them. All traces and identity of the, ten tribes have been lost forever; Jehovah has caused them to cease and will never restore them. Paul says that [Hos. 2:23](#) is fulfilled in Christianity. Hence, it cannot apply to the fleshly restoration of Israel. ([Rom. 9:25, 26](#).) Fleshly Israel gives place to spiritual Israel. God's people, both Jews and Gentiles, are called "the Israel of God." ([Gal. 6:16](#).) Abraham's seed who shall receive the blessings are those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No Scripture teaches that the Jews are now to receive any special favors. God accepts all who believe in Christ as his children and calls them "the seed of Abraham." (See [Rom. 9:6, 7](#); [Gal. 3:7, 29](#).)

3. Not only did the negative say, "The genealogy of the Jews has been lost," but also said that "Jehovah had instructed them not to keep up their genealogy;" that "genealogies, the means of identifying the Jews with fleshly Israel, have been abandoned by divine authority." ([1 Tim. 1:4](#); [Tit. 3:9](#).) So, if the Jews were to be [80] converted nationally and restored to Palestine, they would have to go back each one to his father's estate; and since all genealogies have been abandoned, the Jew would never know how to locate his father's estate should he go back. Brother Boll replies that this "difficulty is God's, not ours." Maybe so. But Brother Boll cannot get out of his difficulty by attempting to place it on Jehovah. This is a difficulty with Brother Boll in proving his proposition, and he has failed to meet this argument.

4. The argument was made that Dr. Barclay, Jacob Creath, and Robert Milligan had all interpreted the same prophecies which Brother Boll has used in this discussion and had given them entirely different interpretations to that which Brother Boll has given. They interpreted these prophecies to mean that Israel, or the Jews, would be gathered back to Palestine first and then converted to Christ. Robert Milligan even fixed the date as the year 1922. Brother Boll replies--and that correctly, too--that the radical differences in the interpretations of these prophecies should not discredit the Scriptures. No, these brethren's differing widely from one another, and also differing as widely from Brother Boll in the interpretations of these prophecies, does not discredit these Scriptures, but their different interpretations do show one thing--namely, that man is unable to give a correct interpretation of prophecies which he claims have as yet not been fulfilled. What guarantee can Brother Boll give us that his interpretations are infallibly correct? How do we know whether to accept his interpretation or the other brethren's interpretations? We cannot accept all of them, because they contradict each other.

5. Quotations were given from Brother Boll's former writings showing that he had occupied a different position to that which he now claims in this discussion. To this he replies, "I think I could easily justify all my former utterances on the subject," but he does not think that such has anything "to do with the proposition and the [81] issue before us." Well, it seems to me that it does have some bearing upon the proposition which is now before us. He is now claiming that the Jews are to be converted to Christ nationally and then "as a righteous nation" be restored to Palestine. He argued in *Word and Work*, 1919, page 37, that "the time referred to ([Matt. 24:19-21](#)) is the beginning of the unexampled tribulation that is to break upon the world, upon Judea and Jerusalem especially, just before the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ. ([Matt. 24:29, 30](#).) The ones to whom the Lord gives this counsel of immediate flight are those believers in him who shall be residing in Judea at that time. When they shall see 'the abomination' (the idol-image) that maketh desolate standing in the then reconstructed temple, they must flee without delay. The country, being under control again of the Jews, regathered in unbelief (as we see them regathering to-day), would be under Jewish law; the Sabbath day, therefore, would offer little chance for quick departure," etc. Now, it will be interesting to see how Brother Boll can justify this utterance with his present contention. In 1919 he taught that the Jews are to be "regathered in unbelief;" in this discussion he contends that they are to be converted to Christ first and then regathered in Palestine. He may be able to see the consistency of these two contentions, but I do not. So closes the discussion on our first proposition. [82]

# PROPOSITION II.

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

**Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in Dan. 2: 35, 44 began to take place on the day of Pentecost."  
H. Leo Boles affirms; R. H. Boll denies.**

### Chapter V.

#### H. LEO BOLES' FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.

We begin the discussion of this proposition with the prayer that all may be led into a fuller knowledge of the truth and that all may be of the same mind; that good may be done and God glorified. This is an important question. It is not to be classed with the other question, the restoration of the Jews to Palestine. The proof of this proposition does not depend upon uninspired interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy.

Lovers of the truth are always under obligation to search for the truth as revealed in the word of God. True lovers of the truth cannot be loyal to the truth without defending it as opportunity is offered. All the children of God are under moral and spiritual obligation to contend earnestly for the truth in the spirit of the Master and in the interest of souls.

It seems strange that any member of the church of Christ should doubt this proposition. All the brethren have been harmonious from the beginning of the Restoration Movement in their proclamation of this phase of divine truth. Only a discordant voice here and there has been heard against the truth of this proposition. Yea, all of the scholarship of the world which has spoken and written on this question concedes that the kingdom of God has been established on earth. The whole system of the Christian religion is based upon the fundamental truth that the kingdom of God is now in existence. We know that a divine proposition cannot be established by [83] human testimony or the scholarship of the world. This reference is made to the scholarship of the world only to show that we are in good company in affirming the present proposition.

Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#) began to take place on the day of Pentecost."

The wording of the proposition is not so clear and definite; however, we have the liberty of explaining just what we mean by the proposition. The terms of the proposition are simple enough, but the arrangement of them in the proposition may be the occasion for confusion. By "Scriptures" we mean the Old and New Testaments; "teach" means to instruct by precept, example, or necessary inference; "event" is explained by the words "signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#);" "the image" is also designated in the proposition as the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream; "began to take place" means began to be fulfilled--not necessarily completely fulfilled, but "began" in its fulfillment; "day of Pentecost" means the first

Pentecost after the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The proposition simply means that the kingdom mentioned in [Dan. 2:44](#) began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ.

That we may understand Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of it, they are here placed in parallel columns for the convenience of the reader:

#### DANIEL'S INTERPRETATION.

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the [84] heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that crusheth all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. ([Dan. 2:36-45](#).)

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. ([Dan. 2:31-35](#).)

#### THE IMAGE.

Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream a colossal human figure standing apparently in an open plain. The ancient people were accustomed to seeing huge figures and statues of men and gods. This part of his dream was not so strange. Profane history records the fact that huge figures or



statues of Ramses and Memnon of Egypt were well known to the kings of Babylon. Even Nebuchadnezzar had erected a golden image which was "set up in the plain of Dura." ([Dan. 3:1.](#)) The king of Babylon was 'well acquainted with images and statues. However, I suppose that no one will deny that Jehovah had much to do--yea, all--with the king's dream. One peculiar thing about this image was that it was composed of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay. The king was greatly disturbed about the meaning of this image. He knew that statues and monuments represented something or some one, but he did not know what this one signified.

Such a colossal, composite figure disturbed him. He was probably familiar with the ancient tradition of Parsee. In this tradition Zoroaster saw four trees, one of gold, one of silver, one of steel, and another one of iron. Zoroaster was told that these four trees represented four ages of the world. The king of Babylon was so disturbed and troubled over the dream that he could not sleep. His magicians, enchanters, and sorcerers were unable to tell him his dream or the interpretation thereof. Its meaning lay buried in mystery. Since Jehovah had prompted the dream, only inspiration could interpret it. We would not be able to-day to know its meaning if Daniel had not interpreted it for us.

#### THE STONE.

In his dream the king saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands. This stone smote the image upon its feet and broke them in pieces. It also broke the [86] iron, brass, silver, and gold. In fact, the entire image was smitten by this stone and destroyed. The stone which smote the image "became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." The idea suggested here is that of a huge boulder loosing itself from a neighboring steep mountain and rolling down on the plain and striking the image with irresistible force and completely destroying the image.

There are four elementary questions to be considered and answered. First, what does the image represent? Second, what does the stone represent? Third, what does the smiting and destruction of the stone mean? Fourth, when did this stone begin its destructive work? We are to seek a Scriptural answer to these four questions. They are all four involved in our proposition.

The first question may be briefly answered by saying that the image which was composed of different metals represents four universal kingdoms. "The head of gold" represents the Babylonian kingdom, which was then in existence. Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art the head of gold;" that is, the Babylonian government is represented in this image by the head of gold. Daniel is very specific in pointing out the Babylonian kingdom as the first of the four successive universal kingdoms which was represented by the composite image.

Daniel further says: "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." This world power is represented in the image by the "breast and . . . arms of silver." This second kingdom was to succeed or immediately follow the Babylonian kingdom. This was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. ([Dan. 5:31; 6:8, 25; Ez. 1:1, 2.](#)) This kingdom was as inferior to the Babylonian kingdom as silver is inferior to gold.

The third universal empire succeeded the second and is represented in the image as "another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." This was the kingdom of

Greece; it followed the Medo-Persian. [87] ([Dan. 8:20, 21.](#)) Alexander the Great was the chief exponent of this kingdom. We are familiar with his universal reign and the tradition that "he sat down and wept when he learned that there were no other kingdoms for him to subdue."

The fourth universal kingdom, which was represented in the image by "legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay," was the Roman Empire. We now have before us the four world empires which were destined to appear and follow one after the other. It is important to observe that Daniel predicted only four world powers which would succeed each other. We look for no other world power. During this last kingdom, or the Roman government, "the God of heaven would set up a kingdom." It was to be the last universal kingdom.

"The stone cut out without hands" represents the kingdom which the God of heaven would set up. This stone smote "the image upon its feet" and destroyed the iron, clay, brass, silver, and gold. Daniel said that the God of heaven would "set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold." Daniel's interpretation identifies "the stone" with the "kingdom" which the God of heaven should "set up." Both the stone and the kingdom of God are to destroy one and the same thing; hence, they are one and the same. I think that Brother Boll will agree with me thus far.

A brief summary of the image with its interpretation is as follows: The head of gold (Babylon); the arms and breast of silver (Medo-Persia); the belly and thighs of brass (Greece); the legs and feet of iron and clay (Rome). The stone cut out without hands smites the image (the kingdom of God). [88]

What does the smiting of the image by this stone mean? This question is answered by the nature and mission of the kingdom of God. It means that universal world powers should cease when this kingdom was set up; that no other universal empire operated by man should control the world. It means that the kingdom of God would be of such a nature that it would render impossible any other universal kingdom; that the nature and principles of the kingdom of God would destroy in its ever-increasing and expanding power and influence the principles of world powers.

When did this great change begin? When did the reign of the kingdom of God begin on earth? Our proposition states that it began on Pentecost. This is the task which we have to prove; it is the exact point of time stated in the proposition. We are now to determine when the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was set up. Daniel said that it would be done during the fourth world power, or Roman government, and that its king should be "like unto a son of man," whom all peoples, nations, and languages should worship. ([Dan. 7:13, 14.](#))

Our proposition should have been worded and stated as follows: "Do the Scriptures teach that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) began on Pentecost?" This is a clear and definite statement of the fact that the prophet declared that God would set up a kingdom. The Old Testament closes with a distinct hope in the heart of the people that the Messiah would come and would set up a

kingdom; the New Testament opens with this long-cherished hope and expectancy firmly fixed in the heart of God's people.

It is well to stop here and examine the terms "kingdom," "kingdom of God," "kingdom of heaven." In order to eliminate all irrelevant matter and narrow the discussion down to the exact issue, it is well for us to understand the meaning of "kingdom of God," "kingdom of heaven," "kingdom." "Kingdom" is equivalent to royal power, dominion, authority, or rule, as well as the [89] ones who are governed. As applied to God's power or dominion, I think we may say that "kingdom of God" may have five applications. (1) God's physical kingdom. He created all things; his laws control all life, vegetable and animal. (2) His moral or ethical kingdom. A moral government of the world implies the existence of a moral governor. "Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." ([Ps. 103:19](#); also [Dan. 4:25, 32, 34-36](#); [Ps. 22:28](#); [93:2](#).) (3) His eternal kingdom--heaven. ([Acts 14:22](#); [2 Pet. 1:11](#).) (4) His kingdom of Israel. ([2 Sam. 5:12](#); [1 Kings 9:3-7](#); [11:11](#).) (5) His kingdom of Christ--the church. The kingdom mentioned in Daniel was not God's physical kingdom, as this was already in existence. Neither was it his ethical kingdom; this was also in existence before Daniel's day. Neither was it his eternal kingdom, heaven, Jehovah's habitation. Neither was it the kingdom of Israel; this also had been in existence and was declining. He must have had in mind the kingdom of the Messiah, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The affirmative is not contending that the universal kingdom of God is synonymous with the church. "Kingdom." comes from the Greek "basileia;" "church comes from the Greek "ekklesia." "Church" and "kingdom" come from different Greek words, and these Greek words are not synonymous. No scholar ever claimed that they are synonymous. They are applied to the same thing, just as "body of Christ" and "house of God" are different phrases which have no common radical or derivative, yet they are applied in the New Testament to the same institution. Thayer, in his Greek New Testament Lexicon, in defining "basileia" and "ekklesia," applies them to one and the same thing--to wit, the New Testament church.

Our proposition means, then, that the kingdom referred to in [Dan. 2:44](#) and the church of the New Testament are applied to the same thing and began on Pentecost. [90] John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, began his ministry by preaching, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." ([Matt. 3:2](#).) He thus gives emphasis to the near approach of this kingdom. His disciples were put on the tiptoe of expectancy of the approach of this kingdom. A few months later Jesus began preaching: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ([Matt. 4:17](#).) Jesus added emphasis to the hope and expectancy of the near approach of the kingdom of heaven. He increased the emphasis when he chose his twelve disciples and sent them out to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." ([Matt. 10:7](#).) These twelve messengers were to go throughout the country emphasizing the near approach of the kingdom of heaven. A little later Jesus sent out the seventy disciples, who were to preach: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." ([Luke 10:9](#).) Here we have John the Baptist, the Christ, and eighty-two men preaching all over Galilee and Judea: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." What kingdom is preached by these heaven-sent messengers, if it is not the kingdom which the God of heaven would set up in the days of the Roman Empire? Jesus said to Zaccheus: "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A

certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants. . . . and said unto them," etc. ([Luke 19:11-13.](#)) This was tantamount to saying to them that the kingdom of God would not be established or appear until he ascended to the Father.

A short time before the transfiguration, Jesus said to his disciples: "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." ([Mark 9:1.](#)) It is to be noticed that the kingdom should come "with power," [91] and that it should come during the lifetime of some who were standing there. This brings the time of the approach of the kingdom within the narrow limits of the remainder of the life of some of his disciples.

On the night in which he was betrayed he said to his disciples: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ([Luke 22:29, 30.](#)) His disciples were to receive the kingdom, and the kingdom was to come "with power." Jesus, in talking with the disciples after his resurrection and just before his ascension, spoke to them "concerning things of the kingdom." ([Acts 1:3.](#)) He told them: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." ([Luke 24:49.](#)) He said: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." ([Acts 1:8.](#)) It should be noted that the disciples were to receive the kingdom after Jesus made his ascension to the Father and when the Holy Spirit was come upon them. The Holy Spirit came on the first Pentecost after his ascension. This is the time when the kingdom of Christ began; it is the birthday of the church.

This Pentecost was a notable day. In the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ a preparatory history both divine and human comes to its close. In Christ culminate all the previous revelations of God to Jews and Gentiles, and in him are fulfilled the deepest desires and earnest efforts of both Jew and Gentile for redemption. Pentecost marks the great miraculous advent to earth of the Holy Spirit; it marks the distinct closing of the old dispensation and the beginning of a new spiritual dispensation. This notable day has truly been called "the birthday of the church." It was the time when the apostles were endued with power from on high; it was the time when the church as the body of Christ began upon earth; it was the time when the kingdom which John, [92]Christ, and the apostles had preached was set up, or began.

The prophets had spoken of Christ's coming in the last days of the decline of the Jewish nation; they had told that he would come during the last universal, or Roman, empire. Isaiah had said: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." ([Isa. 2:3.](#)) This was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. The disciples were in Jerusalem "continually in the temple," waiting for the power from on high. ([Luke 24:52, 53.](#)) Peter preached the first gospel sermon by the Holy Spirit on this day, and three thousand were converted; they were added to the church; they were translated into the kingdom. The apostles, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared Christ as "King of kings and Lord of lords," which means that he was now reigning over the kingdom which God had set up.

He had said: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." ([Luke 22:29, 30.](#)) He thus committed the earthly

administration of his kingdom to his disciples. He gave them power to extend his kingdom by the direction of the Holy Spirit; he gave them wisdom to instruct his subjects how to live in the kingdom, or the members of the body how to live in his church. The kingdom over which Christ is now ruling and the church over which he is the head is the kingdom which Daniel said the God of heaven would set up. It began on Pentecost. So our proposition is established. [93]

## R. H. BOLL'S FIRST NEGATIVE.

When a point is raised so important and far-reaching as to affect not only the proposition in the course of which it is mentioned, but all our propositions and the debate as a whole, it is surely not out of place to bring it up again in entering upon this new proposition. I speak of the question whether unfulfilled prophecy can be understood by uninspired man. It seems to me that this ought to be settled *before* we go on with any other matters depending for their settlement upon this question. If Brother Boles is willing (as he says he is) to discuss this point *after* we have discussed all else, why would he not be willing to discuss it now and here, where logically it ought to be discussed? I had no idea that he would take such a position in regard to prophecy, else I would have insisted from the start that this fundamental question be settled before all else. If he refuses to do this now, it will only mean that this matter will continually come up and be dragged along through the whole discussion, diverting time and space from the specific issues of all the following propositions. It ought to be settled first and once for all, if possible. Why should I go on quoting Scripture proofs for Brother Boles to set aside on the preassumption that they cannot be understood by uninspired man? If he can establish *that*, there will be no need whatever for us to go into the rest of the propositions. But if it is seen that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood, my respondent will be obliged thenceforth to accept the force of the Scriptures I present. Unless he does that, can it be called a debate at all?

Brother Boles says that I feel the crushing burden of this argument (namely, that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood). But that is not an argument at all; it is merely a huge assumption. It is the begging of the whole question, and of all the questions raised in this debate, before ever a word is said. It is kicking clear out [94] of the traces. He says he cannot let me escape so easily. My impression of Brother Boles' position in this matter would be that *he* is trying to escape from the whole responsibility of giving my Scripture proofs serious examination, on the *a priori* assumption that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood at any rate. Nor am I trying to evade anything by insisting that he discuss this first; on the contrary, I am going after an essential point relating to this and all the rest of the questions before us.

In connection with this, my respondent says that he is glad for the admission that all my proofs lie in the realm of unfulfilled prophecy. He knew that from the first. If we were discussing historical matters, for instance, all of my proofs would likely be taken from the field of history. Since the propositions, as agreed upon, deal with prophecy, whether it be fulfilled or unfulfilled, the proof texts must necessarily lie within that realm.

When he says at the outset of his affirmative that his proof in this proposition depends not upon unfulfilled prophecy, but upon fulfilled prophecy, he again begs the question. For that is exactly the point at issue; and it is up to him to show that the smiting of the image by the stone is fulfilled prophecy, and it is my part to deny that particular point. But all prophecy, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled, is the word of God, and is to be accepted and believed by us according to the just meaning of its language. I did not at all wish to charge my brother with discrediting the Bible as a whole after the fashion of the Roman Church, but to point out that his position regarding our inability to understand unfulfilled prophecy is precisely the same as that which Rome holds toward the entire Bible. From this position he ought to recede, or else that point should be discussed and settled before anything else.

However, it seems to me that Brother Boles does not consistently stick to that notion. On occasion he "interprets" prophecy with a high hand. First, he shows (and [95] quite correctly) that the vision of Nebuchadnezzar was a mystery until Daniel interpreted it. But even after Daniel had interpreted it and had reduced the symbolism of the image to plain speech, was it then still a mystery, and does it even then need more "interpreting" before it can be understood? My respondent seems to think so. "What does the smiting of the image by this stone mean?" he asks; and answers as follows: "This question is answered by the nature and mission of the kingdom of God. . . . It means that the kingdom of God would be of such a nature that it would render impossible any other universal kingdom; that the *nature* and *principles* of the kingdom of God would destroy in *ever-increasing and expanding power and influence the principles of world powers.*" (Italics mine.) Here is certainly a sample of arbitrary "interpretation." But should he say that this is a *fulfilled* prophecy, I must again call attention to the fact that that is the very point to be proved. And even if it were a fulfilled prophecy, that fact would not license us to give it an arbitrary meaning to suit our preconceptions. It would be difficult also to imagine what advantage it would be if the kingdom of God merely put an end to *universal* human kingdoms, the while an endless succession of smaller ones, just as godless, cruel, and vicious as the universal, would go on flourishing through thousands of years.

#### THE PROPOSITION.

The proposition my respondent is to prove is that "the Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:34, 35 and 44, 45](#) began to take place on the day of Pentecost."

The task of the affirmative is not to prove that God has now and always has had a kingdom in one sense or another; nor that the kingdom in a new and different stage began with the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost; nor that the church represents the [96] kingdom of God to-day; nor that the Lord Jesus is enthroned in heaven as King of kings and Lord of lords, having all power and authority in heaven and on earth; and that all who are in the church are translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. *On all this we are agreed.* I not only admit and concede all that, but I avow and declare it. There is no controversy between us on these points. But it is the affirmative's burden to show that the event of the smiting and the destruction of the image took place, or began to take place, on Pentecost.

My honorable respondent fails to keep the exact point at issue clearly before him. Perhaps he has been, and is yet, under a misapprehension in regard to it. I tried to make this clear in our correspondence when we arranged the propositions. He says that the proposition should have been worded, "Do the Scriptures teach that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) began on Pentecost?" If it had been so worded, I would not have taken the negative, because of its ambiguity. I am not at all denying the existence of the kingdom of Christ, or its beginning on Pentecost. On page 20 of my little book, "The Kingdom of God," I have this note:

The statement that "[Dan. 2:44](#) has not yet been fulfilled" does not deny that the Stone which smites the Image upon its feet already exists. Necessarily, the cutting out of the Stone "without hands" must precede its descent upon the Image. If it be contended that the words in [Dan. 2:44](#), "In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," has reference to the first



preparation of the Stone, in the establishment of the church on Pentecost, we have no objection to offer. It is in harmony with that conception that Christ, descending from heaven at the head of his saints ([Rev. 19:11-21](#)), destroys the last world power and takes possession of the earth. This is the Stone which has been forming throughout the present age, and which in due time comes down to smite the Image and assume the control of the earth. But it is the latter point--the [97] establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth, in open manifestation and supreme power--which the catastrophe of [Dan. 2:44](#) has especially in view.

I tried to make all this clear to Brother Boles, and called his especial attention to that note in my book which is here quoted. Yet it seems that Brother Boles argues as though I were denying the present existence of God's kingdom, or its beginning on Pentecost.

My respondent has written an able and well-worded article indeed, and with most of it I am in hearty agreement; but if he has undertaken to prove that on the day of Pentecost the stone smote the image, he has entirely failed to do that.

He tells us correctly what kingdoms are represented by the different parts of the image--Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome. He also correctly tells us that the stone which smites the image is the kingdom of God. "Both the stone and the kingdom of God are to destroy one and the same thing," he says; "hence, they are one and the same." Now, if the stone "represents the kingdom which the God of heaven would set up," manifestly *the stone existed before it smote the image*. We can agree, therefore, that the kingdom of God, as it exists to-day, took its inception on Pentecost, while yet I deny that the catastrophe which is represented by the stone's smiting upon the image and utterly annihilating it has yet come to pass. And the affirmative has, so far as I am able to see, offered not one vestige of proof that this thing did happen on Pentecost. The negative does not deny that Christ is King now, that he has a kingdom, and that that kingdom began on Pentecost; but takes the position that that establishment and distinct manifestation of the kingdom in sovereign power on earth which is signified by the smiting of the image by the little stone (which itself is the kingdom of God, as Brother Boles says) has never yet taken place. Brother Boles has failed to prove that it has. Among the many good things which he says, this [98] one all-important point escapes his notice. This thing was not brought out nor substantiated by the word of God; and on this hangs the whole question. Will the kingdom of Christ ever openly clash in destructive force with the kingdoms of this world, and bring them down in utter and final ruin? If so, then that is the time when the stone (the kingdom of God) will smite upon the feet of the image, and will thereafter occupy the arena itself alone. Will Brother Boles show that the stone smote the image on Pentecost? Will he show that the image was broken up then, or that on that day it even *began* to be broken up, and its small fragments swept away so that no place was found for them?

Between every prophecy and its fulfillment there must be a definite and recognizable correspondence, else it would be no prophecy. That is, the event must clearly embody what the prophecy foretold. But there is no correspondence between the prophecy of [Dan. 2:35, 44](#) and Brother Boles' alleged fulfillment. The stone *smites the image* upon its feet--as Brother Boles says, "a huge boulder loosing itself from a neighboring steep mountain and rolling down on the plain and striking the image with irresistible force and completely destroying the image." This is surely not a case of peaceful penetration. It would be a singularly inapt representation of the

inauguration of the gospel message. The stone's descent upon the image is not a picture of grace, but of sudden and terrible judgment from on high.

If the establishment of the church was signified by the impact of the stone upon the image's feet, it is strange that that fourth world power suffered no inconvenience from it. She was not in the least injured by it. She was not destroyed, nor did she even *begin* to break up, then nor from that day on; and that would be the least that might have been expected. On the contrary, Rome did not only stand as she had been before, but went right on growing and increasing. Any history will show that for [99] nearly a hundred years after Pentecost Rome continued in rapid territorial growth, and did not reach the fullest extent of her dominion until the reign of the Emperor Trajan (A. D. 98-117). When at last Rome began to decline, her decline and fall were not due to the moral influence of the gospel or of the kingdom of Christ, but to immorality, profligacy, luxurious and effeminate living--the same natural causes that undermined other kingdoms and which were responsible for the fall of some of the preceding world powers, before the church was established. No connection can be traced between the gracious influence of the gospel and the perdition of Rome. If there was any significance in the two legs, it would lie in the fact that the Roman Empire separated into two distinct dominions, the Eastern and the Western Empires. But there were no such legs until A. D. 395--more than three and a half centuries after Pentecost. Finally both parts played out--the Western, A. D. 476; the Eastern, not until A. D. 1453. Since then other kingdoms, most of them not a whit better than Rome, just as persecuting, as wicked and godless, have filled the face of the earth. What, then, has the stone done? Far from destroying the world power, the world power came near several times to destroying the church, at times by persecution, and even more by corruption. Where, we ask, is the resemblance between the prophecy and the fulfillment?

But this is not all. According to the prophecy, the stone does not even *begin* to grow until the image is utterly destroyed, and all its fragments are clean swept away. The church, however, grew fastest in the first years after its establishment, while the Roman Empire as yet stood firm and uninjured. The church has had no steady growth since, but seasons of great decline, relieved by occasional revivals of the faith. When Jesus comes, it will be even smaller ([Luke 18:8](#); [2 Tim. 3:1-8](#)), and far from "filling the whole earth."

Note, then, these points: [100]

(1) The stone's impact upon the feet of the image signifies, not moral influence, but destructive force.

(2) After the descent of the stone, the stone and the image do not at any time exist side by side. When the one comes, the other goes.

(3) It is not stated nor indicated that the stone would permeate the image by its influence, or that the stone would gradually wear away the image.

(4) The stone does not, by its growth and expansion, gradually crowd the image off the scene. The stone does not grow at all until the image is destroyed and the debris blown away.

If the prophecy of the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#) foretells the establishment of the church on Pentecost, there is certainly no telling of what prophecy means before it is fulfilled, nor any accounting for it afterwards. With such views of fulfillment, it is no wonder that brethren should think that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood.

If the difficulty be felt that in view of the fact that Rome has disappeared, that prophecy could not be fulfilled in the future at all any more; such difficulties can be left with God. We need not try to force his words into unwarranted agreement with the past because we think it has to be done. Especially not, since God has clearly shown us that there will be a final world power which the Lord at his coming with his saints will utterly destroy, after which the kingdom of the world will be his ([Rev. 11:15](#)) and he will reign with his saints ([Rev. 13:1, 2, 7; 19:11 to 20:6](#)). Since these things will be fully discussed in subsequent propositions, I do not enter into them more particularly now.

A few special points deserve attention. I do not wholly accept the classification of God's kingdoms, or five aspects or stages of God's kingdom, as Brother Boles tabulates them. Yet I am glad that my respondent recognizes the fact that the kingdom of God may have [101] different manifestations and stages of existence. That facilitates matters. He refers to [Luke 19:11](#), etc. That is a good reference, and pictures the situation comprehensively. The nobleman is Christ; the far country, heaven. Thither he has gone to receive for himself a kingdom. In the meanwhile his servants, surrounded by hostile and rebellious men, like the church in the midst of the world, administrate his goods. When the nobleman returns in power ("having received the kingdom"), he calls first his servants to account, and then appoints them a share in the government he has taken over; but his enemies he destroys. That fits the prophecy of [Dan. 2:35, 44](#).

I am glad also that Brother Boles recognizes the parallel between the prophecy of [Dan. 2](#) and [Dan. 7](#). The prophecy concerning the four beasts in [Dan. 7](#) is an important side light to the prophecy of the four-part image of [Dan. 2](#). And the final issue is the same in both prophecies. The last beast being destroyed, the saints, who up until that moment had been persecuted by the world power, receive the kingdom--not a kingdom up in heaven, but a kingdom "*under the whole heaven*," the same realm and sphere of government which up till then had been dominated by the beast. But from thenceforth the Son of man and his saints exercise that rule. ([Dan. 7:13, 14, 21, 27](#).) This again sets forth in different terms that great and radical change which occurs in the world's affairs when the little stone smites the feet of the image. [102]

## Chapter VI.

### H. LEO BOLES' SECOND AFFIRMATIVE.

This is a very important proposition. A proper division of the Word of Truth demands that we know just when the kingdom of God began on earth. A failure to understand this leads to confusion. The establishment of the kingdom of God on earth is not a future event; it is a past event, and the proof of it is to be found among historical facts and not in the field of unfulfilled prophecy.

It is the duty of the negative to follow the affirmative and answer the arguments which are presented in support of the proposition. About one-fourth of the negative's reply is irrelevant matter. Brother Boll seems to be dissatisfied with his efforts to prove his first proposition, and especially the argument which was made against his ability to interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy. He seems to think that we ought to settle the question whether man, unaided by inspiration, can tell when and how unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled.

The argument was made that man, unaided by inspiration, is unable to interpret unfulfilled prophecy with any degree of certainty. Brother Boll admits that the proof of his propositions depends entirely upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. Since this is true, the point was made that Brother Boll can never tell, and the reader can never know, whether Brother Boll has given the correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, and therefore he can never know, and the reader can never know, whether he has proved his proposition. This is no reflection on Brother Boll's ability or his integrity. It is not in man with finite mind, unaided by inspiration, to see the end of prophecy and tell how and when it will be fulfilled. The statement was made that "*no proposition*[103] *which depends wholly upon the interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies for its proof can ever be established.*"

The question is *not*, Can we *understand* unfulfilled prophecies? But the question is, Can any one who is unaided by inspiration tell *when* and *how* unfulfilled prophecies will be fulfilled? Brother Boll thinks that I have raised a very important question here and that it ought to be settled before we proceed with the discussion. He states that he is unwilling to continue the discussion until this point is settled. I suggested that it is better to discuss the propositions which we have already announced, and then we can take up this new proposition; but he asks: "Why would not the affirmative be willing to discuss it now and here, where it logically ought to be discussed?" It is true that Brother Boll cannot prove the propositions which he has agreed to prove until he establishes beyond a doubt this one thing--namely, Can finite mind, unaided by inspiration, tell when and how an unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled? Brother Boll is rather late in wanting to establish this point. He should have proved several years ago that he can give infallible proof that his "private interpretations" of unfulfilled prophecies are absolutely correct. What guarantee has he to give us *now* that his interpretations are correct? Why should the affirmative or any one else accept his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies upon his *ipse dixit*? He has been teaching for years his private interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. All these years he has been teaching "on the preassumption" that his interpretations of unfulfilled

prophecy were infallible. Now let him prove this first, and then we can accept his interpretations as proof of his present proposition.

Of course, the affirmative is not going to let him make such "a huge assumption" upon which his part of "the whole discussion" depends. Brother Boll says this "ought to be settled first and once for all, if possible." Truly, it ought to be settled--it ought to have been [104] settled by him twelve or fifteen years ago. I am glad that he sees the importance of settling that question *now*, or else all that he may offer as proof of his propositions will be of no avail. There is a definite and square issue between Brother Boll and me on this point--namely, he claims that he is able to give infallible interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy; I deny it. Since he insists upon discussing this new issue now, I am willing to pause with the present discussion and let him undertake to prove this issue which is so important in this discussion. To relieve him of any embarrassment, the affirmative states the issue as follows: *The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled.* I await his first affirmation on this proposition, and the reader will bear patiently with us for a few articles on this.

If Brother Boll fails to prove the above proposition, then he cannot prove any of the propositions which he has proposed to affirm. If he fails to prove the above proposition, he ought to announce to the public that the propositions which he has agreed to affirm cannot be proved by the Scriptures and that he is ready to withdraw all of his declarations and teachings which depend upon his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy.

I accept all the Scriptures which he has presented. I believe all of these Scriptures--in fact, the entire Bible; but I do not accept his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy: It is one thing to reject man's interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies and quite a different thing to reject the prophecies themselves. The negative fails to discriminate here. The reader will please make the discrimination.

But Brother Boll thinks that I violate this fundamental truth and says that I interpret prophecy "with a high hand." The affirmative does not attempt to interpret unfulfilled prophecies "with a high hand" or with any other hand. Even if the affirmative should [105] attempt it, what objection could Brother Boll have to it, since he claims to be able to interpret unfulfilled prophecy? Is he the only one who can interpret unfulfilled prophecy? How does he know that his interpretation is better than mine? It is well to agree as far as we may be able without sacrificing truth. I am glad that Brother Boll indorses nearly all that the affirmative has presented on the proposition now before us. Brother Boll and I agree on the following points: (1) That the church of our Lord was established on the day of Pentecost; (2) that the kingdom of God on earth began on Pentecost; (3) that the church and kingdom which began on Pentecost are one and the same institution; (4) that members of the church are citizens of this kingdom; (5) that the Lord Jesus is enthroned in heaven as King of kings and Lord of lords; (6) that he has all power and authority in heaven and on earth. These are all very vital truths and far-reaching in their effect on the present discussion.

The prophecy of [Dan. 2:44](#) says that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom during the existence of the Roman Empire. Since the church, or the kingdom of God on earth to-day, began on Pentecost, which was during the existence of the Roman Empire, then it follows that the kingdom which began on Pentecost was the kingdom which [Dan. 2:44](#) said the God of heaven

would set up, or the God of heaven set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire. And since the Roman Empire has filled its mission and ceased to exist, the prophecy of Daniel now becomes history. Fulfilled prophecy becomes history after its fulfillment.

The proposition resolves itself into the following question: Was the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) the same as the church or kingdom which began on Pentecost? If they are the same, then the smiting and destruction of the image began to take place on the day of Pentecost. Brother Boll made a fatal admission when he stated: [106] "We both believe in the one body, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, established on the Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, which is God's kingdom on the earth to-day." The affirmative is claiming that this kingdom which Brother Boll says began on Pentecost is the kingdom which Daniel said the God of heaven would set up.

One simple argument is enough to prove the affirmative's position. Daniel said that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom during the existence of the Roman Empire. Brother Boll and I both agree on this point. The God of heaven established his church or kingdom on the day of Pentecost. Again Brother Boll and I agree on this point. The day of Pentecost as mentioned in the proposition came during the existence of the Roman Empire. Again Brother Boll and I agree on this point. The Roman Empire has long since passed out of existence. Brother Boll and I agree on this point. Now it follows that *if the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom established on Pentecost are not one and the same kingdom, then the God of heaven set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire.* Brother Boll can never answer this argument. His admission was fatal to his position. He must now admit that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom which began on Pentecost are one and the same, or else he must show that God set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire. If he admits that they are one and the same kingdom, then he is admitting all that I claim in my position. He is in a dilemma--namely, either admit that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom which began on Pentecost are the same, or the God of heaven set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire.

There is no Scripture in the entire Book of God which teaches that God would set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire. We will search in vain [107] for any Scripture which lends any encouragement to the position that two kingdoms were set up during the existence of the Roman Empire.

As further proof that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom which began on Pentecost are the same, we submit this: "There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." ([Dan. 7:14.](#)) Brother Boll and I agree that the kingdom here spoken of is the same kingdom spoken of in [Dan. 2:44](#). Hence, the kingdom of my proposition, the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#), is the kingdom which was given to Christ. It is the kingdom over which Christ reigns; it is Christ's kingdom. Brother Boll made the fatal admission that the kingdom of heaven which began on Pentecost has Christ as its enthroned King. The kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was given to Christ as King; the kingdom which began on Pentecost was given to Christ as King. Hence, the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom which Brother Boll admits began on Pentecost are one and the same kingdom, or else Christ has been given two kingdoms. Again Brother Boll is in a dilemma--namely, either the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#), which was given to Christ, is the same as the kingdom which began on



Pentecost that was given him, or the God of heaven has given Christ two kingdoms. Which horn of the dilemma will he take? If he says they are the same kingdom, he admits the affirmative of this proposition; if he says that Christ was given, during the existence of the Roman Empire, two kingdoms, he takes upon himself a burden which he cannot carry, a proposition which he cannot prove.

Now, Brother Boll must either concede the affirmative claim or face the embarrassing position of saying that Christ was given two kingdoms. Will he please tell us the difference between these two kingdoms? Who are [108] the subjects of these two kingdoms? What are the laws of these two kingdoms? What is the territory of these two kingdoms? Will Brother Boll tell us the difference between these two kingdoms? Brother Boll's position makes him teach that God has given Christ two kingdoms with but one throne, one set of laws to reign over the two kingdoms. May we ask if these two kingdoms which were given Christ during the existence of the Roman Empire are both now in existence? Does Christ still have dominion over both of them? These questions show the absurd position that the negative must take if he does not indorse the affirmative position.

Brother Boll claims that the smiting of the image by the stone is a catastrophe. How does he know it is a catastrophe? Who has said it was? Daniel, in giving the interpretation of the dream, did not say it was a catastrophe. This is a sample of Brother Boll's "private interpretation."

Brother Boll states that if the stone represents the kingdom of God, then the kingdom was in existence when it smote the image. He seems to intimate that the kingdom which smote the image was not in existence at that time. His attention is called to the fact that the image was in existence with all of its parts when it was smitten by the stone. Be it remembered, also, that Brother Boll and I agree that the composite image was made up of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. Hence, according to Brother Boll, if the kingdom did not exist until it was ready to smite the image, then all of these kingdoms which compose the image must be brought back into existence in order that the future kingdom (as Brother Boll teaches) may smite them. His interpretation would call for a reestablishment of the Babylonian government, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman, all at the same time, in order that a future kingdom may smite them and destroy them. God has not promised that there should be a fifth world power on this earth. The affirmative calls for the proof. [109]

Mention was made of the five uses of the term, "kingdom of God." These are not "five aspects or stages" of the same kingdom, but they are five distinct kingdoms. They are: First, God's physical kingdom. His laws control all life, vegetable and animal. Second, his moral or ethical kingdom. ([Ps. 103:19](#); [Dan. 4:25, 32, 34-36](#); [Ps. 22:28](#); [93:2](#).) Third, his eternal kingdom, heaven. ([Dan. 4:26](#); [Luke 15:21](#); [Acts 14:22](#); [2 Pet. 1:11](#).) Fourth, his kingdom of Israel. ([2 Sam. 5:12](#); [1 Kings 9:3-7](#); [11:11](#).) Fifth, his kingdom, or church. These are distinct kingdoms and not "phases or stages" of the same kingdom. The kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) cannot be identified with God's physical kingdom, nor his ethical kingdom, nor with heaven, nor with the kingdom of Israel; it can be identified only with the kingdom which began on Pentecost, which is the church of our Lord.



Jesus took up the Old Testament conception of the kingdom of God and claimed to fulfill it; he claimed to be fulfilling the prophecies concerning the kingdom of God. All of the parables of the kingdom emphasize the fact that the kingdom which Christ was preaching was the kingdom which had been announced by the prophets. The parable of the seed growing secretly ([Mark 4:26](#)), the parable of the mustard seed ([Mark 4:30](#)), the leaven, the tares, etc., all show that the kingdom which Jesus was preaching was the kingdom which had been promised and the one which fulfilled the prophecies.

For the sake of emphasis, further proof is given, showing that the church of the New Testament and the kingdom of God as used by the Savior are one and the same institution. The following facts are submitted: The church and the kingdom agree in the following points: (1) The head, (2) the laws, (3) the subjects, (4) the territory. The church and kingdom agree in all of these essential points.

The Head of the church and the King of the kingdom are the same. Christ is the Head of the church. (See [110] [Eph. 1:22](#); [Col. 1:18](#).) Christ is also the King of the kingdom. (See [Acts 17:7](#); [Rev. 1:5](#); [17:14](#).) Since Christ is the Head of the church and also King of the kingdom, the church and the kingdom are identified in the chief executive of each.

The laws of the Bible furnish all things which pertain to life and godliness. ([2 Pet. 1:3](#).) There cannot be different laws in the church and the kingdom, since the Scriptures pertaining to both church and kingdom are the same. So the two are identified in that they have the same laws.

The members of the church and the subjects of the kingdom are the same. ([Col. 1:13](#).) Every one who is born again is in the church. ([1 Pet. 1:22, 23](#).) But those born again enter the kingdom. ([John 3:3-5](#).) The members of the church are the citizens of the kingdom. ([Eph. 2:19](#).) Christ does not have one thing on earth called the "church" and a different thing called the "kingdom." One cannot be in the church and not be in the kingdom; neither can one be in the kingdom and not be in the church. He who, is in the one is in the other; he who is out of the one is out of the other. That which introduces one into the church also introduces one into the kingdom. There are not two sets of acts, the one which puts people into the church and another one which puts them into the kingdom. So the kingdom and church are identified in the fact that they have the same subjects.

The territory of the church is the territory of the kingdom. The Lord rules in the heart. "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful." ([Col. 3:15](#).) Again: "I will put my laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." ([Heb. 8:10](#).)

We may conclude, then, since the church and kingdom have the same head, laws, subjects, and territory, that they are one and the same institution. This identity of [111] church and kingdom is further emphasized by the language of Christ in [Matt. 16](#). He said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." ([Verse 18](#).) Speaking of the same institution, he said to Peter: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." ([Verse 19](#).) In one instance he calls it "my church," and in the next instance he calls it "the kingdom of heaven." Thus Christ identifies his church and his kingdom as the same institution. Since the church began on Pentecost and the

kingdom began on Pentecost, then the issue of the affirmative proposition is established. The church began its work when established; it began its mission on Pentecost. So the kingdom of God began its mission on Pentecost, and Daniel said it would smite and destroy all others. So the work of smiting and destroying began on Pentecost, which is the statement of the proposition.

The body of Christ on earth and the church are one. ([Eph. 1:22, 23](#); [Col. 1:24](#).) The mode in which we become members of the body of Christ is the mode in which we enter the church and the mode in which we enter the kingdom. The body of Christ, the church of God, and the kingdom are one. They are not three different things, but one. They are not different phases of one and the same thing; they are one and the same thing. They are the same institution wearing three different names. This institution may be viewed either as a kingdom, as a church, or as a body. All that is true of this institution in any one of these views is true of it in either of the other two. The members of this institution, viewed with reference to Christ as their Head, are the body of Christ; if viewed in their collective capacity as an assembly or congregation, they are the church; but when viewed as subjects under law, with Christ as King, then they are the kingdom of God on earth. When the identity of the church and kingdom is established, then the proposition of the affirmative has been proved. [112]

## R. H. BOLL'S SECOND NEGATIVE.

I regret that there should have been any "irrelevant" matter in my negative; but if there was, it was because my respondent raised an issue that should not have been raised when he took the position that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood. In taking this ground, he went back on the proposition itself, according to his own definition of the words, "the Scriptures teach." He defines "the Scriptures" as the Old and New Testaments. But it developed that the Scriptures I present in proof of my propositions teach nothing whatever, because they cannot be interpreted and nobody can really know with any certainty what they mean. It is this *arbitrary assumption* on his part that demanded attention; for as long as my respondent can set aside whatever passage of Scripture I may present in proof of my proposition on the pretext that it is unfulfilled prophecy, and therefore cannot be understood, no intelligent and profitable discussion of these Bible themes is possible. My brother had no ground for saying that "Brother Boll seems to be dissatisfied with his efforts to prove his first proposition," for, as the reader may see, I mentioned nothing again that pertained to the subject of the first proposition. If I am taking up the issue which he raised in the course of the first proposition and touches upon again in this affirmative of the second proposition, whether unfulfilled prophecy can be understood, it is because that affects the entire debate fundamentally. Again, he is not accurate in stating that I am "unwilling to continue the discussion until this point is settled." I said the opposite; but I also pointed out that by all means this point ought to be discussed first and to a finish, else there would be little use of debating. And in my last article I said that this issue, if not discussed first, would continue to come up throughout the whole discussion, diverting space and attention from the specific points of the propositions in hand. [113]

In a personal letter accompanying his last manuscript Brother Boles says:

You will note in reading it that I give opportunity to stop the discussion on the present proposition and take up the new proposition. I think that it will mar the discussion to stop in the midst of the present one. If you wish to discuss this new issue before concluding your other negative, you may do so, but it seems to me that it will be better to let me get through with the affirmation of the present proposition and then you begin affirming the new issue which has been raised. However, I am willing to let your good judgment guide in this matter and will abide by your wishes.

I appreciate this generous attitude and fully concur with Brother Boles that it is advisable to finish this proposition first, in any case, seeing we are now in the midst of it.

But behold the proposition he offers me! Here it is:

*"The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled."*

Did Brother Boles actually think I would accept *that*? How and where did I claim that uninspired man can know exactly "how and when" unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled? I am sure that neither in this debate nor anywhere else did I say anything that would warrant such a conclusion. I claim to know nothing about any matter of prophecy except what God has said in

his Book. If, in connection with any unfulfilled prophecy, God revealed the "when" and the details of circumstance under which the prophecy would be fulfilled, we can know that, too; if not, we cannot. The question is not one concerning the *when* or *how*, but the *what* of God's predictions. The proposition that requires our preliminary attention is that "*unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles and in the same way as all the rest of God's word.*" Will Brother Boles deny this? If so, we [114] must discuss that above all else. If not, we can go on with the discussion.

My respondent appears to have shifted his position when he says, "The question is *not*, Can we *understand* unfulfilled prophecies?" etc. I think that was exactly the question. But let that go. Does he now admit *that we can understand unfulfilled prophecy?* If so, all is well. All I contend for is that the Scriptures (including unfulfilled prophecies) are to be taken at their own fair meaning and can thus be understood.

One point more needs to be noted on this. Just what does my respondent mean by "interpret?" And what does he mean by "private interpretation?" I want his definition of these terms which he uses so freely. I fail to get his meaning. I have repeatedly stated what I mean by "interpretation." I mean nothing more than to elicit the import of the language of a passage, be it prophecy or anything else. If I have ever failed of that (as, no doubt, I may often have) it was an error of the head, not of the heart. If Brother Boles assigns a different significance to the word "interpret" as used by me, he does so without right or warrant. In my last affirmative of the first proposition I said: "I depend on the simple, straightforward meaning of God's word on the prophecies for my faith as to these matters and for proof on these propositions." Again, I said: "If by 'private interpretation' Brother Boles means arbitrary, irresponsible, lawless imputations of meanings which the language does not warrant, I am opposed to that as much as he is, and with all my heart." Again, I said:

Brother Boles must concede that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood according to the common standards that govern the interpretation of Scripture, and, indeed, of all language. I ask for no privilege of "private interpretation;" but I do insist upon an acceptance of God's word as testimony to the proposition, in accordance with the fair meaning of its statements. [115]

When, in the light of these statements, Brother Boles charges me with all these years teaching "on the preassumption" that my interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy were infallible, he does me a grave injustice. Such charges have no place in this discussion. He ought to have informed himself sufficiently to know that this is not true. Perhaps it was this sort of attitude of unjust presumption on the part of my critics, rather than my teaching, that has been wrong these "twelve or fifteen years" he speaks of. All along I have been as far as possible from claiming to be an "infallible interpreter" of any part of Scripture. "We are not right--the Bible is right," has been my claim. And I neither consciously taught any "private interpretations" nor assumed nor claimed that in anything I was "infallibly correct." Why charge me with such things? A little examination of my teaching and my claims would have prevented such wrong judgment.

At the close of my book on the "Kingdom of God," for instance (page 78), I wrote as follows:

Having traced the great theme of the kingdom through the Scriptures as I was able, I now commend these studies to the reader, to examine and test them for himself in the light of the Holy Writ. These pages themselves will, I trust, bear witness that no attempt has been made to construct or set forth a theory, but that these studies represent only a simple, honest effort to bring out the teaching of the Bible on this worthy subject. If in any point I should be found at fault, may my reader generously grant me a credit for sincere endeavor; and may he be the stronger for having independently weighed and compared these words with the word of God. In conclusion, I can say nothing more fitting than the following words of Augustine:

"Whoever reads these writings, wherein he is equally convinced, let him go on with me; wherein he finds himself in error, let him return to me; wherein he finds me in error, let him call me back to him. So let us go on together in the way of charity, pressing on toward Him of whom it is said, 'Seek ye his face evermore.'" [116]

Is that the language of a man who teaches "on the preassumption that his interpretations of prophecy were infallible?" Or the following from the preface of my little book on Revelation:

The writer's aim has been to be faithful to the Word, above all: just and true in his presentation, and undogmatic in his conclusions. His object was to point out facts and features, rather than to teach and dogmatize; and to direct the reader's eyes to what is actually said and written, more than to explain and comment. He says nothing upon his own authority, but has endeavored to place everything before the reader, that he may see, examine, and judge for himself. If the author should have failed of this aim in any point; if anywhere he has seemed to be trying to force an opinion or an unwarranted conclusion, it is not intentional, and he would beg the reader to overlook such lapse, and always, everywhere, to 'prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.'"

Is that the same thing as claiming that my "'private interpretations' of unfulfilled prophecies are absolutely correct?" All through these "twelve or fifteen years" I have been trying to teach what God said in his word of prophecy, on the same principle as Brother Boles and I have been teaching other portions of the Scriptures, pointing men to the Bible as the only standard of truth.

When his opposers say to Brother Boles that they do not accept his "interpretations" of the Bible, he points them to the Book. That is my principle exactly. With God's word alone I propose to stand or fall. Brother Boles says he believes all that God *says*, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled. So say I. But if Brother Boles goes on to assume that in unfulfilled prophecy God says one thing and means another, and that in unfulfilled prophecies he means something so obscure that one does not know what God means, I dissent from him; and that is the point on which the matter turns. But he seems to regard this idea he has concerning unfulfilled prophecy as "a fundamental truth," although it is but an [117] assumption unsupported by any evidence or proof whatever. When we are through with the present proposition, therefore, if Brother Boles will consent to take the negative, I will affirm the following proposition:

*"The Scriptures teach that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles as the rest of God's word."*

The bulk of my respondent's argument, all that regards the establishment of the kingdom and its identity with the church, I concede.

Brother Boles argues closely and forcefully upon his premises. I would not want to have to clash with him when he has the truth on his side. But he labors under a fundamental misapprehension of the point at issue and has not grasped the meaning of the proposition. His misunderstanding is inexplicable to me, especially since in the correspondence preceding the debate I called his especial attention to the specific point of our difference regarding [Dan. 2:44](#). He takes up much space showing that God's kingdom began on Pentecost and in identifying church and kingdom. He should have known that I would not controvert that. He could find some of his arguments anticipated in my writings on the subject. But he even thinks I made a fatal admission when I stated: "We both believe in the one body, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, established on the Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, which is God's kingdom on the earth to-day." Fatal or not, I believe that, and am glad to state it again. But I see no fatality in it.

His total in is apprehension of the point at issue appears when he says that "if the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom established on Pentecost are not one and the same kingdom, then the God of heaven set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire." And he even goes so far as to say that I seem to intimate that the kingdom which smote the image was not in existence [118] at the time, although I had said the opposite, and that is the very point I contend for. I quoted from my book, "The Kingdom of God," as follows:

The statement that "[Dan. 2:44](#) has not yet been fulfilled" does not deny that the Stone which smites the Image upon its feet already exists. Necessarily, the cutting out of the Stone "without hands" must precede its descent upon the Image. If it be contended that the words in [Dan. 2:44](#), "In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," has reference to the first preparation of the Stone, in the establishment of the church on Pentecost, we have no objections to offer. It is in harmony with that conception that Christ, descending from heaven at the head of his saints ([Rev. 19:11-21](#)), destroys the last world power and takes possession of the earth. This is the Stone which has been forming throughout the present age and which in due time comes down to smite the Image and assume control of the earth. But it is the latter point--the establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth in open manifestation and supreme power--which the catastrophe of [Dan. 2:44](#) has especially in view.

To this note I called Brother Boles' particular attention in our correspondence before the debate. If he had examined it carefully, he would surely not have missed the point in discussion as badly as he has. How can he now say that I "seem to intimate that the kingdom which smote the image was not in existence at the time" (i. e., on Pentecost, when the church was established)? And how can he say: "If he admits that they are one and the same kingdom, then he is admitting all that I claim in my proposition?" I do admit that; and if that is all he claims, the matter is settled--would have been settled before we took it up, for I admitted that long ago. But Brother Boles' proposition calls for more than that. It says: "*The Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#), began to take place on the day of Pentecost.*" That the kingdom originated on Pentecost we both believe. That was the bringing into existence and the preparation of [119] the stone, the "cutting out" of it without hands. Brother Boles makes the establishment of the kingdom the same as the smiting of the

image. I do not. They are neither simultaneous nor identical. Reason and Scripture combine to show that the two are not the same events. The preparation of the stone took place first, the descent of the stone upon the image and the utter destruction of the same was a subsequent step-- a new action and manifestation in outward power of the stone previously brought into existence. I trust my respondent will see this point and address himself to it. I deny that such a thing has taken place, or begun to take place. I deny that Rome was ever smitten by the stone, broken up by it into atoms "like the chaff of the summer's threshing floor," and these carried away by the winds so that no place was found for them, after which the stone took possession of the whole earth. If it can be shown that this prophecy of [Dan. 2:35, 44](#), was fulfilled by the event of Pentecost, then, indeed, language is at an end, and unfulfilled prophecy may, indeed, mean anything or everything or nothing, as the case may be; neither can it be recognized after its fulfillment. If this is my respondent's position, I do not wonder if he thinks that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood.

He comes nearer the issue when he says:

The image was in existence with all of its parts when it was smitten by the stone. . . . All of these kingdoms which compose the image (Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires) must be brought back into existence in order that the future kingdom (as Brother Boll teaches) may smite them. His interpretation would call for the reestablishment of the Babylonian government, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman, all at the same time, in order that a future kingdom may smite them and destroy them.

He will admit, then, that if the fourfold image could be brought into existence again, a future smiting of the image might take place? Then, granting this were [120] possible, that kingdom (which was established on Pentecost, and the headquarters of which are until yet *in heaven*--[Phil. 3:21](#)) may yet descend with destructive force upon the kingdom of the world? Well, that would meet the demands of the prophecy of [Dan. 2:35 and 44](#). It is not necessary, however, that all four world powers should be brought back. Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece were not in actual existence on Pentecost. They existed only as included in the fourth world power, yet, according to Brother Boles, the image "stood complete" on Pentecost, though only the fourth world power was actually in existence then. So all four do not have to be brought back into actual existence for the smiting: if the fourth comes back, that is sufficient.

John, in Revelation, sees such a world power. He calls it "The Beast." It corresponds with the fourth beast of Daniel's prophecy in [Dan. 7](#), which Brother Boles agrees is parallel with the prophecy in [Dan. 2](#). The four beasts of [Dan. 7](#) are world powers: the first like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, the fourth a terrible ten-horned beast. During the existence of the latter the Son of man receives his dominion, as Brother Boles correctly points out. Now, John sees among things future ([Rev. 4:1](#)) a ten-horned beast coming up out of the sea. He is a universal world power. ([Rev. 13:2-7](#).) As Brother Boles says, there cannot be a fifth one; he is, therefore, one of the four, the fourth one, come back. And, like the image, he embodies all the four: he has the lion's mouth, the bear's feet, the leopard's general appearance, and he himself is that fourth, ten-horned beast. And just like the fourth world power in the image which was smitten by the stone, and the fourth beast of [Dan. 7](#), which was destroyed by judgment from on high, so the beast of John's vision, that final world empire, is destroyed by a judgment from on



high, the descent upon him of Jesus Christ with his saints ([Rev. 19:11-21](#)), after which (like as in the case of the stone [121] that fills the earth in [Dan. 2](#), and as in [Dan. 7](#), where, following the fourth beast's destruction, the saints rule over all under the whole heaven) the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ with his saints ensues ([Rev. 20:1-6](#)). This answers to the prophecy of the smiting of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#), and answers to it fully and perfectly, as, a faithful fulfillment of God's word of prophecy.

Now, if my respondent will produce proof that, not the beginning of the kingdom, but *the smiting of the image*, took place, or began to take place, on Pentecost, I shall be glad to examine his proof. [122]

## Chapter VII.

### H. LEO BOLES' THIRD AFFIRMATIVE.

#### UNFULFILLED PROPHECY.

The question of the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy comes up again. A proper division of the Bible shows seventeen books of prophecy in the Old Testament. Much of the subject matter in these books is history; all the prophecies which have been fulfilled are now history. Only a very small portion of the prophecies can now be classed as "unfulfilled prophecy." Brother Boll has frequently admitted that the proof of his propositions has to do with "unfulfilled prophecies." He says: "Our propositions deal with unfulfilled prophecy, not with the fulfilled." Since his proof has to do with the interpretation of "unfulfilled prophecy" and since very little of the Bible belongs to the class of "unfulfilled prophecy," he has but little Scripture from which to take his proof text. Of course, the occasion for dispute as to whether a prophecy belongs to the class of "fulfilled prophecy" or "unfulfilled prophecy" may arise, but no issue has been raised on the classification of any prophecy.

When Brother Boll admitted that he must go to the class of "unfulfilled prophecies" and interpret "unfulfilled prophecy" before he could prove any of his propositions, the question was raised as to his ability to interpret correctly "unfulfilled prophecy." He wanted to proceed on the assumption that his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy were absolutely correct. I called upon him for proof of his ability to see the end of "unfulfilled prophecy" and give an absolutely correct interpretation of it. I called upon him to give us a guarantee that his interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecy" were infallible. I still insist that he should show his credentials as to his qualifications as an infallible interpreter of "unfulfilled [123] prophecies." Mere "theological guesses" are not to be accepted as proof of his propositions. The emphatic categorical statement was made that *"no proposition which depends wholly upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecies for its proof can ever be established by man unaided by inspiration."* Brother Boll asked me to recede from this position or else he could not prove his propositions "until this one point was settled." He admitted that he could not prove his propositions until he had established the fact that man, unaided by inspiration, could give absolutely correct interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecy." Now, since he had not established this fact nor had given any guarantee that his interpretations were absolutely correct, he felt that he ought to do this before proceeding, and insisted that we settle this point before going further. I reminded him that he should have settled this point twelve or fifteen years ago; that he had been offering his interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecies" to the public on the presumption that his interpretations were absolutely correct.

I have read much of the interpretations of different writers. Almost every new cult in religion attempts to interpret unfulfilled prophecy. They all differ from one another in their interpretations. Pastor Russell gives one interpretation, Mrs. Ellen G. White gives another, and Brother Boll gives still another interpretation. They all differ from one another. Which is correct? They cannot all be correct, since they conflict with one another. Hence, it is fair for me to call upon Brother Boll to show us his credentials or give us a guarantee that his interpretations are

correct before we accept them. I frankly confess that I have no confidence in the interpretations of any uninspired person. I have no faith in Pastor Russell's ability to interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy, neither Mrs. White's, nor Brother Boll's, nor even my own interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. I do not mean to cast any reflection whatsoever upon Brother Boll. I simply mean [124] that I do not believe that any one, unaided by inspiration, can see the end of unfulfilled prophecy and tell how and when it will be fulfilled.

I gave Brother Boll the opportunity to stop in the midst of this discussion and affirm that "the Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy." He refused to affirm this proposition, and asks: "How and where did I claim that uninspired man can know exactly 'how and when' unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled? I am sure that neither in this debate nor anywhere else did I say anything that would warrant such a conclusion." He says that he does not claim to "know exactly how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled." Does he know approximately? He says that he does not know "exactly." How near can he approach exact knowledge of an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy?

He answers my challenge on this point by giving counter propositions for discussion. Such tactics do not get us anywhere; neither are they edifying. The reader knows that the real issue between us is whether Brother Boll is able to give an *absolutely correct* interpretation of "unfulfilled prophecies." No counter challenge or a skillfully worded proposition will obscure the real issue. When Brother Boll admitted that the prophecies of the Bible were Scripturally and logically divided into two classes--"fulfilled" and "unfulfilled prophecies"--and when he admitted that the proof of his proposition depended upon his interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecies," then he assumed the responsibility of showing that he was thoroughly competent to give infallible interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecy." He cannot escape this issue. He is in a dilemma--namely, he must say that his interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecy" are absolutely correct or he must say that he can give no guarantee for the correctness of his interpretations. If he says that he [125] is able to give an absolutely correct interpretation of "unfulfilled prophecies," he takes upon himself the honors of being an infallible interpreter of "unfulfilled prophecies;" if he acknowledges (and he ought to do this) that he is unable to tell exactly whether his interpretations are absolutely correct, he concedes the contention of the affirmative.

He wants to know what the affirmative means by "interpretation" or "private interpretation." I mean just what Peter meant when he said: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation." ([2 Pet. 1:20](#).) This Scripture was quoted in the beginning of our discussion.

Brother Boll states that the affirmative "is not accurate" in stating that he "is unwilling to continue the discussion until we have settled the question whether man, unaided by inspiration, can give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy." I thought that Brother Boll wanted to settle this point first. He said:

Our propositions deal with unfulfilled prophecy, not with the fulfilled; and if a man cannot understand unfulfilled prophecies without being inspired, and since neither Brother Boles nor I

am inspired, the discussion cannot go on, unless Brother Boles recedes from this position. I await his reply to this. The rest of the discussion depends on it.

The reader will see that he says "the discussion cannot go on, unless Brother Boles recedes from this position." I replied at that time and said: "I cannot. I believe it to be true." I did not "recede." The reader may judge whether I was inaccurate in saying that Brother Boll was "unwilling to continue the discussion until this point is settled."

#### THE ISSUE.

When did the kingdom of God begin its mission? Four questions were involved in the proposition they [126] were as follows: First, what does the image represent? Second, what does the stone represent? Third, what does the smiting and destruction of the stone mean? Fourth, when did this stone begin its destructive work?

We have learned that the composite image represented four, and only four, universal world powers. We have learned that these universal kingdoms were the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman empires. These four world powers descended in inferiority from the head of gold to the feet and toes of iron and clay, or from the Babylonian to the Roman Empire. Brother Boll agrees to all of this.

We have also learned that the stone represents the kingdom of God which "the God of heaven would set up." Brother Boll agrees to this. The smiting and destruction of the image by the stone means the conflict which the kingdom of God should have with the world powers; it means the opposition which the kingdom of God has with the forces of evil. Brother Boll agrees to all of this.

When did the stone begin to smite the image? This calls for the sharp issue as set forth in the proposition. The affirmative claims that it began on Pentecost. Brother Boll denies this. The affirmative claims that the smiting and destruction began when the kingdom was set up. Brother Boll denies this and says that it is to be done when Christ returns to earth. The issue is now narrowed down to a very fine point. All extraneous matter has been removed and preliminary work has been done, so there is left nothing else to do except to press the issue. We have waited for this part of the task until now, so that the pressing of it may be the more emphatic.

It is well now to note the admissions which Brother Boll has made, or note how far he agrees with the affirmative. As the stone represents the kingdom of God and the kingdom was established on Pentecost, then the stone began its smiting and destruction when the [127] kingdom began. Brother Boll admits that the kingdom began its mission on Pentecost. Now, the kingdom began its work and mission on Pentecost. Surely no one will claim that the kingdom was set up on Pentecost, which is now more than nineteen hundred years ago, but that it has not yet begun its mission. Brother Boll is in another dilemma. He must say that the kingdom began its work and mission when it was set up, or he must say that the kingdom was set up on Pentecost, but deferred its work and mission until Christ comes again. If he says that it began its work and mission when the kingdom was set up, then he must say that it began its work and mission on Pentecost; if he says that it began its work on Pentecost, he concedes the very point at

issue and all that the affirmative claims. If he says that the kingdom has not yet begun its work and mission, he is placed in the embarrassing position of saying that the God of heaven set up a kingdom and left it in idleness for thousands of years before it could begin its work and mission. This makes the kingdom of God a kingdom of idleness; it makes the King an idle king; it makes the subjects of the kingdom idle subjects; it makes the army of the Lord merely idle soldiers on dress parade.

It must be remembered that Daniel mentions no other work or mission for the stone, or kingdom of God, except that of smiting and destroying all foes to the kingdom of God. The kingdom of Daniel has these points: First, God would set it up; second, it would be given to Christ; third, it would never be destroyed; fourth, its sovereignty would not be left to another people; fifth, it should stand forever, be eternal; sixth, it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Now, we have received just such a kingdom as Daniel describes. "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire." ([Heb. 12:28, 29.](#)) The kingdom which was [128] established on Pentecost is the kingdom which Daniel described; it is the kingdom of God on earth to-day. It is a militant kingdom.

Christ described the nature of Christianity and his kingdom when he walked among men. In speaking of the nature of his kingdom and its spirit, he said: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." ([Matt. 10:34-39.](#))

The nature of the warfare is described by Paul as follows: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh; but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds); casting down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full." ([2 Cor. 10:3-6.](#))

Many Scriptures could be quoted showing that the church of our Lord, or the kingdom established on Pentecost, is militant in spirit and mission. Its subjects are also militant. Paul said: "Fight the good fight of the faith." ([1 Tim. 6:12.](#)) Every citizen of this kingdom has the hope of triumph. He is to have on the "whole armor of God;" he is to follow the Captain of our salvation. The apostle to the Gentiles said at the close of his life: "I have fought the good fight." ([2 Tim. 4:7.](#)) [129]

The gospel is to be preached and the kingdom of God is to go on with constantly increasing victory. The spirit of conquest must ever inspire the citizens of this kingdom. He who does not view the church, or kingdom of God on earth to-day, as a militant institution has not the New Testament conception of that kingdom.

If Brother Boll admits the militant spirit and mission of Christianity, he is admitting the militant mission of the kingdom which began on Pentecost. If he denies the militant mission of this kingdom to-day, he denies a large portion of the Scriptures which describe the fight and triumph of the church. If he admits the militant mission of the church to-day, let him tell us who the foes are which it is fighting; let him tell us what the kingdom of God is opposing; let him tell us why the citizens of the kingdom are ever to be clad with "the whole armor of God," if there is not fighting to be done. Surely, he will not take the position that the kingdom of God to-day is not smiting and destroying the forces of evil which were represented in the composite image of Nebuchadnezzar.

Wherever the influence of Christianity goes, it breaks in pieces and destroys all opposition. The more of the spirit of Christ and Christianity one has, the less need for human government; the more of the spirit of Christ any community has, the less use that community has for human government; the more of the spirit of Christ and Christianity a people have, the less need they have for human government. God's highest conception of human society is faithful citizenship in the kingdom of God; his perfect conception of human society and government is in the kingdom of God. As the kingdom of God is preached and accepted, the smiting and destruction is going on. No one claims that the kingdom has fulfilled its mission or completed its work. The contention of the affirmative is that it began its work and mission on Pentecost and that it has waged its warfare [130] through these centuries and will continue to do so until Christ, the King, shall surrender up the kingdom triumphant to God the Father. "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." ([1 Cor. 15:24-26.](#))

#### REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS EXAMINED.

The stone was to begin smiting the image during the existence of the Roman Empire; the kingdom was to be set up during the existence of the Roman Empire. The stone which represents the kingdom of God did begin its work during the existence of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire has ceased. Like all human governments, it went down. Brother Boll has admitted that the stone began its smiting during the Roman Empire; but since the Roman Empire has ceased, he meets with a serious embarrassment. His theory puts the smiting of the stone, or the work and mission of the kingdom, to begin in the future. How can the kingdom of God begin to destroy the evil powers of the world during the existence of the Roman Empire and it still be in the future? Brother Boll tries to meet this embarrassment by saying that the Roman Empire is to be reëstablished. What an absurd theory! Surely such an absurdity ought to emphasize the egregious error in his theory. What a monstrosity! Where is there any Scripture which teaches that God will bring back into existence old pagan Rome, with all of its corruption and idolatry? How long did it take wickedness to culminate into pagan Rome? Yet Brother Boll says that the God of heaven is going to bring back into existence the Roman Empire. He says: "The Roman world power then, though now it does not exist, is to return. When it returns, the Roman power [131]

will be in the form of a ten-kingdom confederacy under one dominant head; which fact is indicated by the toes of the image; more fully set forth in the ten horns of the fourth beast ([Dan. 7](#)) and clearly revealed to John in Revelation." (Boll, in his "The Kingdom of God," page 19.)

This is a specimen of man's attempt to interpret unfulfilled prophecy. Frankly, I cannot believe that such an interpretation is correct.

If the Roman Empire should be returned, it will not be the same kingdom or government. It will be another government; it will be another world empire; it would be a fifth universal world power and would contradict the image and Daniel's interpretation of the image. Why not have the entire image to return? Why not have Babylon, the head of gold, return? Why not have the Medo-Persian and Grecian kingdoms return? The stone smote the entire image and not just the feet of the image. Surely Brother Boll can see the inconsistency of such a theory; surely he can see that there is something wrong with his interpretation. An interpretation which involves such monstrous errors should be given up. Such an interpretation, which calls for a reestablishment of old pagan Rome, with all of its wickedness and idolatry, is an insult to common intelligence, to say nothing about the perversion of God's word. Frankly, such an interpretation given by Brother Boll disqualifies him as an interpreter of unfulfilled prophecy.

But Brother Boll claims that all of the other three universal world powers are embodied in the returned Roman Empire. How does he know this? There is no Scripture which teaches such. No inspired man has so interpreted the prophecy of Daniel. But Brother Boll attempts to identify the ten-horned beast in Revelation with the Roman government. How does he know that they are one and the same? This is another "theological guess." How does the reader know that his guess is correct? This is only a theory of his. There is not one [132] sentence given by inspiration which connects the prophecy of Daniel and the symbolical language of Revelation, making them mean one and the same thing. Until Brother Boll has proved that man, unaided by inspiration, can give infallible interpretation of unfulfilled prophecies, he must excuse me if I reject his interpretation. The reader may accept them if he wishes and put faith in them, but I cannot.

#### SUMMARY.

No new argument is needed in support of the proposition. The affirmative has tried to deal fairly with the proposition, and presented clear and definite arguments in support of the proposition. I need not say that the negative has failed so far to examine the argument. In fact, the negative has agreed to nearly all of the arguments which have been submitted as proof of the proposition. Nearly one-half of the negative's discussion on this proposition has been given to the question of "unfulfilled prophecy." It was stated in the beginning that the proof of the present proposition does not belong to the field of "unfulfilled prophecy." When Brother Boll admitted that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was the same as the kingdom that was set up on Pentecost, he admitted the contention on this point of the affirmative--namely, that it belongs to the past and not to the future.

Daniel said that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom during the existence of the Roman Empire. John the Baptist, Christ, and eighty-two inspired men were sent out through Galilee and Judea to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," "The kingdom of God is come nigh." Brother Boll and I agree that this kingdom was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ; we further agree that this kingdom is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ; we further agree that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#), which is represented by the stone, is the



kingdom that was set up on Pentecost. [133] Brother Boll was forced to agree to this or contend that the God of heaven had set up two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire.

The argument was made that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was given to Christ, and that only one kingdom was given to him. Brother Boll was forced to admit that the kingdom mentioned in [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom established on Pentecost were one and the same, since Christ was given the one established on Pentecost, or take the position that Christ was given two kingdoms during the existence of the Roman Empire.

Again, the argument was made that Christ is now reigning over the kingdom mentioned in [Dan. 2:44](#) and that he is now reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords over the kingdom established on Pentecost. The negative was forced to take the position that Christ was now reigning over two kingdoms or admit that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) and the kingdom established on Pentecost were one and the same. He agreed with the affirmative that Christ is now reigning over but one kingdom, and that this is an eternal kingdom; that there can be no other kingdom brought into existence without conflicting with the one which Christ is now reigning over.

The only point over which we seem to differ is whether the "smiting and destruction" began on Pentecost. The affirmative has argued that it did begin then or else the kingdom was not functioning in its mission; that the kingdom of which Christ is now King is a militant kingdom and that its subjects are militant. They are instructed to ever be ready with the "whole armor of God" to fight the good fight of faith. The negative's position on this point is that the kingdom is now in idleness, but when Christ comes again the kingdom will then begin its work and mission. Attention was called to the fact that the only feature of the kingdom mentioned by Daniel in fulfilling its mission was "the [134] smiting and destruction" of the foes of Christianity, and since the kingdom began on Pentecost, that its mission began then; and if its mission began then, its work began then. These points have all been established, and the affirmative claims that the proposition has been established.

No one contends that the work of the church or mission of the kingdom has been completed; its mission has not yet been fulfilled, but is in process of fulfillment, and began its fulfillment with the establishment of the kingdom, which was the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. Therefore, "the Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#) began to take place on the day of Pentecost," which was to be proved. [135]

## R. H. BOLL'S THIRD NEGATIVE.

### UNFULFILLED PROPHECY.

I regret the necessity of carrying on the simultaneous discussion of two distinct propositions; but it was foreseen that unless my respondent receded from the unwarranted and unproved position he assumed regarding the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, this matter would have to come up all along; for apart from some agreement on this point no profitable and satisfactory discussion is possible. My respondent thinks I complain of this strange turn because it disables me from proving my proposition. Of course, I cannot help it if he throws the testimony of the Scriptures overboard on the pretext that one needs to be inspired to interpret it; but that is not to my discredit. If, for example, he had gone into debate in good faith with a Roman Catholic on some proposition that the Scriptures teach thus and so, and after getting under way his Roman Catholic opponent had suddenly taken the position that the Scriptures cannot be understood by ordinary fallible folk, and that therefore Brother Boles would never be able, to establish his proposition--that would be some handicap to his debate, would it not? And Brother Boles would probably demand in such a case that his opponent recede from that position or else discuss *that* point to a finish. That is exactly what has happened in this case, and my respondent will neither recede nor face a fair proposition on the issue whether unfulfilled prophecy can be understood just as all other Scripture, but offers me instead a proposition which he should have known I would not accept because it does not represent my contention. Is this worthy of my good brother? I cannot but think that when once he sees the injustice of this attitude he will recede from the position he has taken regarding the testimony of God's word of unfulfilled prophecy. His contention, his very argument, that unfulfilled prophecy [136] cannot be understood, is precisely the same as that which the Roman Catholic Church holds toward all the Scripture. In proof, they, like my respondent, quote [2 Pet. 1:20](#), and call attention to the many differing interpretations among Protestants, and ask triumphantly: "What guarantee can you give that your interpretations are infallibly correct, or are any better than those of all the rest?" There you have it. It seems strange to see an intelligent brother in Christ falling into Roman Catholic tactics. There is no essential difference between the unfulfilled prophecies and any other part of God's word. I will take my brother's arguments to show that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be interpreted by uninspired man and prove by the same logic that no part of Scripture can be understood by uninspired man.

I asked my brother to tell me what he means by "interpretation" and "private interpretation." His reply is an evasion. He says he means exactly what Peter means in [2 Pet. 1:20](#). But he does not tell us what that is. If some one had asked him what he meant by "baptism," he would have given a clear and full explanatory answer. Why does he not tell us what he means by "private interpretation?" He repeatedly accuses me of "private interpretations." I do not know what he means when he speaks of my "interpretations" and "private interpretations." I have repeatedly stated that all the "interpretation" I contend for is the ascertaining of the fair meaning of the language of Scripture. If he objects to that, let him say so, and we will know in that case that he is not willing to accept the testimony of the Scriptures. But if he approves of that (and I am sure he must), he ought not to charge me with some undefined wrong of "private interpretations" of which I am not guilty.

It was pointed out before that if unfulfilled prophecy cannot be interpreted by uninspired man, then the [137] testimony of the Scripture to such themes as heaven, hell, resurrection, judgment, the second coming of Christ, the great and terrible day of the Lord, and such like matters of highest practical importance, is wiped out. He may call these things "promises" and "warnings," but it does not matter--they are unfulfilled prophecy, and everybody can see that they are. If only infallible interpreters can know what these things mean, there is no definite hope or prospect for the Christian and no definite warning to the wicked. These things may mean anything else than what they say, for nobody could possibly know "when or how they will be fulfilled." He arraigns me alongside of Pastor Russell and Mrs. White, the Seventh-Day Adventist prophetess. (I am grateful, by the way, for this admission that my "interpretation" *is different from Russell's and Mrs. Whites.*) But I have the same grounds for standing my respondent up by the side of Pastor Russell and Mrs. Ellen G. White; for they teach one thing about hell and hereafter, and Brother Boles another. So whose interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy shall we take--Russell's, Mrs. White's, or Brother Boles'? What guarantee can Brother Boles give us that his interpretation of unfulfilled prophecies of hell and judgment and hereafter are infallibly correct, and that his interpretation is any better than theirs or anybody else's? That is the sort of reasoning my respondent has been using. Let us drop all this and agree that the Scriptures, old or new, fulfilled or unfulfilled, are given us from God, and should be received and believed according to the fair import of their language. It is a pity to waste time and space over such things. Our purpose in this debate is simply to search and see what God has said.

I seriously protest against the statement that "the real issue between us is whether Brother Boll is able to give an *absolutely correct* interpretation of unfulfilled [138] prophecies." When did the issue get to be that? I did not offer to affirm in this debate my infallibility as an interpreter of unfulfilled prophecy or any other part of Scripture; nor am I under any obligation by the issues of this debate to show any "credentials" to that elect; nor did I assume the responsibility of showing that I am "thoroughly competent to give infallible interpretations." Neither the propositions as drawn, nor my offer to affirm that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principle as other Scripture, nor yet my "admission" that my proofs for these propositions are drawn from the unfulfilled prophecies--not by any of these am I under obligation to debate *Boll's infallibility*. The issue is not Boll, I hope, but *what has God said*, and *does God mean what he has said?* That, and only that, is *the real issue*. The proposition I submitted represents precisely what I believe and stand for on this point: "*The Scriptures teach that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles as the rest of God's word.*" If Brother Boles denies this, let us debate it; if he concedes it, let us proceed with our next proposition. Which shall it be? I must have his answer to this.

#### THE PROPOSITION PROPER.

*The Scriptures teach that the event signified by the smiting and destruction of the image in [Dan. 2:34, 35 and 44, 45](#) began to take place on the day of Pentecost."*

In his first affirmative my respondent hardly touched the point at issue. He strove to establish the fact that the kingdom was set up on Pentecost, and that the church began on Pentecost, and that the church is the kingdom which is represented by that stone cut out without hands--none of which was under dispute and all of which I gladly conceded. I thought that strange, because I had

pointed the real issue out to him both before the debate began and again in my first negative. But in the second affirmative he again took up the same line, and what [139] could I do more than tell him that I agreed with him on the bulk of his argument? But now he seems to think he has "narrowed down the issue to a very fine point," and that "all extraneous and preliminary matter has been cleared away," etc., and that now there is "nothing else to do except to press the issue." "We have waited for this task until now," he adds. Frankly, I do not understand my brother. He did not narrow down anything to a fine point; the point was that fine and narrow to begin with. In our preliminary correspondence (letter dated January 21, 1927) I wrote to him as follows:

I have never denied that the kingdom was set up on Pentecost; nor have I contended that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) is a different kingdom from that which now exists, except in form and manifestation. If you will examine the note on page 20 of my book, "The Kingdom of God," you will see that it is not so much my point to deny the previous existence of the kingdom in some form as that no such phase and manifestation of the kingdom on earth as that represented in [Dan. 2:35, 44](#) has as yet taken place.

Since he knew this, why did he not address himself to the one point at issue? Did he doubt me when I told him that I believed that the kingdom was set up on Pentecost and that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) is not a different kingdom? Why, if he knew this, did he wait until now to face the real issue? Why did he fight a straw man in his first two articles? Nay, three times over in this last affirmative he goes so far as to declare that I was "*forced*" to take these positions, when, in fact, these were my published positions long before the debate. I do not understand this.

I am glad, however, that the issue proper is now coming in for some attention. Brother Boles reasons that since the mission of the kingdom is the smiting and destroying of the world power, unless the kingdom were an idle kingdom, instead of the militant kingdom which it is, its mission must have begun with its establishment. [140]

That is to the point. But in this argument he assumes that the kingdom could have had no other preliminary mission; and proceeding upon this assumption, he argues that unless it had done what Daniel said it would do it was an *idle* kingdom. So he endeavors to show that something like what [Dan. 2:35 and 44](#) predict has been coming to pass. That is what I deny. True, Daniel does not tell us that it had any other mission, but that does not prove that it had no other task to perform. Since there must necessarily have been a longer or shorter space between the first formation of the stone and its destructive descent upon the image, and if elsewhere the Scriptures show that the kingdom passes through a preliminary stage of suffering and humiliation, and it be seen that no smiting or destroying of the world power has as yet taken place, the affirmative's argument is met from every angle.

The prophecy of [Dan. 2](#) views the kingdom in its seizure of the world sovereignty. That period of the kingdom which is represented by the church from its beginning until its triumph in judgment upon the world comes in for no notice in Daniel, except in the brief reference to the stone's being cut out without hands previous to its descent. The kingdom of God as represented by "the church militant" belongs to the period preceding the descent of the stone upon the feet of the image. The stone descending is the church triumphant, when she appears in glory with her Lord. ([Col. 3:4](#).) The church is indeed a militant church; at least, it ought to be. But the present

militancy of the church is not directed against any world power or against any human government. The church is always loyal and subject to the civil government, and her influence and teaching and prayer is helpful rather than detrimental to "the powers that be." The church did not destroy Rome; she rather even by her presence counteracted Rome's inward moral rottenness and thus delayed her fall. The militant church [141] has never overthrown or destroyed any civil government either by physical or spiritual means, and never will. The "church militant" is a suffering church. She is always comparatively small, poor; and she is persecuted and despised in proportion as she is true to her Lord. As he was, so is she in the world. It has already been pointed out that in the last days she will be smaller rather than larger, and will be almost swamped by the world. ([Luke 18:8](#); [2 Tim. 3:1-5](#).) During the whole period of Christ's absence while he is gathering out this people for himself, the forces of evil prevail. The mystery of lawlessness does already work, but before the day of the Lord shall come evil will be at a maximum; the falling away shall come first, and the "man of sin" is revealed, and there will be an all but universal delusion. At his glorious coming with his saints, Christ will handle the situation and will deal with it in judgment, and will bring this "man of sin" to naught "by the manifestation of his coming." ([2 Thess. 2](#).) This makes a very much different picture from what Brother Boles would set before us. A little examination and reflection will convince the reader that the present mission and militancy of the church cannot be that of the smiting and destruction of the image. Centuries passed away after the establishment of the kingdom on Pentecost. Rome still stood; yea, she flourished and grew and increased. The church did not hurt Rome in any wise; but Rome hurt the church, by fierce persecutions at first, by corrupting her afterwards. The "image" still stood, but the "stone" would have been hard to find. By the time Rome fell the great bulk of the professing church had become so changed and corrupted that Brother Boles would not have recognized it nor fellowshipped it. Where was the church? A few hunted, persecuted believers, who dwelt in mountain fastnesses and in caves and holes of the earth, represented her in those evil days and for centuries after. These are simple facts which Brother [142] Boles will not deny. When Rome finally fell, there was no traceable connection, even remotely, between her downfall and the mission or militancy of the church. Nothing that the church did by way of either physical or moral conflict had anything whatever to do with Rome's fall. My respondent ought to prove that the stone did something to the image that could reasonably be called "smiting" and "destruction." But his theory that this smiting and destruction began on Pentecost is contrary to all the facts in the case. And after Rome fell there was nothing corresponding to the small fragments "like the chaff of the summer's threshing floor," as there should have been if the stone had smitten it; but the large chunks of it remain unto this day and even show some symptoms of reuniting; and none of the remains have blown away. But the church was almost reduced to chaff and blown away. There is absolutely no correspondence between the prophecy and Brother Boles' alleged fulfillment of it.

For the purposes of the present proposition, I do not care whether or not he believes that the last world power is coming back or not to be smitten by the stone in fulfillment of God's word. That matter will come up in a future proposition. But it is his business to prove that the stone (which is the kingdom, the church) has smitten the image, or began to do so on Pentecost. He cannot show either by fact or Scripture that such a thing has happened. If it was "the mission of the kingdom" to smite and destroy the image, then, in all honesty, he is forced to confess that the kingdom has thus far been a complete and dismal failure; for, instead of smiting and destroying any world power, it has never done anything of the sort, even partially, nor anything that by any

reasonable exegesis can be construed that way. And the Scripture does not intimate that such a thing will be before Christ comes. [143]

#### SUMMARY.

We have arrived at the close of the second proposition. The affirmative was to prove that the smiting and destruction of the image, according to [Dan. 2:35, 44](#), took place, or began to take place, on the day of Pentecost. He set forth many things, well and ably; but this, so far as I am able to judge, he did not prove. The first two affirmatives were misdirected toward the proving of an issue that was not in dispute. On the point at issue he made but one serious argument (the one above replied to) to prove that the stone, the kingdom of God, began its work of smiting and destroying the image, representing the Gentile world power. It was shown that in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as interpreted by Daniel, (1) the stone was cut out without hands; (2) it descended upon the image and smote it upon its feet; (3) the image was broken into small fragments like the chaff; (4) the winds carried them away and there was no place found for them; (5) the stone became a mighty mountain and filled the whole earth. The affirmative's duty was to prove, not that the stone was cut out, that the kingdom began on Pentecost, but that it then began to smite and destroy the image. The negative pointed out that nothing comparable to such an event ever came to pass or began to come to pass on Pentecost or has been traceable since.

It was shown by the negative that--

(1) The stone's impact upon the feet signifies, not moral influence, but destructive force.

(2) That the stone and the image are not represented as at any time coexisting side by side: the coming of the one means the destruction and removal of the other.

(3) There is nothing in the prophecy to indicate that the stone would permeate the image with its influence, or that it would gradually wear away or absorb the image, or that the stone in its expansive growth would gradually crowd the image off the scene (for the stone [144] does not grow nor take possession of the earth until the image is wholly destroyed and removed).

(4) That there is no correspondence whatever between the prophecy of [Dan. 2:34, 35, and 44, 45](#) and the alleged fulfillment as claimed by the affirmative.

When Christ comes in glory with his saints, he will shatter the opposing world power, and the announcement will go forth at the seventh trumpet's sound: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of the Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever." ([Rev. 11:15](#).) This is the point which the prophecy of [Dan. 2](#) and of [Dan. 7](#) has in view.

Throughout the negative has endeavored to preserve brotherly esteem and the high plane of the discussion with which we started out, and intends to continue so or do even better; and I shall count on Brother Boles' consent and help in this our common purpose. [145]



## PROPOSITION III.

### THE REIGN OF CHRIST.

**Third Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that after his coming Christ will with his saints reign over all the earth." R. H. Boll affirms; H. Leo Boles denies.**

### Chapter VIII.

#### R. H. BOLL'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.

In taking up this new proposition, I am first of all compelled again to refer to the question raised concerning the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. The reader will recall that in my last article before this I insisted that I must know whether Brother Boles will discuss the proposition which represents my position on the matter of unfulfilled prophecy: "The Scriptures teach that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles as the rest of God's word." I said: "If Brother Boles denies this, let us debate it; if he concedes it, let us proceed with our next proposition." In a private letter I explained to Brother Boles that I must have some sort of answer, in order to know whether to take up this proposition concerning unfulfilled prophecy, or to send in the first affirmative on the reign of Christ with his saints, which is the next in order. In reply, Brother Boles offers me again the proposition which, as I fully explained before, does not represent my position: "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled;" or (if I preferred), "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy, telling how and when it will be fulfilled." [146]

I wonder why my brother wastes time and words. He knows by now, if he did not know at first, that his propositions do not represent my position. He knows (for I have repeatedly declared myself on this) that I do not claim to know any more about the *when* and *how* of unfulfilled prophecy, or about anything else, than God has revealed. In my second negative of the second proposition I said:

I claim to know nothing about any matter of prophecy except what God has said in his Book. If, in connection with any unfulfilled prophecy, God revealed the "when" and the details of circumstance under which the prophecy would be fulfilled, we can know that, too; if not, we cannot. The question is not one concerning the *when* or *how*, but the *what* of God's predictions. The proposition that requires our attention is that "*unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles and in the same way as all the rest of God's word.*" Will Brother Boles deny this? If so, we must discuss that above all else. If not, we can go on with the discussion.

Is that not plain enough? Again, I said:

Brother Boles must concede that unfulfilled prophecy can be understood according to the common standards that govern the interpretation of Scripture, and, indeed, of all language. I ask



for no privilege of "private interpretation;" but I do insist upon an acceptance of God's word as testimony to the proposition, in accordance with the fair meaning of its statements.

In the face of these and other equally plain declarations of my position on these matters, it is wholly inexplicable to me that Brother Boles would continue to offer me propositions which he knew beforehand do not represent my position and which he knew I could not and would not accept. The right course, if Brother Boles believes that the unfulfilled prophecies of God's word can be understood on the same principles as the rest of God's word, would be simply to say so, and that would settle the matter. If he does not so believe, he ought to be willing to debate that point. The matter is important because it is fundamental. It affects the great amount of unfulfilled prophecy which runs not only through the [147] seventeen prophetic books of the Bible, but through the whole Book; and the principle involved has an essential bearing on the whole question of Biblical interpretation. I am still waiting to hear whether Brother Boles believes that God's word of unfulfilled prophecy is to be received and understood at its own fair meaning, or whether Brother Boles will deny that. He knows that that is the issue, and I would like for him to face it.

We will now take up

### THE THIRD PROPOSITION.

*The Scriptures teach that after his coming, Christ will with his saints reign over all the earth.*

"*The Scriptures*" are the Old and New Testaments. By *Christ's coming* is meant his promised personal return from heaven. "His saints" are his own saved people whom he has redeemed with his blood. To "reign" is to exercise rule and government. The word is meant in its primary and simple sense, as denoting the direct exercise of rule and governmental authority over territory and subjects. "*All the earth*" means the entire globe and all humanity, all nations living on it; all the peoples, nations, and languages," and all the "kingdoms under the whole heaven."

It is understood that the Lord Jesus Christ at his ascension and exaltation received universal authority. "All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth," he said. He is "on the right hand of God," says Peter, "angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." ([1 Pet. 3:22](#).) In this dominion everything in heaven and earth, the entire physical and spiritual universe, is included. "For, he put all things in subjection under his feet," the only exception being the One who did subject all things unto him. ([1 Cor. 15:27](#).) But within the boundaries of this vast dominion there is one world which is, and has been for a long time, in a state of rebellion. Here as yet a rebel prince, a usurper, holds sway [148] --the "prince of this world" ([John 12:31](#)), also called "the god of this world" ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)); the "prince of the powers of the air," "the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" ([Eph. 2:2](#)), who holds the whole world in his embrace ([1 John 5:19](#)). He has his throne on the earth ([Rev. 2:13](#)), and the authority of the kingdoms of the world is until yet left in his hands, and to whomsoever he will he gives it. God providentially overrules, but Satan is until yet in power. It is not strange, in view of these facts, that

Our Lord is now rejected and by the world disowned,

By the many still neglected and by the few enthroned."

Those who come to Jesus Christ and thus save themselves from this untoward generation, who renounce the dominion of Satan and acknowledge Jesus as Lord, are thus spiritually delivered out of the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. ([Col. 1:13](#).) Thenceforth they are no longer *of* the world. But they are *in* the world, which is Satan's province, and thus are exposed to Satan's enmity and malice. They all have to suffer persecution. ([2 Tim. 3:12](#).) They are "strangers" here. The world hates them because they are not of the world. If they should seek and gain the world's friendship, it will be at the price of loyalty to God. ([James 4:4](#).) The faithful Christian must share his Lord's rejection and reproach.

The power which Satan holds he will at last place in the hands of one who is referred to as "the beast," to whom Satan will give his throne and power and dominion. ([Rev. 13:2, 7](#).) This beast will be destroyed by the Lord Jesus at his coming. ([Rev. 19:11-21](#).) Then will the Lord Jesus assert his right and power, rendering vengeance to his adversaries and taking possession of the earth, which, indeed, is his by every right. At the sounding of the seventh trump goes forth the cry: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever." [149] ([Re 11:15](#).) Then those who in this evil age have loyally suffered for their Lord's sake shall share his reign and glory.

The present proposition requires the affirmative to show that after the coming of Christ he will reign with his saints over all the earth.

My first evidence for this is found in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ to the church at Thyatira: "And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father." ([Rev. 2:26, 27](#).)

It is manifest here that the rule of the "rod of iron" is the God-given prerogative of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Comp. [Ps. 2](#).) The rod (equivalent to "scepter") is, as the text itself shows, the symbol of rule and executive government which our Lord has the right to wield. On this there is no disagreement, I think.

Now, speaking to his church (the church at Thyatira, directly, but through her to every other congregation, as my respondent will agree), he promises to each of her members a share and part in this government on certain conditions. To the one fulfilling these conditions the Lord Jesus says: "To him will I give authority over the nations." The nature of this authority is made clear in the clause following: "He shall rule them [the nations] with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father." As it is written in the second Psalm:

I will tell of the decree:  
Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son;  
This day have I begotten thee.  
Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,  
And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;  
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

([Verses 7-9.](#)) [150]

And as the Father grants to him, so will he grant to his disciples. If he sits on his throne, they shall sit on his throne with him. ([Rev. 3:21.](#)) "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." ([2 Tim. 2:12](#)); "if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him" ([Rom. 8:17](#)). For we are called unto fellowship (partnership) with our Lord Jesus Christ. ([1 Cor. 1:9](#).) We share his humiliation now and his rejection at the hands of the world; we shall share his glory and his reign also. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" Says Paul to the Corinthians, speaking as though they should certainly have known that much. That necessarily involves a sharing in Christ's high prerogatives as King and Judge. All judgment is committed to Christ ([John 5:24, 27](#)), the Man whom God has ordained for this ([Acts 17:31](#)); and his saints are associated with him in this. Yea, they shall judge even angels. ([1 Cor. 6:2, 3](#).) The context of this passage ([1 Cor. 6:2](#)) shows that he means judging in the plain sense of rendering decision and pronouncing judicial sentence upon men. This is a vital part of the governmental function, Christ's reign over the earth.

The Scriptures do teach, therefore, Christ's reign over all the earth, and the fact that the saints shall reign with him. The point that remains to be established is the time when the saints shall reign with Christ; for the proposition requires that it will be *after his coming*. I need not remind the reader of what has been so often said before, that I do not claim to know *when* a prophecy will be fulfilled, unless the when is revealed in God's word. This writer professes to know absolutely nothing about any prophetic matters, or any other item of Christian faith, except what God has revealed in his word. I know that the saints will reign with Christ only because the word of God says so; but when once God says a thing, it is for us to believe and receive, regardless of whether it fits into our own or any one else's theology. When God [151] says it, it is so; and it is not my duty to change it or explain it away, but to receive it as the truth. This much of the proposition, then, is settled. Now, as to the time of Christ's reign with the saints: This is to be learned (1) from the nature of the conditions upon which such a reign is promised to the saints, and (2) by the direct teaching on the point.

1. The required conditions in Christ's promise to the Thyatira Christians are as follows: "Nevertheless that which ye have, *hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh*, and he that *keepeth my works unto the end*, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them; . . . as I also have received of my Father." ([Rev. 2:25-27.](#)) The promise is contingent on their holding fast what they have till Jesus comes, and their overcoming, and their keeping his works unto the end. It is manifest that the Christian cannot receive this authority over the nations, and right and power to rule them with a rod of iron, until after he has been tested, has kept Christ's works faithfully unto the end (whatever the "end" may be), and has finally overcome, and has held fast what he had till Jesus comes. "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." ([2 Tim. 2:12.](#)) Therefore, the reign of the saints with Christ is not while they are yet under trial, but when they shall have overcome, and have kept his works unto the end, and when, after Jesus' coming, they have been adjudged worthy. For not until Jesus comes are the saints examined as to their works and conduct regarding him. "Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels

of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God." ([1 Cor. 4:5.](#)) This is perfectly conclusive. The crown and the reign and the glory are not for us till Jesus comes. Therefore, the Scriptures teach that after his coming Christ will reign with his saints over all the earth. [152]

2. The direct teaching is equally clear and conclusive.

When the beast (according to [Rev. 13:2, 7](#), the head of the last world power) and the kings of the earth with their armies are seen gathered together unto the battle of the great day of God, the Almighty, in that final supreme outburst of rage and rebellion, the heaven opens and there comes forth One who is King of kings and Lord of lords. "Out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: *and he shall rule them with a rod of iron:* and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty." But behind him and with him follow the armies of heaven, who are the "called and chosen and faithful." ([Rev. 17:14.](#)) Judgment is executed, Satan bound and *utterly removed*, being shut up in prison for a thousand years. John sees a company sitting upon thrones, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ([Rev. 19:11 to 20:6.](#))

I do not know how language, taken at its simple, fair import and meaning, could any more directly establish any proposition than these passages establish the fact that Christ after his coming will with his saints reign over the nations of the earth. So far as the language of Scripture can determine a thing, we need not hesitate to declare that "Thus saith the Lord."

This teaching is corroborated by other passages in both Testaments. In the vision of the four beasts ([Dan. 7](#)), the fourth beast, which is the fourth and last world power, or its representative king ([Dan. 7:15, 23](#)), persecutes and wears out and prevails against the saints, until the Ancient of days comes for judgment ([Dan. 7:22](#)) and the beast is destroyed. Then and thenceforth "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." ([Dan. 7:18.](#)) "The kingdom" is manifestly that realm of government which the fourth beast had previously held. When his dominion is taken away and utterly destroyed, "the [153] kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." ([Dan. 7:26, 27.](#)) This is that world-wide dominion which was given to "one like unto a son of man," which his saints receive and administrate under him. ([Dan. 7:13, 14.](#))

We have seen--

1. That it is Christ's prerogative to rule and reign over the nations.
2. That his saints shall share with him in this prerogative and authority.
3. That this will not be until they have been tested, tried, and found faithful, when Jesus comes to reward his servants, and they who have overcome shall sit down with him in his throne.
4. When he comes in power and great glory and destroys his adversaries, and Satan is bound and imprisoned, and the kingdom of the world shall have become the kingdom of the Lord and of

his Christ, his saints also shall sit upon thrones and reign with him a thousand years, and beyond that forever and ever. ([Rev. 22:5.](#))

Therefore, I hold that the Scriptures teach that Christ will with his saints reign over all the earth after his coming. [154]

## H. LEO BOLES' FIRST NEGATIVE.

This proposition launches Brother Boll further into the mysteries and deeper into the complexities of unfulfilled prophecy than any of the other propositions. The time of this proposition takes us beyond the resurrection and the second advent of Christ. We should bear in mind the fact and admission of Brother Boll that this proposition with others has nothing to do with our obedience to the gospel and our faithful work and worship in the church as the Lord's people; they belong to the future, and the Lord's people can be faithful to him and never understand or believe the present proposition.

Necessarily the question of the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy is introduced again by Brother Boll, since the direct proof of his proposition admittedly belongs to that field of human endeavor. I am sure that the reader understands the issue between Brother Boll and me on the question of interpreting unfulfilled prophecy. However, for the sake of emphasis, the issue is restated. Early in the discussion of the first proposition Brother Boll, inadvertently or otherwise, admitted that the proof of all of his propositions depended upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. At once he was called upon to give evidence that his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy were absolutely correct. This emphatic statement was made: "*No proposition which depends wholly upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy by uninspired man for its proof can be established.*" It is an indisputable fact and an incontestable principle that if the proof of a proposition depends upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, the proposition which so depends upon the interpretation cannot be logically proved unless the interpretations are absolutely correct. If there is an element of doubt, uncertainty, improbability in the interpretation, this same element of doubt and uncertainty enters into the proof of the proposition; that if truth and [155] certitude do not characterize the premises, doubt and uncertainty must of necessity inhere in the conclusion. This cannot be disputed. Now, unless Brother Boll can give us a guarantee that his interpretations are absolutely correct, he cannot prove his proposition.

He wished to stop or divert attention from the signed propositions and take up this new issue. We have failed to agree upon the wording of a new proposition. I have tried to get him to accept an unequivocal statement of the issue. We have been discussing this issue in almost every article. I have stated it as follows: "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled;" or, "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy, telling how and when it will be fulfilled." He says that this statement of the issue does not represent his position. Whether it "represents his position" or not, *it represents the issue*, and he must prove this before he can prove his proposition and use logically his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy as proof of his proposition. He must prove that man can interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecies; and even after he proves that, he must prove that he belongs to that class of men who can, unaided by inspiration, interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy.

But he complains that I will not discuss this new issue with him. This claim is rather amusing, since the reader knows that I have been discussing it with him in every article since the point was raised. But why does he complain that I will not discuss it with him? If he can prove that he is able to give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, why does he

not do so? He is of age; he can speak for himself; I have no strings on him; he is at liberty to prove it if he can, and give us his credentials that he is an infallible interpreter of unfulfilled prophecy. He does not need another proposition in order to prove it. I am sure the reader is wondering why he [156] does not launch out and establish that point, as he has repeatedly admitted that he cannot prove his proposition until he proves this point. Why "waste time and words" about it? He was in the lead when the question arose, and he is now in the lead. If he can give us an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, he owes it to himself, his proposition, the brotherhood, and to the truth of God to give us the evidence that his interpretations are absolutely correct. Not only does he have the opportunity to give the evidence that his interpretations are correct, but he is urged by the force of the logic of the situation to do so.

I am on absolutely safe ground when I say that man, unaided by inspiration, cannot see the end of unfulfilled prophecy and tell how and when it will be fulfilled. E. G. Sewell, in writing on this point, said:

We think it just the same way in regard to, the unfulfilled prophecies of the book of Revelation, and yet men are constantly claiming to understand them and to be able to tell others all about them. These efforts have been going on for centuries; theory after theory has been written and published, claiming to tell when, how, and by whom these prophecies would be fulfilled, and by the next generation abandoned as fallacious; and still they keep on, with the same results. With a knowledge of the failures which the Jewish people made in regard to the prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom, people ought to learn a lesson in regard to the prophecies yet to be fulfilled, and not waste so much precious time in a vain effort to understand the figurative representations of things that are to take place hereafter. The time would be much better spent in learning, teaching, and practicing the plain and practical requirements of the Christian religion. (Gospel Advocate, June 11, 1903.)

The lamented David Lipscomb wrote as follows:

This is assumed, but on what ground we have never been able to see. So it is with all prophetic calculations. We could make many, if we could but fix a certain starting point. But, alas! These have always, so far as known to me, been based upon the merest fancies. (Gospel Advocate, September 24, 1868.) [157]

Again, he said:

I have very little confidence in human interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies. Because when I look at the fulfillment as given by God, they differ so from what I would have said it meant that I have no confidence in my own interpretations or those of others of what is unfulfilled. (Gospel Advocate, December 5, 1907.)

This has been the position of the Gospel Advocate on the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy all through the years; it is the position of its present editors. These references to the Advocate and the quotations from Brethren Sewell and Lipscomb are made to show that I am in



good company when I say that man, unaided by inspiration, cannot give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, telling how and when it will be fulfilled.

Prophecy was not intended to make uninspired men prophets; this it would do if uninspired man could see the end of unfulfilled prophecy. If uninspired men can see the end of unfulfilled prophecy and tell how and when it will be fulfilled, these men become uninspired prophets. If uninspired men can give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, then uninspired men have more ability than the inspired prophets, for they could not do this. If uninspired man can give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, uninspired man has the advantage over angels, for angels could not do that. (See [1 Pet. 1:10-12.](#))

The present proposition is a simple statement which depends for its proof--if, indeed, it has any Scriptural proof--upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. Brother Boll is not quite clear in the definition of some of his terms of his proposition. He does not tell us just how the saints are to reign with Christ. Are they to sit on thrones with him when he comes? Are they coequal with him in the reigning? Over whom will they reign? Let us know just how his saints will reign with him after he comes. He says that "all the earth" means "the [158] entire globe and all humanity, all nations living on it; 'all the peoples, nations, and languages,' all the 'kingdoms under the whole heaven.'" This includes all rule, authority, and everybody; it includes the entire human race, from Adam, the oldest member of the family, to the youngest member when the race of man shall cease; it includes all from the first to the last. Not a single exception. It includes saint and sinner. It means, then, that Christ will reign "with his saints" over his "saints," as the saints are included in the entire human family. This seems to me to involve an absurdity--namely, Christ reigning "with his saints" over "his saints." How can this be?

#### CHRIST REIGNING NOW.

Christ has all authority *now*. ([Matt. 28:18.](#)) "Angels and authorities and powers" are *now* "subject unto him." ([1 Pet. 3:22.](#)) Christ is *now* "both Lord and Christ." ([Acts 2:36.](#)) He is *now* "King of kings, and Lord of lords." ([1 Tim. 6:15.](#)) He is *now* at the right hand of God and "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion." ([Eph. 1:21.](#)) The Scriptures abundantly teach that Christ is *now* reigning. He has been crowned King and has a kingdom with laws, subjects, and territory. All the Scriptures which Brother Boll gives concerning Christ's reigning help to emphasize this fact. It is dishonoring to Christ to imply or argue that he must come the second time before he can reign over all rule, authority, power, and dominion; he has dominion *now*, even over angels. (See [Rom. 5:21](#); [1 Cor. 15:25.](#)) The fact that he is a King *now* is proof positive that he is reigning now.

The reign of Christ began on Pentecost. (See [Acts 2:23-36.](#)) His present reign will not end till the last enemy shall have been brought into subjection to him. Paul said: "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, [159] till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." ([1 Cor. 15:24-26.](#))

The present reign of Christ will continue until "all things have been subjected unto him." ([1 Cor. 15:28.](#)) When the last enemy shall have been conquered, then his reign ceases, and "he shall

deliver up the kingdom to God," "that God may be all and in all." Yes, my Lord is now a King; he is reigning and will triumph in his present reign until "all things have been subjected unto him." It should be remembered that when Christ comes he cannot be given any more power or authority than that which he already has. *Now* has *all* power and authority. When he comes, he cannot be exalted any higher than his present position, for he is *now* "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." When he comes, he will not be given any more power, because he now has *all* power; when he comes, he will not be exalted any higher, because he is *now* at the right hand of God, far above *all* rule; when he comes again, his dominion will be no greater than it is now, because he is now enthroned and must reign until the last enemy is subdued; when he comes, he will not be given a greater kingdom, because he now has a universal kingdom "which cannot be shaken." ([Heb. 12:28](#).) These Scriptural facts forever explode Brother Boll's theory of what he will do when he comes. There will be no enemies to conquer when he comes, because his present reign will continue until the last one is conquered.

#### THE REIGN OF HIS SAINTS.

Brother Boll and I agree that the Bible teaches that the saints are to reign with Christ. We differ, unfortunately, as to *when* the saints are to reign with him. Brother Boll teaches that they do not reign with him until after their resurrection. This is the point of time affirmed in his [160] present proposition. I think the Bible teaches that the Lord's people are now reigning with Christ. This is the issue: Are they reigning *now*, or must they wait until Christ comes and they are raised from the dead? In speaking of the saints, Peter says: "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." ([1 Pet. 2:9](#).) "A royal priesthood" means a kingly priesthood; a priesthood of kings or a kingdom of priests. In the church or kingdom of our Lord the two elements of kingship and priesthood are united in every faithful child of God. Every Christian is a king and a priest; kings to reign with him and priests to offer spiritual sacrifices to him. As sure as the saints are priests, so sure are they kings; if kings, then reigning with him. In this sense Christ is indeed "King of kings," as he is our King. Paul says: For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ." ([Rom. 5:17](#).) From this we learn that Christ is reigning through his people, or his saints are reigning through him.

Christ promised his apostles that they should sit on thrones in his kingdom or church and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (See [Matt. 19:28](#); [Luke 22:30](#).) As Christ had promised his apostles that they should reign with him, so those who accept the Lord's will as given through the apostles join in the reigning with them. Paul refers to this in [1 Cor. 6:2](#). That which was promised to the apostles, that they should "sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Paul extends in a general way this same honor to all the faithful followers of Christ, his "royal priesthood." Since the kingdom has been established and the apostles are still reigning in that kingdom and all the saints are in the kingdom, they are reigning with Christ in his kingdom to-day. [161]

#### EXAMINATION OF AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS.

Brother Boll quotes a part of the second Psalm as not being fulfilled till Christ comes; but, unfortunately for Brother Boll's position, the Holy Spirit quotes this Psalm in the New Testament and says that it was fulfilled in Christ and his kingdom. ([Acts 4:25, 26.](#)) Again, the Holy Spirit says "that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm," etc. ([Acts 13:33](#); see [Heb. 1:5; 5:5.](#))

Brother Boll quotes [2 Tim. 2:12](#), which reads: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." Brother Boll applies this to our reigning with Christ after the resurrection of the saints, or when Christ comes. In commenting upon this verse, Dr. Ellicott says: "Not only shall we live, but be kings with him." ("Commentary," Volume II.) Dr. Macknight says: "I do not think there is here any reference to the millennium as Benson fancies. In other passages of Scripture the future felicity of the righteous is represented by their reigning with Christ. ([Rev. 3:21.](#))" ("Commentary on Second Timothy.")

Brother Boll next goes to the book of Revelation for proof of his proposition. This book is written largely in figures, symbols, and allegories. Now, truths, facts, and principles are not to be explained by figures and symbols, but figures and symbols are to be explained by facts and principles. One law of interpretation to which Brother Boll and I have subscribed is that obscure and figurative language is to be interpreted or explained by plain and simple Scriptures. Brother Boll does not follow this law of interpretation when he comes to the apocalyptic prophecies. He has taken symbolic and figurative language and given his own interpretation of it instead of other plain and simple Scriptures which bear upon the point. He violated his own caution which he gave some years ago. He said: "Study Revelation also--there is a blessing in it ([Rev. 1:3](#))--but beware of the many [162] called interpretations, wild theories, and imaginations men have spun around that book. First get its facts and teaching into your mind whether you understand or not." ("How to Understand and Apply the Bible," by R. H. Boll, page 24.)

Brother Boll says that "the time of Christ's reign with the saints" is to be learned from two sources or in two ways: (1) "From the nature of the conditions upon which a reign is promised to the saints;" (2) "by the direct teaching on the point." Logically these are not two ways; for if "such a reign is promised to the saints," if promised at all in the Scriptures, then the Scriptures directly teach it; and if the Scriptures directly teach it, his two ways become only one. But we wish to examine both branches of his evidence.

He quotes [Rev. 2:25-27](#) as enumerating the conditions upon which the promise to reign with Christ is made. These conditions are (1) "their holding fast," (2) "their overcoming," (3) "their keeping his works unto the end." These conditions do not necessarily belong to the time after the resurrection; they, can belong to the saints in their reign now with Christ, as their reign with Christ now is conditioned upon their faithfulness to him.

In order that the reader may know whether Brother Boll is able to interpret symbolic terms, figurative language, and allegories found in the book of Revelation, a list of them is compiled and submitted for his interpretation. They are as follows:

### [Chapter 13.](#)

1. What is meant by the "beast coming up out of the sea?"
2. The "seven heads and "ten horns?"
3. The "ten diadems" on the "ten horns?"
4. The "death stroke?"
5. The "dragon?"
6. The "forty and two months?"
7. The "other beast?" [163]
8. Its "two horns?"
9. The "fire" that came from heaven?
10. The "image of the beast?"
11. The "mark on their right hand?"
12. The "number of a man," "six hundred and sixty and six?"

#### *Chapter 14.*

1. The "four living creatures?"
2. Is "the hundred and forty and four thousand" to be taken literally?
3. The "eternal good tidings?"
4. "Babylon?"
5. The "wine of the wrath of God?"
6. The "sharp sickle?"
7. The "thousand and six hundred furlongs?"

#### *Chapter 15.*

1. The "seven plagues?"
2. The "harps of God?"

#### *Chapter 16.*

1. Are "the seven bowls" literal?
2. Are the "sores" literal?
3. Does the "sea" become literal blood?
4. What were the "three unclean spirits?"
5. What and where is Har-Magedon?

#### *Chapter 17.*

1. The "great harlot?"
2. The "foundation of the world?"
3. The "five" kings?
4. Is the time "one hour" literal?
5. Do they eat her literal flesh?

#### *Chapter 19.*

1. Is the great "white horse" literal?
2. Is the eating of "the flesh of kings" literal?
3. Who is "the beast?"
4. Who is "the false prophet?" [164]

*Chapter 20.*

1. What is "the key of the abyss?"
2. Are the "thousand years" literal or measured as we now measure time?
3. What is "the first resurrection?"
4. Who are "Gog and Magog?"
5. Over whom shall the saints reign forever and ever?

His explanation of these terms, symbols, and figures will help us to know his ability to interpret the book of Revelation. If he cannot do this, what evidence can he give us that his interpretation of this symbolic language is correct? If he can give no evidence that his interpretations are correct, what force do they have in proving his proposition? [165]

## Chapter IX.

### R. H. BOLL'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE.

In examining Brother Boles' first negative, I am impressed by the amount of space and argument he devotes to invalidate the testimony of God's word of unfulfilled prophecy. He makes reference to admissions I am supposed to have made (but misconstrues my expressed position on those points), he quotes Brother Sewell and Brother Lipscomb, he quotes himself, and repeats his unwarranted and unscriptural axiom that "no proposition which depends wholly upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy by uninspired man for its proof can be established," and thinks it stands for "an indisputable fact" and "an incontestable principle," although it is purely his own unfounded opinion; he tells the readers how deeply the present proposition launches me in the "mysteries . . . and complexities of unfulfilled prophecy;" he disparages the book of Revelation as definite testimony to anything, and speaks of it as a book "written largely in figures, symbols, and allegories." We cannot but wonder why he is so anxious to throw a haze of doubt and uncertainty over God's word of unfulfilled prophecy and why he tries so hard to make it seem worthless for purposes of definite proof and information. Why, unless it be that these portions of Scripture, if accepted as valid proof and taken at face value, are against him and fatal to his side of the controversy? I presume that if the plain and legitimate import of God's statements in unfulfilled prophecy were in his favor, he would not work so hard to nullify it or to make it appear so mysterious. In order to ascertain what "the Scriptures teach" on this proposition, the reader must look steadily beyond all this dust and fog to the testimony of God's word.

I have tried to meet every Scripture argument Brother Boles has presented fairly and squarely, and have offered [166] in support of my propositions--not theories, dreams, speculations, arbitrary "interpretations," but what I believe to be honest, clean-cut, solid Scripture teaching. I think the readers will bear me witness in this. But my respondent did not so much endeavor to *meet* my Scripture arguments on their merits, but rather to *discredit* them *a priori*, beforehand, at wholesale, and on general principles, and to set aside all I may have to say and all the proof I may bring, on the ground that it is unfulfilled prophecy, and therefore unintelligible and for purpose of proof worthless. Now, I can probably meet him on that ground as well as any other; but I am sorry and disappointed on the readers' account, as well as my own, for they had a right to expect a straight-out and profitable examination of God's word on the topics under discussion. In denying the validity of the testimony of God's word of unfulfilled prophecy, my respondent virtually admits that those portions of Scripture, taken at their lawful import and meaning, are adverse to his position.

But if my respondent falls, back upon his undefined word "interpretation" and says he is not discrediting God's word, but only my "interpretation" of it (he has never told us, however, what he means by "interpretation"); I would remind the readers of my oft-repeated (and as often ignored) statement that all the interpretation I stand for is the fair and legitimate import of the inspired language of God's word. With that I stand or fall. Now, whoever discredits a legitimate exegesis of God's word discredits the word of God itself. If my exegesis has been wrong, if I have misunderstood or misapplied what God has said, let him point out the fact and show that the

Scripture language does not sustain me. In no other way can he meet my Scripture arguments. But when he tries to sweep aside the fundamental right and principle of Scripture interpretation itself, he really denies the validity of the word of God.

But he does not go that far, for he will not deny that [167] "unfulfilled prophecy can be understood on the same principles and in the same way as all the rest of God's word." That proposition I have repeatedly offered him--not "to divert attention from the other propositions," but to prevent him from diverting attention from the issues before us by his continual discrediting of God's word of unfulfilled prophecy. He says, however, that that is not the issue. He says the real issue is: "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled." So he wants me to prove something I have never claimed or affirmed, but which I conceded from the first; for I stated from the first that I did not know when or how a prophecy would be fulfilled, except *in so far as God revealed* the when and how. I profess to know nothing except what God has revealed, and that only to the extent of man's ability to elicit the just significance of the language of God's word. That throws the whole thing back on the question, *Can man understand what God has said? That is the issue*, and nothing else. Will Brother Boles face it? Will he deny it? Will he concede it? I wish he would face it frankly and squarely. He certainly ought to do *something* about it. If he will say he is willing to take the Scriptures at their own worth and meaning, it will be all the concession necessary.

Meanwhile I shall continue to set before our readers such Scripture testimony as I am able to present in support of my proposition, and meet my respondent's arguments with the word of God as the case may require.

But my respondent makes great demands. My proposition, he says, cannot be proved unless my "interpretations" (whatever he means by "interpretations") are absolutely correct. That is for him to see after. I claim no infallibility, as he well knows. I present my teaching subject to examination in the light of God's word. When I present a passage of Scripture in support of a proposition, it is his business, not to wave it aside on grounds of [168] the preconceived theory that it needs an infallible interpreter, but to examine it to see whether his opponent has used it rightly and applied it fairly, and in case he has not, to point out the failure. Brother Boles and I have met on equal terms in this debate. I claim no superior ability or infallibility. I am to examine his points fairly and conscientiously, and he mine; and neither of us has any right to demand that the other be infallible. Without impugning my respondent's motives, I would say that all this talk about absolutely correct and infallible interpretations has but the effect of throwing dust in his readers' eyes. So also the absurd contention that if an uninspired man could give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, he would himself become an uninspired prophet. "Prophecy was not intended to make uninspired men prophets." Apply this reasoning to other parts of God's word, and you may say that if a man understands the apostles' teaching, for example, and would tell it abroad, he, would thereby himself become an uninspired apostle. Yes, to the extent a man faithfully teaches God's word, he is God's uninspired spokesman. And that is our highest aim.

But enough of this. As to the quotations from Brethren Lipscomb and Sewell, whom I hold in high regard, as my respected respondent does--they would have been the last to think that their



word would settle such a matter. Both of these brethren would no doubt have yielded to clear and manifest testimony from the word of God on prophetic matters, as they did on everything else. I think that what these brethren really opposed was unfounded notions, theories, and date settings, and such like things, by which the study of prophecy has been brought into reproach. The quotations from Brother Lipscomb show as much. Brother Lipscomb himself wrote some highly valuable expositions on certain features of unfulfilled prophecy, [169] showing that he in no wise discountenanced the study of the prophetic word or discredited its meaning and value.

#### DEFINITION MADE CLEARER.

My respondent complains that my definitions of the terms of the proposition were not clear. He is justly entitled to clear and full definitions of all the terms of the proposition, and if my former definitions are deficient, I must supply the deficiency. However, definition is not discussion. It is not my task under the head of definition to go into details as to the "how" of things. My definition of "reign," to exercise rule and governmental authority over territory and subjects, is clear and sufficient. By "all the earth," I said, I meant the entire globe, and all humanity, all nations living on it; "all peoples, nations, and languages," and all the "kingdoms under the whole heaven." This my brother says is not clear, for to his mind it includes "the entire human race from Adam," and even the saints themselves, who would thus reign over themselves! Hardly. Nobody would infer anything like that--not soberly, at any rate. When we say the saints shall reign over all the earth and all nation's living on it, we need not add "except themselves." The reigning ones are *ex hypothesi* excluded from the number of those who are reigned over. Nor did it even occur to the writer that anyone might misunderstand the "nations living on the earth" to include the dead of past generations, which was not intended, but simply the race then living on the earth. The term "reign *with* Christ" was not defined--it seemed too obvious. However, nothing ought to be taken for granted, and Brother Boles has a right to know what I mean by that. It means they will reign *conjointly* with Christ--not as coequal, for he is ever the Head, but as "joint heirs" with him. ([Rom. 8:17.](#)) I trust this is now clear to my respondent and to all. [170]

#### THE NEGATIVE'S REPLY.

Coming now to his reply to my affirmative--he fails to pay anything like adequate attention to my first and chief argument, taken from the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in his message to the church at Thyatira:

*"And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father."* ([Rev. 2:26, 27.](#))

This is purely a plain, direct promise from the Lord to a congregation of Christians. In his third negative of the first proposition my respondent makes a distinction between a promise and a prophecy. "Brother Boll fails to distinguish between a promise and a prophecy." There is no such distinction to be made. Every promise of God pertaining to the future, and the hereafter is an instance of unfulfilled prophecy. But taking my respondent on his own ground, here is a plain promise, which he cannot turn down on the pretext that it is unfulfilled prophecy. It is not taken from a maze of bewildering apocalyptic symbols, but from a sober and direct message of Christ

to his church. No plainer, more practical and pointed teaching can be found anywhere in the New Testament than those messages to the seven churches, in [Rev. 2 and 3](#). In the passage before us the Lord Jesus Christ makes the definite promise to his saints that he would give them *authority over the nations*--namely, that they should "rule them with a rod of iron; . . . as I also have received of my Father."

It will be noted that the tense the Lord uses is future. To illustrate: Brother Boles, when he preaches or debates on [Matt. 16:18](#), emphasizes the future tense in the statement, "Upon this rock I *will* build my church," and shows correctly, upon the strength of it, that the church could not have been in existence when Jesus spoke those words. [171] Now, here we have a similar case. The Lord Jesus tells his faithful people that, when certain conditions are fulfilled, he *will* give them authority over the nations. The nature of the authority is clearly set forth: "He shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father." The people to whom the Lord Jesus says this are Christians, of that "royal priesthood" of which Brother Boles speaks--"kings and priests," as he says. My respondent declares that if Christians are kings they are reigning *now*." I think the Bible teaches that the Lord's people are reigning now with Christ," he says. "This is the issue," he says further: "are they reigning *now*, or must they wait until Christ comes and they are raised from the dead?" Just so; that is the issue exactly. Manifestly the Lord Jesus promised to the church at Thyatira a position of *rule* and *authority* over the nations, and it was not something they already had when the Lord made the promise, but something they were to receive in the future. Although they had been a faithful and noble church, in the main, and that for years, as the message shows, this promise was yet in the future for them. They had not received it nor entered upon it. The Lord's words also show *when* this rule would be given into their hands. He says to them: "Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast *till I come*. And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works *unto the end*, to him will I give authority over the nations." So, manifestly, not before they had kept his works to the end nor before his coming was this promise due. When Jesus comes, he will examine the works of his servants, and then to each will his reward be adjudged: then shall every man receive his praise from God ([1 Cor. 4:5](#)); then shall they receive their crown, for though they be kings they are uncrowned kings till then ([2 Tim. 4:8](#); [James 1:12](#); [1 Pet. 5:4](#)); then shall they sit down with him in his throne ([Rev. 3:21](#)). Let the reader turn again to [Rev. 2:25-27](#) and judge whether [172] it is a plain Scripture or not; and whether this is a case of uninspired "interpretation," or if it is the simple, straightforward declaration of God's word. The Lord Jesus here promises to those who shall be found acceptable at his coming a joint share with him in the exercise of the rule and authority as he has received of his Father.

[2 Tim. 2:12](#) says the same thing, despite the comments to the contrary of Mr. Ellicott and Dr. Macknight. "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." It can never be known whether a man has endured until he has endured to the end, nor is endurance worth anything unless it be endurance to the end--until Christ comes, and judges our life and work, and brings to light the hidden things of darkness and makes manifest the counsels of the hearts: *then* shall every man have his verdict and, if faithful to the end, his praise from God. ([1 Cor. 4:5](#).)

CHRIST EXALTED NOW.

In respect to the exaltation of Christ, my respondent repeats what I had emphatically affirmed in my first affirmative--that Christ holds universal authority *now*, at God's right hand. He seems to think the fact is damaging to me. But I rejoice in it, because it is the truth, let it damage my "position" as much as it will. However, it is in perfect harmony with all I believe. "The fact that he is a King now," says Brother Boles, "is proof positive that he is reigning now." No, that is not proof; for he was King (because he was the *Christ*) before his exaltation and before his reign began. But he is indeed *reigning* now. Just as Brother Boles says, "The reign of Christ began on Pentecost (see [Acts 2:23-26](#));" and: "His present reign will not end till the last enemy shall have been brought into subjection to him. . . . The present reign of Christ will continue until 'all things have been subjected unto him.'" This is not only true, but absolutely undisputed. I should be sorry if Brother Boles' reiteration of these great truths should make the [173] impression on even a single reader that this truth is not as whole-heartedly believed by the affirmative as by the negative. My respondent goes on in this strain: "He *now* has *all* power and authority. When he comes, he cannot be exalted any higher than his present position, for he is *now* 'far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.'" That is good and true. So my brother believes, and so I believe. Yet he does not notice the distinction (though he himself makes it) between a position of universal authority and the actual exercise of this universal authority and power. He himself shows that all things have not been actually subjected to Christ, for he says: "The present reign will continue until 'all things have been subjected unto him.'" Just so. Therefore, all things have not yet been subjected unto him. On this rebel earth Satan still reigns, the "prince of the world," the "god of this world," who holds the whole world in his embrace ([1 John 5:19](#)), and his throne still stood when the last book of the New Testament was written, and stands unto this day ([Rev. 2:13](#)). Christ's right and authority could not be greater than it is now; but there are yet enemies to be subdued and dominions to be seized. In the parable of [Luke 19](#), the nobleman (Christ) has gone into the far country (heaven), there to receive a kingdom and thence to return. In the meanwhile he has left his servants in the midst of a hostile population to administrate his goods. When he comes again, he comes in royal power, destroying his enemies and opposers, and to his servants, according to their faithfulness during his absence, he grants a share in his royal prerogative and sovereign power. That seems too plain to be controverted. ([Luke 19:11-27](#).) Again, when the last, the seventh, trumpet sounds, the world-shaking announcement is heard: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever." ([Rev. 11:15](#).) He had all along held all title, [174] but *then* he takes *actual possession*. For when this announcement is made the four and twenty elders say: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou hast *taken* thy great power, and didst reign." ([Rev. 11:17](#).) The power, then, had been his all the time; but now he has *taken* it, now he asserts his right, now he exercises his authority. We see, then, that though Christ is exalted to supreme and universal authority, that fact does not clash with the additional teaching that all things are not yet subjected to him in actual fact. Satan is yet to be bound; the kingdom of the world is yet to pass into the hands of Christ; he is yet to reign with his saints over all the earth; the saints of the Most High are yet to possess the kingdom, "and the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven," shall yet be given unto them. ([Dan. 7:22, 27](#).) Then, when, after this reign, Satan is cast, into the lake of fire, and death, the last enemy, shall have been abolished ([Rev. 20:10, 14](#)) when Christ's immediate aim, and work is accomplished, he shall deliver up the kingdom (the entire sphere of his universal domain) unto God, even the Father, not to cease from reigning, for his kingdom is

eternal ([2 Pet. 1:11](#)), but to take a subordinate position under his Father's sovereignty. Such is the outline of things future as the Holy Spirit taught it ([John 16:13](#)) through the Word.

Finally, I will not overlook the argument my brother makes on [Matt. 19:28](#); [Luke 22:30](#); and [1 Cor. 6:2](#). He says: "Christ promised his apostles that they should sit on thrones in his kingdom or church and judge the twelve tribes of Israel." Brother Boles himself recognizes the fact that though the church is his kingdom here and now, the church and the kingdom are not coextensive. Christ's kingdom is that over which he rules, of course. His sphere of dominion is far larger than the church. "He has dominion *now* even over angels," as Brother Boles declares. But the angels are not in the church. [175]

And again: "He now has a universal kingdom 'which cannot be shaken.'" Well; but the church does not embrace this universal domain of Christ, which includes "all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named," in heaven and on earth. But the church shall be associated with him in all his glorious reign when he comes. They shall judge the world; they shall even judge angels. ([1 Cor. 6:2, 3](#).) That has no reference to anything going on in this present time, for he uses the future tense, and brings the promise of the future judging into contrast with things that are now. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels? how much more, *things that pertain to this life*? ([1 Cor. 6:3](#).)

As for the argument on [Matt. 19:28](#)--the apostles have never yet in any conceivable sense sat upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If it be said they are "judging" by their writings, the infallible word of God of which they were the messengers (truly a "highly figurative interpretation!"), let us remember that we have the writings of only four apostles, all told; and if there has been a set of people through all these centuries that cared less for the apostles' teaching than anybody else, and were *not* ruled by it, it is those selfsame twelve tribes of Israel. My brother's "fulfillments" are even more mysterious than the unfulfilled prophecies. But *when* shall the apostles sit on twelve thrones? "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, *in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory*, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And when shall that be? "But *when the Son of man shall come in his glory*, and all the angels with him, THEN *shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*." ([Matt. 25:31](#).) Now, "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory [that is, when he comes in his glory], ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ([Matt. 19:28](#).) [176]

#### SUMMING UP.

My respondent has not, so far as I am able to see, done anything with the affirmative argument. He has not seriously attacked the passage upon which the argument chiefly centered--[Rev. 2:25-27](#). I believe that his rebuttals have been fairly met. If I have failed, let him point out my failure, and I will try to come up with the word of God on my part as best I may be able. In all things I am preserving my regard and respect for my respondent, and nothing I have said is to be taken as even remotely reflecting upon his Christian character and integrity. I think he feels the same way toward me. We are both learners and desirous of God's truth; and if in our quest for it we should lose sight of the supreme thing, all else would be vain. For if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and have not love, I am nothing. [177]



## H. LEO BOLES' SECOND NEGATIVE.

The negative cheerfully and fully reciprocates the brotherly love and fraternal spirit expressed in the last sentences of Brother Boll's affirmative. We may differ--we do differ widely on these subjects--but we esteem each other as brethren in the Lord. We are not striving for victory the one over the other, nor any cheap fame as debaters. We are in quest of the truth of our God, and I hope that we both are honest enough and courageous enough to accept it in its fullness when we learn it.

My brother is mistaken when he says that I "throw a haze of doubt and uncertainty over God's word of unfulfilled prophecy." My doubt is not in "God's word of unfulfilled prophecy," but in Brother Boll's use and interpretation of "unfulfilled prophecy." Neither do I "disparage the book of Revelation." I believe every word of it; but I do discredit Brother Boll's theological guesses and doubtful interpretations of its figures, symbols, and allegories. There is a difference between unfulfilled prophecy and the interpretation of prophecy; a wide difference between God's word as expressed in unfulfilled prophecy and human interpretation of this prophecy. We should discriminate between the two and draw the line accurately between what is *stated or expressed* in unfulfilled prophecy and what is a mere human interpretation of the unfulfilled prophecy.

Brother Boll seems to fail to grasp the argument which has been made against his ability to interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy. When Brother Boll admitted that the proof of his propositions depended upon unfulfilled prophecies, the statement was made that *no propositions which depends wholly upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, by uninspired man for its proof can be established*. My brother has not refuted this and seems not to grasp the force of it. No correct or true conclusion can be deduced from false premises. It is a canon of [178] logic that whatever measure of doubt attaches to the premises of an argument, just that degree of uncertainty belongs to the conclusion; if doubt or uncertainty belong to the premises, doubt and uncertainty inhere in the nature of the conclusion. So, if the proof of his proposition depends upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecies, then his interpretation must be absolutely correct, entirely free from any element of doubt, or he can never prove his proposition. I am sure that the reader understands this argument.

Brother Boll is correct when he says, "Whoever discredits a legitimate exegesis of God's word discredits the word of God itself." But who is to determine whether the "exegesis" is "legitimate?" Whose standard of reasoning shall measure the "exegesis?" I cannot let his interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy pass as a "legitimate exegesis."

The understanding of unfulfilled prophecy, in the sense of interpreting it, is not to be "understood on the same principles and in the same way as all the rest of God's word." Unfulfilled prophecy cannot be "understood on the same principles and in the same way" as fulfilled prophecy is understood. The Holy Spirit has pointed out the event or set of events which fulfilled specifically certain prophecies which were announced in the Old Testament. We can know and understand that these prophecies were fulfilled, because Christ and the Holy Spirit pointed out specifically that they were fulfilled by certain events. No such claim can be made on behalf of unfulfilled prophecy, and hence that portion of God's word is not to be "understood on

the same principles and in the same way" as the fulfilled prophecy. It is a canon of interpretation that *events can never be proved by unfulfilled prophecy, but prophecy must be proved and explained by events*. Unfulfilled prophecy can never be converted into history until it has been fulfilled; hence, unfulfilled prophecy can never prove an event. [179]

The following proposition has been pressed upon the affirmative: "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled." Brother Boll refuses to affirm this, saying that it does not represent his position; he says he does not believe it. In refusing to affirm this, he concedes the very point for which I am contending; he admits that he cannot prove his proposition unless he can give absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. I know that he will not affirm it, but logically *it is the very proposition which he must affirm* if he proves his proposition by his interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. I am sure that the reader can see that he yields, by this admission, the very point for which the negative contends.

But the affirmative evades the issue and says that it resolves itself into this question: "Can man understand what God has said?" No, I beg his pardon, this is not the issue. The issue is, Can uninspired man see the end of unfulfilled prophecy and give an absolutely correct interpretation of its fulfillment? Can uninspired man see and know that which inspired men and angels could not see and know? Brother Boll's position says "yes;" the negative says "no." That is the issue. "Will Brother Boll face it?" "He certainly ought to do something about it."

He says: "I claim no infallibility." Just so. I know that he does not claim it; I do not compliment him with it, neither do I demand it of him; but he ought to see that if his proposition depends for its proof upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, then his interpretations must be infallible, or else they do not prove his proposition. But why should we talk so much about this or discuss his ability to interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecy? If his interpretations are absolutely correct, why does he not prove it? He has been urged to do so. Let him show us his credentials or give us a guarantee that his [180] interpretations are absolutely correct, and that will end the matter; but until he does this, we cannot accept them as absolutely true.

He ignores the quotations that were given from Brethren Lipscomb and Sewell, and says that "Brother Lipscomb himself wrote some highly valuable expositions on certain features of unfulfilled prophecy." Yes, Brother Lipscomb did. He said: "I have very little confidence in human interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy." Again, he said:

Many of those ideas concerning the second coming of Christ are in themselves harmless; but if preached as the gospel or in lieu of the gospel, or are made hobbies to create division and strife among brethren, or to attract the people, in their faith, love, and practice, away from the great practical concerns of life eternal, they are evil, and only evils. Of such are the two tracts sent us. A man preaching and teaching such things and claiming simply to be a disciple of Christ is sailing under false colors and should be reported." ("Questions Answered," page 627.)

Truly, Brother Lipscomb "wrote some highly valuable expositions on certain features of unfulfilled prophecy," which are applicable to the present issue.



Brother Boll attempts to confuse "unfulfilled prophecy" with "promise." He says: "There is no such distinction to be made. Every promise of God pertaining to the future and the hereafter is an instance of unfulfilled prophecy." I do not think that my brother is correct in this statement. Prophecy is a prediction made under divine influence. Unfulfilled prophecy always has the element of prediction in it. A promise is an assurance given by one person to another that the former will or will not do a specified act; it can be conditional or unconditional. Sometimes a prophecy may contain a promise, but certainly not every promise is an unfulfilled prophecy. Is [Acts 2:38](#) a prophecy? Remission of sins is promised to every believing penitent who is baptized. Is this promise [181] a prophecy? But Brother Boll should prove this statement before he uses it as a premise in an argument. He is guilty of the fallacy of equivocation when he shifts from the logical term "unfulfilled prophecy" to the term "promise" without showing that they are logically and Scripturally synonymous and hopes to escape the difficulty of having to prove that his interpretations of "unfulfilled prophecy" are infallible. He thinks he will not meet with such a difficulty if he shifts to the term "promise;" but we cannot let him elude this embarrassment even with such plausible sophistry.

History has ever falsified man's interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. It is not in the power of finite mind to peer through unfulfilled prophecy and see the end of it and tell how and when it will be fulfilled. Take, for example, the prophecies in the Old Testament of Christ's first advent--his birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, his kingdom, its work and mission. The prophets of old were not able to interpret correctly the prophecies concerning all of these. I gave numerous examples in my third article on the first proposition, showing that it was not in man to give correct interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy. Brother Boll did not even refer to the examples which I gave. Here I submit other examples.

Take the prophecy of [Isa. 61:1](#). Who knew what this prophecy meant and how it would be fulfilled? Who correctly interpreted it before it was fulfilled? During his personal ministry Christ came to Nazareth and went into the synagogue and picked up the book of Isaiah and read this prophecy. He then closed the book and said: "To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears." ([Luke 4:16-21](#).) No one could have guessed the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Another prophecy of the Old Testament illustrates the same point--[Hos. 11:1](#). Who knew the meaning of this? Who interpreted it correctly before it was fulfilled in [182] Christ? Who knew its meaning until the Holy Spirit said that it was fulfilled by the Lord, saying: "Out of Egypt did I call my son." ([Matt. 2:15](#).) No one could know its meaning until it was fulfilled. Another example is found in [Ps. 16:8-11](#). Who knew the correct interpretation of this before the Holy Spirit, through Peter, gave its meaning on the day of Pentecost? ([Acts 2:25-28](#).) These examples could be multiplied, but surely this is enough. God has emphasized concerning his unfulfilled prophecy that "the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end." ([Dan. 12:9](#).)

Brother Boll writes as though he and those who have espoused his theory are the only people who believe and teach the prophecies. I do not believe his theories or his interpretations which he has offered in support of his theories, but I do believe the entire word of God. I have as much confidence in Brother Boll's "theological guesses," "prudent conjectures," "improbable interpretations," and "uninspired foresights" as I have in any one else's. I simply have no confidence in any of them, and certainly Brother Boll's recent excursions and ventures into the

field of unfulfilled prophecies have not convinced me that his interpretations are absolutely correct. Frankly, I think that his splendid talent, consecration, piety, and reverence for God's word could be used to a greater advantage by devoting them to the things which are practical.

Brother Boll now makes it clear that Christ is not to reign with his saints, when he comes, over any one except "simply the race then living on the earth." His theory is that Christ, when he comes, will sit on David's throne in Jerusalem, and with his saints he will rule, not only in Palestine, but over all "the race then living on the earth." There will be two classes living upon the earth when Christ comes--saints and the wicked. (See [1 Cor. 15:51](#); [1 Thess. 4:15](#).) If all the saints are to reign conjointly with Christ when he comes, and if Christ is to [183] reign only over "the race then living on the earth," then Christ with his saints will reign *only* over the wicked. He will reign over the wicked for a thousand years. We now have the meaning of Brother Boll's proposition which he is affirming. It means that the Scriptures teach that after Christ comes he will reign for a thousand years over the wicked; and that his saints--all his saints--will occupy thrones and reign conjointly with Christ over the wicked for a thousand years. Now, what kind of a kingdom will that be? His theory has Christ, a *righteous King*, on David's throne, with millions of his *righteous saints* on their thrones, with *righteous laws*, ruling for a thousand years over the *wicked* "race which is then living upon the earth." Who can believe it? I am positive the Bible does not teach such a theory.

Brother Boll's theory is self-contradictory. He says that "when he comes again, he comes in royal power, destroying his enemies and opposers." How can he with his saints reign over the wicked a thousand years, if he is going to destroy them when he comes? How can he harmonize these two conflicting and contradictory statements? He is in a dilemma. If he says he destroys the wicked, then he has no one to reign over; if he does not destroy the wicked when he comes, then he has a *righteous King* with his *righteous saints* and *righteous laws* reigning for a *thousand years* over a *wicked race of people*.

But there is another difficulty with his theory. If the wicked race over which Christ is to rule submits to the rule or authority of Christ, they will not be *wicked people*, but will become saints. No one can submit to the will of God or Christ without becoming a saint. It is preposterous to claim that people will submit to the reign of Christ for a thousand years without becoming saints. But if the affirmative says that they will not become saints, then I ask, Will it take Christ with his saints a thousand years to destroy "the race then living on the earth?" May I ask if "the race then living on the earth" will be ruled [184] by gospel principles? Will they have opportunity to accept Christ as Lord? Will they have advantages that people do not have now? Such inconsistencies betray the weakness of Brother Boll's position. It is just such inconsistencies as these that he is trying to support with his interpretations of the Scriptures.

#### HIS TWO MAIN ARGUMENTS.

So far Brother Boll has attempted to make only two arguments in support of his present proposition. I do not think that he sustains his proposition by these two arguments. I think that his two arguments are fallacious. The first one is based on [Rev. 2:26, 27](#). A close reading of the text shows that it does not support his proposition. The context of this Scripture shows that what Christ now has he will give to his saints: "As I also have received of my Father." This is in the

past perfect tense and states emphatically that he has already received of his Father that which is promised in this Scripture to the saints. It says absolutely nothing about what Christ will receive from the Father when he comes and then share that with his saints. The comments and interpretations of scholars do not agree with Brother Boll's interpretation and application of this Scripture.

Dr. William Burkitt says:

I have received power as mediator, from my Father, effectually to subdue and conquer all mine and your enemies, and I will make you partakers of it in some measure; you shall exercise an irresistible power over them by consenting to, by approving and applauding of, that righteous judgment which I shall denounce against them and execute and inflict upon them. ("Burkitt's Notes," Volume II., page 768.)

Adam Clarke, in commenting upon this Scripture, says:

[Verse 26](#). *Power over the nations*. Every witness of Christ has power to confute and confound all the false doctrines and maxims of the nations of the world, for [185] Christianity shall at last rule over all; the kingdom of Christ will come, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.

[Verse 27](#). *He shall rule them with a rod of iron*. He shall restrain vice by the strictest administration of justice; and those who finally despise the word and rebel shall be broken and destroyed, so as nevermore to be able to make head against the truth. This seems to refer to the heathen world; and perhaps Constantine the Great may be intended, who, when he overcame Licinius, became the instrument in God's hand of destroying idolatry over the whole Roman Empire; and it was so effectually broken as to be ever after like the fragments of an earthen vessel, of no use in themselves and incapable of being ever united to any good purpose." ("Commentary," [Rev. 2:26, 27](#).)

Dr. Justin A. Smith says:

A distinction should be made, here, between the Greek "power" in the sense of authority (which is the word in this place) and "power" in the sense of force or strength. With this should be taken the proper emphasis of the Greek in what follows. The true sense and scope of the passage is also better seen by still connecting these words with the concluding words of the verse, *as I have received of my Father*. That is to say, that "power," authority, which the Son has received of the Father "over the nations," by which must be meant the world as distinct from the kingdom of grace, he imparts to, or shares with, those who "keep" his "works," who are with him and gather with him. ([Matt. 12:30](#).) . . . Not, however, the severity of mere force, least of all of force exercised in the mere interest of authority; not the rule of the despot, but of the shepherd. . . . The breaking to pieces will be by the Lord's own divine power; but this power will work *through his people*, and thus, to them, the instruments, he imparts this power. This is a part of their reward in the overcoming." ("American Commentary," [Rev. 2:26, 27](#).)

According to these scholars, "the nations" or kingdoms shall be broken--not that the people are to be destroyed or broken, but their government so destroyed that the "kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord." This message directed to the church at Thyatira [186] is in harmony with the message which the Holy Spirit gave to the church at Laodicea, in which it is said: "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne." ([Rev. 3:21](#).) Christ had already overcome "when his message was given and had already sat down with my Father in his throne." The tense is not future, so far as Christ's part is concerned. So we see Brother Boll's first argument does not support his proposition.

His second argument is based on [2 Tim. 2:12](#). I quoted Drs. Ellicott and Macknight as opposed to Brother Boll's application of this Scripture, but he dismisses them with his mere "*ipse dixit*" denial. He places himself and his word in square opposition to these scholars. I confess it would not be a comfortable attitude for me. Macknight says emphatically: "I do not think there is here any reference to the millennium."

But we wish to quote this verse which Brother Boll bases his second argument upon in connection with both the verse which precedes and the one which follows it. Paul says: "For if we died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us: if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself." ([2 Tim. 2:11-13](#).) Notice the two parallel conditional clauses and their parallel consequences. "*If we died with him, we shall also live with him.*" Christians have died with Christ. ([Rom. 6:2](#); [Col. 3:3](#).) The antecedent is true; hence, the consequent is true, "*We shall also live with him.*" The Scriptures teach that we are now living a new life in Christ; and the life which we now live is by faith in Christ. ([Rom. 6:4](#); [Gal. 2:20](#).) Now examine the parallel in [verse 12](#). "*If we endure, we shall also reign with him.*" Now, as Christians, we are enduring and suffering for Christ. "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." [187] ([2 Tim. 3:12](#).) The antecedent is true *now*; therefore, the consequent, "*We shall also reign with him,*" is true *now*. Both consequents, "we shall also live with him" and "*we shall also reign with him,*" are true. As sure as we are living with Christ now, we are reigning with him now. So Brother Boll's second argument does not sustain his proposition.

#### CHRIST REIGNING NOW.

The negative has produced two arguments which show that the proposition of the affirmative is not true. The first one of these arguments was based upon the Scriptural fact that *Christ is now reigning and will continue this reign until the last enemy has been conquered*. Christ is now reigning as King and Lord over all rule, authority, power, and dominion; even has dominion *now* over angels. ([Rom. 5:21](#); [1 Cor. 15:25](#); [Eph. 1:21](#); [1 Tim. 6:15](#); [1 Pet. 3:22](#).) The reign of Christ began on Pentecost when the stone began smiting the image, and it will continue to the end. Brother Boll contradicts this argument and makes Christ merely bearing the title of King. He says: "He had all along held all title, but then he takes actual possession." He further says: "The kingdom of the world is yet to pass into the hands of Christ." Brother Boll's position is that Christ is now only bearing the title of King and has all authority, but is not in "actual possession" or exercising this authority. He seems to see that if he admits that Christ is now in "actual possession" of all authority it will be detrimental to his theory as to what Christ will do

when he comes. I regret that Brother Boll does not believe that Christ is in "actual possession" of "all authority." Such a position contradicts the statement of our reigning King. He said: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." ([Matt. 28:18.](#)) But Brother Boll says he is not in "actual possession" of this authority, but will take "actual possession" when he comes. Such a position robs my faithful Lord and reigning King of power, [188] authority, and glory; such a position dishonors the Lord Jesus Christ. The King James Version closes what is commonly called "the Lord's Prayer" with these words: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." Surely there must be something wrong with a theory which denies the Lordship and authority of the King of kings. Such a position denies the fundamental principle of the Christian religion.

The negative's second argument is based on the fact that the saints are now reigning with Christ. [Matt. 19:28](#) and other Scriptures were quoted in support of this position. I now wish to quote J. W. McGarvey's comment on [Matt. 19:28](#) as further support of this position. He says:

"Regeneration" means, either the process of regenerating, or the result attained by that process, according to the context in which it is found. Here it evidently means the former, for it designates a period during which the apostles would sit on thrones. . . . The words, "ye who have followed me," simply describe the parties addressed as having done what the rich man refused to do. The period designated by the term "regeneration" is further limited by the words, "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory." He sat down on that throne when he ascended up to heaven, and he will still be seated on it in the day of judgment. . . . "The regeneration," then, is cotemporaneous with this period, and therefore it must be that process of regenerating men which commenced on the Pentecost after the ascension, and will continue until the saints are raised with regenerated bodies. . . . The judgment and the sitting on thrones are declared to be cotemporaneous with the regeneration and with Christ's sitting on his throne; and therefore they must be regarded as now in progress. . . . The judging consists in pronouncing decisions on questions of faith and practice in the earthly kingdom, and the twelve are figuratively represented as sitting on thrones, because they are acting as judges. During their personal ministry they judged in person; since then they judge through their writings. True, we have written communications from only a part of them; but judgments pronounced by one of a bench of judges, with the known approval of all, [189] are the judgments of the entire bench. . . . The apostles have sustained no such relation to the twelve tribes of Israel, literally so called, as the text indicates, nor is there any intimation in the Scriptures that they ever will. Their work is with the true Israel, and not with the Israel according to the flesh; consequently, we are to construe the term metaphorically, the twelve tribes representing the church of God, of which they were a type. ("New Testament Commentary," Volume I., Matthew and Mark.)

Brother D. Lipscomb, in commenting on this Scripture, gives the following:

The word "regeneration" literally means a new creation or new order of things. As used in the passages named, we think it means the new institution--the church, or kingdom, of God on earth. The apostles were to sit on thrones *in* the regeneration--that is, in the church. The apostles received their power, or authority, on the day of Pentecost, when they received the Holy Spirit and began to preach the word of the Lord as the Spirit gave them utterance. They then began to give the words that are to judge all Israel and all the world. Christ was then seated upon the

throne of his glory in heaven, and his promise to the apostles was that when he should sit upon the throne of glory they should sit upon twelve thrones. These apostles took their seats on their thrones that day, and they are on them yet, and will be till the close of time. We are, therefore, to look to them for all authority in religion. The words of the apostles must be an end to all controversy in matters of faith and practice. ("Questions Answered," page 538.)

So the Scriptures abundantly teach that Christ is *now* reigning and that his saints are *now*, reigning with him. This refutes the position that Christ and his saints will not reign together until he comes. All legitimate interpretations of other Scriptures must harmonize with these facts. [190]

## Chapter X.

### R. H. BOLL'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE.

My respondent has filled up much space with generalities. Over five pages of his eight-page manuscript is taken up with remarks about interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. The testimony of God's word of unfulfilled prophecy is surely dead against him, seeing he must work so hard to nullify it. "Counsel in a lawsuit," says an English jurist, "has sometimes to advise that unless some adverse witness can be discredited the case must collapse." It is manifest that unless my respondent can discredit God's word of unfulfilled prophecy as *testimony to the proposition*, his case collapses. If he cannot make the readers feel that it is so mystical, so obscure, so indefinite, so incomprehensible, that fallible mortal man cannot tell what it means--if he cannot rule it out of court one way or another, his case is gone. As for my end of it, I propose to stand simply upon the word of God. I am not asking my respondent to accept any theories, guesses, or opinions; I want him to point them out if I should forget myself so far as to offer such thing to him in proof of my proposition; and I desire him to face, as honestly, the Scripture proof I present. He is greatly exercised over what my supposed theories and alleged ideas and positions are. He seems, indeed, much too much concerned about *me* and my views and my "theories." I wish he would not "pursue after a flea," as David said, but simply and directly address himself to the examination of the Scriptures I present, and let us know whether *they* say what the affirmative claims, and if not, why not, and let him show what the passages in question do say and mean. That would be profitable to us all. He cannot, it seems, give up that Roman Catholic error that Scripture cannot be understood unless there is an infallible interpreter. I know well that he does not extend that [191] idea to *all* the Scriptures, but only to God's word of unfulfilled prophecy, and I do not charge him with more. But any one can take his position on this and prove the whole Roman Catholic contention by it. He thinks I have failed to grasp his point. Reasoning that no certain conclusions can be reached from uncertain premises (which, of course, is true), he applies thus: "So, if the proof of his proposition depends upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecies, then his interpretation must be absolutely correct, entirely free from any element of doubt, or he can never prove his proposition. I am sure the reader understands this argument."

I think we do understand it. It is the very same as the common Roman Catholic argument. "Since you are not an infallible interpreter," they tell you, "you can never be absolutely certain of the correctness of your interpretations of the Bible, and therefore it is impossible for you ever to *prove anything* from the Bible." If an enemy who desires to break the force of God's word and set it aside should employ such argument as that, it would not be strange; but it does not behoove a *Christian* who would have all men to rest their confidence on God's infallible and faithful word to make use of such arguments. Our premises are not uncertain when we build on God's word. This whole thing concerning the "interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy" is a plain open-or-shut sort of question, and I think my respondent sees it by now. It is just the question whether God means what he says; whether his statements can be credited at their own face value or not. If not, I confess I am out of it; but if yes, Brother Boles has got to face the Scriptures. He says he does not discredit God's word; but "I do discredit Brother Boll's theological guesses," he says, "and doubtful interpretations of its figures, symbols, and allegories." Very well. I am whole-heartedly



with him in that. But that is no reason why *the testimony of God's word* in [192] matters of unfulfilled prophecy should not be gold standard, worth a hundred cents on the dollar.

I am glad he sees that "there is a difference between unfulfilled prophecy and the interpretation of prophecy;" for he has been charging me with saying that my proof depended on "the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy." But I had said that it depended *on God's word* of unfulfilled prophecy. There is "a wide difference," he says, "between God's word of unfulfilled prophecy and human interpretation of prophecy. We should discriminate between the two and draw the line accurately between what is *stated or expressed* in unfulfilled prophecy and what is a mere human interpretation of the unfulfilled prophecy." Amen. So say I, and so I have been saying all along. I have stated a number of times that all the "interpretation" I stand for is "an acceptance of God's word as testimony to the proposition, in accordance with the fair meaning of its statement." That is really simply that which he calls "what is stated or expressed in unfulfilled prophecy." Brother Boles himself draws a distinction between this and "interpretation." Nevertheless, he continually charges me with "interpreting" and speaks of my "interpretations." I have a right to know, and the readers have the right to know, what he means by that. I ask him to tell me plainly what he thinks I am guilty of that he calls "interpretation."

But if uninspired man cannot understand unfulfilled prophecy, and if nobody can know what a "legitimate exegesis" is, then even "what is *stated or expressed* in unfulfilled prophecy" is worthless to us for light or truth or proof! And it is *that* that my respondent has been driving at, and it is *that* that I deny and object to as an unfair turn in a discussion that deals with matters of unfulfilled prophecy.

But at last my respondent comes out on one tangible statement concerning this. If I understand him, he says that *unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood on the [193] same principle and in the same way as all the rest of God's word*. Good. If he will stand by that, I challenge him on it. I say it *can* be so understood. He says it cannot. This is a clear issue and strictly to the point. I will take the affirmative on it and assume the burden of the proof. Let him deny it. This is by far the most important thing we can discuss now. He can take it up next or last, as he chooses, but this certainly ought to be discussed. Except in a few lines at the first mention of this issue, I have not discussed this question of uninspired man's ability to understand unfulfilled prophecy at all *on its merits* so far; but all the discussion has been on the general point of whether my respondent's position on this was fair and whether it ought to be discussed in a formal and orderly manner. Let my respondent save his arguments till we take up this proposition proper.

I would even accept *his* proposition, if he will make it represent the issue, thus: "The Scriptures teach that man, unaided by inspiration, can understand how and when unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled, *in so far as God has revealed in his word how and when it will be fulfilled*." For, of course, Brother Boles would not have me to affirm that uninspired man can know something that God has not revealed. I do not claim that, as he knows. So, if he will allow me to guard that point, I will take even his own proposition.

Brother Boles quotes from "Questions Answered," page 627, where, speaking against certain things of which I am wholly innocent, Brother Lipscomb says:

Many of those ideas concerning the second coming of Christ are in themselves harmless; but if preached as the gospel or in lieu of the gospel, or are made hobbies to create division and strife among brethren, or to attract the people, in their faith, love, and practice, away from the great practical concerns of life eternal, they are evil, and only evil. Of such are the two tracts sent us. A man preaching and teaching such things and claiming simply to be a disciple of Christ is sailing under false colors and should be reported. [194]

The case does not apply to me. I have preached the gospel according to my ability and have not substituted anything in lieu of it. Those who have known and heard me these thirty years will bear me witness. Nor can any man show that I have made a hobby of prophetic teaching, or that I created division and strife among brethren; rather, I have used my influence to prevent strife where others had fomented it. "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." ([John 7:24](#).) If I have attracted people "away from the great practical concerns of life eternal," the results ought to show it. "By their fruits ye shall know them," said our Lord; and a man's work ought to be permitted to bear witness of him. For near twenty-four years I have worked with the Portland Avenue Church, Louisville, Ky. If I had been teaching falsehoods, if I had preached hobbies and drawn people away from the practical concerns of the Christian life, surely the effects would show *here* if anywhere, and the blight of the error would be manifest by now. I invite my brother to come and see if this congregation has been less faithful and practical than others.

#### THE PROPOSITION.

After all this loss of time and space, we must now take up the proposition itself. My respondent says (incorrectly, however) that the only two arguments I have made were those on [Rev. 2:25-27](#) and [2 Tim. 2:12](#). He has clean forgotten about [1 Cor. 6:2, 3](#) and [Luke 19:11-27](#) and [Dan. 7](#) and [Rev. 20](#). But let us see what he has to say on [Rev. 2:25-27](#).

In order to get it before our readers, I will quote this passage again, in full:

Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father. ([Rev. 2:25-27](#).) [195]

My respondent declares that this passage does not support my proposition. The reason he gives is that "it says absolutely nothing about what Christ will receive from the Father when he comes and then share with his saints," as though that had any bearing on the point. Then he quotes, what to my humble judgment is rather a weak effusion, from one Dr. William Burkitt and one Dr. Justin A. Smith, whoever they are, and something not much better from Adam Clarke. And of this consists his reply to the argument based upon the simple declaration of Christ as given above.

Commentators are never to be received upon their own authority, be they ever so great scholars, but their work rests purely upon its own merits. I do not bank upon commentaries at all.

However, since Brother Boles has himself once quoted Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, I will quote him on [Rev. 2:25-27](#):

At Christ's coming the saints shall possess the kingdom "under the whole heaven," therefore over this earth; cf. [Luke 19:17](#), "Have thou *authority* (the same word as here) over ten cities."

[Verse 27](#) (from [Ps. 2:8, 9](#)). *Rule*--lit., "rule as a shepherd." . . . Beginning by destroying His Antichristian foes, He shall reign in love over the rest. "Christ shall rule them with a *scepter* of iron, to make them capable of being ruled with a scepter of gold; severity first, that grace may come after."

It is easy to see how much clearer and *truer to the text* these comments are than those which Brother Boles quoted. But we could "prove" or "disprove" anything in the world by means of commentaries. Here is something better from one of the ablest and greatest of our brethren that ever lived, James A. Harding:

It is apparent that the one great, all-including purpose for which we were made, for which we exist, is to be educated, trained, developed, so as to be indeed sons of God; brothers of Christ, heirs of God, who will dwell with their Father forever and will reign with him. We were made for rulers to start with ([Gen. 1:27](#)), and the [196] faithful are to be members of the ruling family of the universe, rulers for evermore. Daniel prophesied, saying: "The saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. . . . I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. . . . And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." ([Dan. 7:18, 21, 22, 27](#).) Paul indignantly asks of the Corinthians, when they were so foolish as to go to law before the unbelievers: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" ([1 Cor. 6:2, 3](#).) In the parable of the talents ([Matt. 25:14-30](#)), and of the pounds ([Luke 19:11-27](#)), Jesus plainly shows that the faithful are to be made rulers. Referring to the time of his second coming, he says to the faithful, "Well done, thou good servant; because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities;" and to another, "Be thou also over five cities;" or, as he expressed it in another place: "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Word and Work, 1922, page 15, quoted from The Way.)

I would have the reader to observe that nobody said that Christ would "receive" something from the Father when he comes. That has nothing to do with it. He says the word, "I have received," is perfect tense. Why shouldn't it be? But the Lord who says he received this authority from the Father also says he *will* bestow it upon his faithful servants, and that they should "rule the nations with a rod of iron" just as the Father had granted to him to do. There is no proof that the Lord Jesus is going to quit his rule when the saints begin theirs; therefore, they rule together, and they share his rule with him. But the saints to whom the Lord is [197]making this Promise had not yet received this rule and authority, for Christ said: "*I will give*." That is future.

According to Brother Boles' idea, they would have been already reigning with Christ, and there would have been no room or occasion for such a promise. If they had been already reigning with Christ, they would have been doing so *without any authority*; for the Lord promised to *givethem* authority to rule, in the event they would *hold fast till his coming* and would *keep his works to the end*. The question whether they had held fast, overcome, and kept his works to the end, cannot be officially settled and decided until the Lord's coming. Therefore the promise refers to a time subsequent to the Lord's return. Thus the proposition, "that Christ shall rule with his saints over the nations after his coming," is as perfectly established as it will ever be possible to establish anything by the teaching of God's inspired word.

I want to call especial attention, since so much has been said on the point, that in this I am not advancing any theories, or putting up "theological guesses" or "doubtful interpretations;" that this passage does not deal with apocalyptical symbols and figures. I am staking everything upon *the plain declaration of the word of God*. I would like for Brother Boles to face this passage squarely.

In my last I pointed out that, according to the distinction which Brother Boles himself drew, this is not even "unfulfilled prophecy," but purely a *promise*. So I don't see how he can turn it down on any ground. What will he do with it?

I specifically limited my statement about the promises of God being instances of unfulfilled prophecy by the clause, "pertaining to the future and the hereafter." Brother Boles quotes this statement of mine correctly, but then goes on to reason upon it as if I had omitted that clause. He says that I attempt to confuse "unfulfilled prophecy" with "promise," and calls it "plausible [198] sophistry." Such language is hardly in line with the standards we have chosen in this debate. The expression, "plausible sophistry," carries an intimation of trickery and dishonesty. I was not guilty of "sophistry;" my respondent simply overlooked or ignored my words. I said: "Every promise of God *pertaining to the future and the hereafter* is an instance of unfulfilled prophecy." That is simply *so*, and no one can deny it. Brother Boles reasoned as if I had said that *all* promises are "unfulfilled prophecy," and wants to know whether [Acts 2:38](#) could be so classed. Can we not be more accurate in our argumentation, avoid aspersions in our language, and keep the whole discussion on a high plane?

But to go back to [Rev. 2:25-27](#) once more. My respondent sees many reasons why Christ simply *could not* reign over the earth with his saints after his coming. If I could not answer a single one of his objections, and if I could not tell him what sort of "nations" these could be, whether wicked or righteous, where they had come from, or what their conditions or advantages would be under that reign, none of that could in any wise alter what God says in [Rev. 2:25-27](#). We must not trim the word of God to our ideas of what could or could not be, but we must trim our ideas to fit what God has said. The question, "How can these things be?" is always secondary and waits upon the question, "What hath God spoken?" Daniel Sommer offers this possible explanation:

Does some one inquire where the people will come from who will be on the earth during the millennium? That is not our side of the question. Though God will take the righteous away, and destroy those who have worshiped the beast, or received his mark, yet we need not be in doubt.

God knew how to overthrow Pharaoh and his army, yet spare a residue of the Egyptians who were not responsible for his sins. He knew how to destroy Jerusalem, and the Jew as a nation, and yet save a remnant of that people. On the same principle, we may feel assured that he will know how to overthrow all his enemies [199] among mankind in the last days of the gospel age, and, yet, will be able to save sufficient of mankind to people the world in the millennial age. Besides, from the time of the event mentioned in [Rev. 11:13](#), God will have the Jews as his people, for the promise in [Isa. 66:22](#) cannot fail. In view of all this, we need not to be disturbed about God's side of the question, nor of any other. He knows how to manage it, and will manage it to his honor and glory. All that we need to do is to believe and obey the Lord in the present, then believe and trust him with reference to the future.

I note, however, that though Brother Boles is sure that no uninspired man can know how or when an unfulfilled prophecy will be fulfilled, he seems to know how and when it can *not* be fulfilled. According to his position, he ought to be simply neutral and say he does not and cannot know anything about it, one way or another.

He says also: "Brother Boll's theory is self-contradictory." But I haven't offered him any theory. I have not promulgated any theories to him. All I gave him to work on was a few simple passages of Scripture, which I took at face value and on which I rest the proposition. Let the negative confine himself to his task, instead of troubling about some "theory" the affirmative is supposed to hold.

2 TIM. 2:12.

My second main argument, according to my respondent, is on [2 Tim. 2:12](#). I will give this also in full:

Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him, we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us." ([2 Tim. 2:11, 12.](#))

My respondent says I dismissed his quotations from "Drs. Ellicott and Macknight" with my mere "*ipse dixit*" denial. That would not be a very bad slip, even at that. Says Brother Boles: "Macknight says emphatically, 'I do not think there is here any reference to the [200] millennium.'" Well, well; because "Dr." Macknight "emphatically says" he "thinks" something, ought we to stand in awe of such solemn authority? It has never been so among us. But I did not turn those gentlemen down with my "*ipse dixit*;" I gave good reason. I said that it will not be possible to say that a man has *endured* until he has reached the end of the journey. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." ([Matt. 24:13.](#)) The "stony-ground hearer" is he that "endureth *for a while*," but under stress falls away. Will he reign with Christ? Will it be made known who has "endured" until after Christ has come, "who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts?" ([1 Cor. 4:5.](#)) Then, and not till then, "shall every man have his praise from God." "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." ([2 Cor. 5:10.](#)) The promise of the reign with Christ rests upon the "if" of endurance; and that requires the finished course. So, whatever the doctors may say, we shall not reign with Christ till after his coming.

But *then we shall*, if we are found to have been faithful to the end. This again, alone, establishes the proposition.

My respondent uses strong language regarding the matter of Christ's universal authority, which I showed is indeed his, "*de jure*," though not as yet "*de facto et actu*," as the lawyers say--that is, "by right," but not yet "in actual fact and act." My respondent says that this is a theory "which denies the Lordship and authority of the King of kings." (It does no such thing; *it affirms it*.) Again: "Such a position denies the fundamental principle of the Christian religion." Why does my respondent make such charges? I believe in the *present*, universal, absolute authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, and feel that he must in some way prove that [201] I do not so believe. But the reader will remember that in my last I pointed out that *Brother Boles himself* stated that all things are not yet actually subjected to Christ. Very well, then; that is the very position he so extremely denounces now, and that is all there is to it. When he said that all things are not yet subject to Christ, did he "deny the Lordship and authority of the King of kings?" Did he "deny the fundamental principle of the Christian religion?" Of course he did not; nor do I, neither by implication nor otherwise. I think my respondent might see this. Brother Boles quotes [Matt. 28:18](#) in proof of Christ's present universal authority. Good. I hold by that. But at the very time when the risen Lord said, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth," had he at that time actually received this authority? It was almost fifty days before he ascended to the Father and sat down at God's right hand, crowned with glory and honor. At the time he said, "All authority is given unto me," the certainty of this authority was his. Therefore, he could speak of it even then as a present fact. But now he holds that authority, although there are yet some steps to be taken in claiming what is his own. And that is not derogatory to the Christ's supreme Lordship.

In "Queries and Answers" (old edition, page 304), David Lipscomb, in answer to the question, "How do you know that the kingdoms of this age are not Christ's?" ([Rev. 11:15](#)), says: "I know the nations are not the kingdoms of God, because they do not obey his laws." Is that position derogatory to Christ's universal Lordship and authority? If not, then neither is mine. Again, Brother Lipscomb says (page 360, same volume):

Jesus had been to earth and returned to heaven. Heaven must receive him until "the times of restoration of all things." Then "the times of restoration of all things" must be when Jesus returns again to earth--the restoration of all things to their original relation to God. . . . When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the [202] world will be restored to harmonious relations with God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

If this position does not "deny the fundamental principles of the Christian religion," then neither does my position.

On [Matt. 19:28](#), Brother Boles quotes from McGarvey, and also from Brother Lipscomb, to the effect that the twelve apostles are *now* sitting on thrones and ruling over the twelve tribes of Israel. I noticed in our first proposition that Brother Boles did not at all seem to mind turning down what Brother McGarvey had said on the restoration of Israel, and he surely will not blame me overmuch now if I see reason to differ from Brother McGarvey just here; and as for differing



from Brother Lipscomb in any matter, that has never been regarded as a capital offense among us. I have a suspicion that perhaps Brother Boles differs with him just a little in the quotations given just above. My reason for venturing to differ is not only the inherent untenableness of the idea that the apostles are now reigning over the twelve tribes of Israel, but that, *according to [Matt. 19:28](#), the apostles were not to sit on their thrones until the Lord Jesus should "sit on the throne of his glory;"* and in [Matt. 25:31](#) he himself states *when* that would be: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, *then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.*"

If my respondent should denounce this as subversive of Christian faith, let him remember that this is *what Christ himself said in so many words*, and it is no "theory" or "guess" of mine, or anybody else's. I believe that his present position on the Father's throne ([Rev. 3:21](#)) includes *all* authority and dominion, yet when he comes he will sit on the throne of his glory, just as he said; a throne that is his *now*, but which he will occupy when he gets ready--that is, when he comes; and *then* shall the apostles rule on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [203]

I have finished my work on this proposition.

1. It was proved with complete conclusiveness that in [Rev. 2:25-27](#) the Lord Jesus promises to give those who would be faithful till his coming authority over the nations, that they should rule them with a rod of iron, as he also had received of the Father. It was shown that this would be joint rule with Christ, and could not take place before Christ's coming. This alone establishes the proposition.

2. It was shown that in [2 Tim. 2:12](#) the promise is given to Christians of reigning with Christ if they *endured*, and it was pointed out that that is not to be decided till Christ comes. This again, alone, establishes the proposition.

3. It was shown that, not here and now, but in the life to come, the saints shall share in Christ's sovereign function and prerogative of judging the world and even angels. ([1 Cor. 6:2, 3.](#)) This again shows their position as joint rulers with Christ in the judgment.

4. It was shown that in [Luke 19:11-27](#) the Savior taught that his servants were to administrate his goods in the midst of a hostile population, while he himself had gone away "to receive for himself a kingdom and return;" and that on his return he judged his servants and appointed to the faithful ones a sphere of rule. This again sustains the proposition.

5. It was shown in [Dan. 7](#) that the saints are persecuted by opposing powers clean up to the point when the "Ancient of Days" came, executed judgment, and the kingdom *under the whole heaven* was turned over to the saints of the Most High, and they should possess it forever. The context shows that this kingdom was the one which was given to the Son of man, that all kingdoms and dominions should obey him.



6. It was shown that when Christ comes again in glory he will sit on the throne of his glory, and that *then* his [204] apostles shall reign with him on twelve thrones over the twelve tribes of Israel. ([Matt. 19:28; 25:31.](#))

7. It was shown that in [Rev. 19 and 20](#), after the destruction of the beast and his armies, Christ and his saints take possession, and they shall reign with him forever. ([Rev. 19:11-21; 20:1-6.](#))

I have no desire to do my respondent the least injustice by any undue assertion. So I will simply say that, *so far as I am able to see and judge*, he has not answered any of these arguments, and that the proposition of the affirmative is established. The reader must judge for himself. [205]

## H. LEO BOLES' THIRD NEGATIVE.

Brother Boll's remarks about his respondent's reply are not very complimentary. However, I am trying my best to please my reigning King, and I hope that Brother Boll will finally be pleased. I know that it is not very pleasant to him to have his theory exposed and have to face arguments which he cannot answer. It is not my desire to be unkind to him or even unpleasant in holding him to the issue "with generalities," but this is the task of the negative. His complaints show that he feels the pressure of the argument and the embarrassment which they gender.

Almost one-half of his article deals with irrelevant matter. I wish that we could stay closer with the issue and argue only the proposition under discussion. He is in the lead, and I am supposed to follow him. However, much of the irrelevant matter I shall pass over--not that it cannot be answered, but that the issue may be kept clear, it is passed without notice. The reader is fully aware of the fact that he has not met the issue on the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy.

Why does he not settle that point if he wants it settled? All that he has to do is to show that he is able to give an infallible interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, and that would settle the matter. We are still wondering why he does not do that and quit talking so much about it. "Do it, and then talk about it," is a good motto, and applicable just here on this point. He must do this in order to prove his proposition. I think that he knows this now, and I am sure that the reader knows that this is his task. He has been in the lead all along on this point. No one has restrained him, but, rather, he has been urged to prove it; but so far he has failed. Propositions which express clearly the issue have been submitted, but he has only replied to these propositions with a counter proposition couched in ambiguous language and equivocal terms. [206]

I have denied his proposition that "unfulfilled prophecies can be understood on the same principles and in the same way as all the rest of God's word." Fulfilled prophecy is a part of God's word. I have showed that "the fulfilled prophecy" cannot "be understood on the same principles and in the same way" as "unfulfilled prophecies," for the fulfilled prophecy has been pointed out by Christ and the Holy Spirit. We have been told the prophecy and the time and event of its fulfillment. This is not true of "unfulfilled prophecy." A number of examples were given from the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ's first advent, showing that they were not understood, nor indeed could be, until the event transpired and the Holy Spirit pointed out the prophecy which the event fulfilled. Brother Boll did not notice these.

Again I must reiterate that I do not "discredit God's word of unfulfilled prophecy" (Brother Boll knows I do not), but I do "discredit" Brother Boll's interpretation and application of unfulfilled prophecy. May I inquire, When did his interpretation and application become God's word? I make a wide distinction between his interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy and "God's word of unfulfilled prophecy," and I think Brother Boll should discriminate between them.

His little ruse about thinking my "position on this can prove the whole Roman Catholic contention" is too transparent to be taken seriously. He says it is "the common Roman Catholic argument." If it be so, why does he not meet it and answer it? Calling it bad names does not answer it. It is easier for Brother Boll to brand it "the common Roman Catholic argument" than it

is to answer it. The proposition still stands unshaken: *No proposition which, depends wholly upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy by uninspired man for its proof can be established.*

He seems not to know what I mean by "interpretation." I remind him again that I mean just what Peter meant [207] when he said: "No prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation." ([2 Pet. 1:20](#).) I mean just what Brother Boll meant by that word when he said: "Study Revelation also--there is a blessing in it ([Rev. 1:3](#)); but beware of the many so-called interpretations, wild theories, and imaginations men have spun around that book." ("How to Understand and Apply the Bible," by R. H. Boll, page 24.)

The argument was made that *prophecy does not prove an event, but events prove prophecy*. Brother Boll attempts to reverse this order. Man, unaided by inspiration, cannot see the end of unfulfilled prophecy and tell how and when it will be fulfilled. This is no new doctrine. Brethren Lipscomb and Sewell frequently taught the same. Brother Lipscomb said: "I have very little confidence in human interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies." The Gospel Advocate has always occupied this position. It is the position of the present editors, Brethren Elam, Smith, and Srygley. I am in good company and on safe ground when I say that man, unaided by inspiration, cannot give an absolutely correct interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. Jehovah said: "For the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end." ([Dan. 12:9](#).)

Brother Boll's reference to Portland Avenue Church and his labors with it has absolutely nothing to do with the issue of the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy or the proposition under discussion. It is entirely irrelevant matter. I rejoice in all the good that Brother Boll and the church there have done and are doing. I pray the Lord to bless them in their abundant labors in his kingdom.

Our brother did not quote enough from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. If he had quoted a little further, he would have found this comment on [verse 27](#):

Jesus had refused to receive the kingdom without the cross at Satan's hands. He would receive it from none [208]but the Father, who had appointed the cross as the path to the crown. As the Father has given the authority to me over the heathen and uttermost parts of the earth, so I impart a share of it to my victorious disciples.

This states that Jesus had already received the kingdom. Brother Boll not only did not quote enough from these authors, but he does not believe what he did quote, for in his quotation we have these words: "Beginning by destroying His antichristian foes, He shall reign in love over the rest." Now, Brother Boll has said that Christ will not reign "over the saints," but the saints "will reign conjointly with him" over "the race then living upon the earth." Now, if, when he comes, he destroys "his antichristian foes," or his enemies, and he does not reign over his saints, then pray tell whom he will reign over. Brother Boll has not made this clear.

Again, he is confusing in his discussion on the difference between "a promise" and "a prophecy." In his second affirmative he said that his opponent failed in his attempt to make "a distinction between a promise and a prophecy. . . . There is no such distinction to be made. Every

promise of God pertaining to the future and the hereafter is an instance of unfulfilled prophecy." I asked him if "the promise of the remission of sins" to one who believed and repented and was baptized was "an unfulfilled prophecy." He says now that "not all promises" are "unfulfilled prophecies;" that only the promises pertaining to the future and the hereafter" are "unfulfilled prophecies." Now, may I ask him if a promise can pertain to the past? Do not all promises it pertain to the future?" It will be interesting to observe Brother Boll's efforts in trying to find a promise which "pertains" to the past. His language implies that there are such promises. I think that he now sees that his statement was not correct when he attempted to make "a promise" and "a prophecy" synonymous, substituting the one for the other in an argument which he made. [209] This is an admission of his fallacy and, of course, invalidates the proof of his proposition.

His quotation from Daniel Sommer is given as "a possible explanation." Yes, a "possible" one. But there is nothing definite in this little realm of possibilities, and Brother Boll is fair enough to offer it with doubt and uncertainty in calling it "a possible explanation." But the reader will wonder why he offered it at all.

But the affirmative says that his respondent "knows how an unfulfilled prophecy can *not* be fulfilled." He said I should "remain neutral" on this point. I do not claim the honor which he offers me; but when I know that an interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy contradicts any plain, simple declaration of God's word, then I know that *that* interpretation is not the fulfillment of any of God's prophecies.

REV. 2:26, 27, 28.

Brother Boll comes to this Scripture again. He says "that this passage does not deal with apocalyptic symbols and figures." Well, what are these? "Rod of iron," "vessels of the potter," "broken to shivers," and "morning star." They are all in this Scripture; yet Brother Boll says that this Scripture "does not deal with apocalyptic symbols and figures." I wonder why he should make such a statement?

Adam Clarke, in commenting on [this Scripture](#), says:

Every witness of Christ has power to confute and confound all the false doctrines and maxims of the nations of the world, for Christianity shall at last rule over all. . . . This seems to refer to the heathen world; and perhaps Constantine the Great may be intended, who, when he overcame Licinius, became the instrument in God's hand of destroying idolatry over the whole Roman Empire.

So this does not have reference to the millennium, but is in process of fulfillment now. It has no reference, according to Adam Clarke, to the time when Christ comes.

Dean Alford, in commenting on [this verse](#), says: [210]

The authority here spoken of is that which shall be conferred on the saints when they shall inherit the earth and reign with Christ in his kingdom. It has been gradually realized, as the stone

cut out without hands has broken in pieces other kingdoms. ("New Testament Commentary," Volume II., page 964.)

It will be noticed that Dr. Alford says: "It has been gradually realized, as the stone cut out without hands has broken in pieces other kingdoms." This shows that he interprets it to mean that it is in process of fulfillment now, and that the saints are reigning with Christ now, and have been ever since the stone began smiting the image on the day of Pentecost. Dr. Smith, as quoted before, says: "This power will work through his people, and thus to them, the instrument, he imparts this power. This is a part of their reward in the overcoming." He emphasizes that it is now working through his people, or that they are now reigning with Christ in his kingdom.

#### 2 TIM. 2:12.

It has been my observation that when an opponent begins to ridicule scholars and disparage scholarship he feels keenly the force of their testimony against his proposition. It is a futile way of attempting to weaken the evidence of scholarship; it is also an admission that one is unable to answer them. Dr. Macknight says: "I do not think there is here any reference to the millennium." This is very emphatic.

Attention is called again to the two parallel conditional clauses. They are: "*If we died with him, we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him.*" The Centenary Translation of the New Testament translates [verse 12](#): "If we endure suffering, we shall also reign with, him." And the New Testament in Modern Speech, by Weymouth, translates it as follows: "*If we patiently endure pain, we shall also share his Kingship.*" [211]

It is an axiom of logic that if the antecedent of a conditional proposition is affirmed, the consequent is thereby affirmed; or if the antecedent is true, the consequent is true. For example: "*If we acted justly, we shall be respected.*" Now, if we affirm that we acted justly and prove that to be true, then the consequent, "*we shall be respected,*" is true. The same reasoning applies to Paul's two parallel conditional clauses. Let us notice the first one, "*If we died with him.*" If this is true, then "*we shall also live with him*" is true. But Christians have died with Christ ([Rom. 6:2](#); [Col. 3:3](#)); therefore, the consequent is also true; we are now living with Christ, or the life which we now live is in Christ ([Rom. 6:4](#); [Gal. 2:20](#)). Likewise, "*if we endure,*" is true, then "*we shall also reign with him*" is also true at the same time that the antecedent is true. Now, Christians do "endure"--"endure suffering." Paul says: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." ([2 Tim. 3:12](#).) It is true that the faithful child of God endures suffering in this life; then the consequent, "*we shall also reign with him,*" is true in this life. Both of the antecedents of the two conditional propositions are true, and therefore both of the consequents are true in this life. Hence, this Scripture teaches that the saints are now living with Christ and also reigning with him in the church. Brother Boll did not answer this argument; he did not even refer to the argument that is here made.

#### CHRIST REIGNING NOW.

It seems to me that the arguments which have been made on the fact that Christ is reigning now are so clear, emphatic, and Scriptural that Brother Boll had to admit them, and after doing

so he turned square around and attempted to deny them. For example, the argument was made that Christ is now reigning and that he has all authority. ([Matt. 28:18](#).) Brother Boll says: "Good. [212] I hold by that." Then he faces about and says that Christ does "not as yet have it in actual fact and act." He further asks, Did Christ "actually have all authority at that time?" Yes; he said that he had it, and began exercising it in giving the commission, but told his disciples to wait till the Holy Spirit came. They did wait, and received the power from on high, and remitted sins according to the terms which were given them by their Lord. It seems that Brother Boll is confused in regard to the authority which Christ now has, or else he has not the courage to come out boldly and deny the Lordship of Christ. His theory denies Christ as actually having all authority now, but says that he will receive it when he comes: that he will only have it "in actual fact and act" during the millennium. I repeat that I regret that Brother Boll does not believe that Christ is in "actual possession" of "all authority." Such a position contradicts the statement of our Lord. Such a position robs the reigning King of power, authority, and glory; it dishonors the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a position denies the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, because, if Christ does not have "all authority" now, the whole foundation of Christianity rests upon a sandy foundation; for Christ has made a false claim, if he is not "in actual fact and act" exercising "all authority."

Again, Brother Boll does not hesitate to push aside the testimony of J. W. McGarvey and D. Lipscomb on [Matt. 19:28](#). McGarvey said that the period of regeneration and restoration is now going and that the apostles are now on their thrones judging true Israel. Brother Lipscomb, as was quoted, bears testimony equally as clear and strong. But Brother Boll puts up his own interpretations on this Scripture against these eminent scholars, who contradict his position. All restoration is under the Lordship of Christ, and is being worked out now by the agencies of Christianity through the saints. Brother Lipscomb further says: [213]

As the whole under-creation sympathized with man in his ruin, it likewise sympathizes with him in his rescue. ([Rom. 8:20-22](#).) . . . In perfect accord with this, wherever the Christian religion gains a foothold, it excites to industry. Briers, thistles, and thorns are rooted out; the earth is reclaimed from a desert waste and brings forth food for man and beast. With generous and nutritious food, the lower animals improve in their development and are softened in nature. ("Salvation from Sin," pages 124, 125.)

This emphasizes the restoration of all things in Christianity through the present reign of Christ with his saints in the church or kingdom of God on earth. Truly, if we "fill the world with faithful, pure, active churches, led by the light of truth and the Spirit of God, soon 'the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.'"

Brother McGarvey says that the "throne of his glory in [Matt. 25:31](#) is "the throne of judgment." ("Commentary," page 220.) Christ is now on his mediatorial throne and interceding between God and man; but this same Mediator on the same throne will at his coming be Judge "of the quick and the dead." His throne then will be the same as his throne now; the only difference will be in the different offices of Him who sits upon the throne.

#### BROTHER BOLL'S SUMMARY.

Brother Boll sums up his work on this proposition under seven heads. He vehemently affirms these seven points; but, in my judgment, he has not proved a single one of them. We wish to notice each one of them separately.

1. [Rev. 2:25-27](#). Adam Clarke, Dean Alford, and Dr. J. A. Smith, all eminent Bible scholars, contradict Brother Boll's interpretation of this Scripture. They say that it has been fulfilled or is now in process of fulfillment; that the saints are now reigning with Christ. What evidence has Brother Boll given us that his interpretation of this Scripture is correct and that their interpretation is false? [214] He cannot claim with absolute certainty that his interpretation of this Scripture is true beyond a doubt, and therefore the uncertainty of his interpretation weakens his proof of his proposition. So he cannot claim this Scripture as support to his proposition.

2. [2 Tim. 2:12](#). Macknight, in commenting on this Scripture, says that "it has no reference to the millennium. There is not one word said in it about the saints' reigning with Christ when he comes. This Scripture does not sustain beyond a doubt Brother Boll's position; hence, the element of doubt (which Brother Boll is unable to remove) inheres in his premises and is inevitably a part of his conclusion. So, again, the proof of his proposition weakens his contention. He cannot claim this Scripture as support to his proposition.

3. [1 Cor. 6:2, 3](#). This does not sustain Brother Boll's position. It says absolutely nothing about the saints' reigning with Christ when he comes. A casual reading of this Scripture shows that it does not support his proposition.

4. [Luke 19:11-27](#). This is the parable of the pounds. In my judgment, Brother Boll misinterprets the entire parable. The chief lessons of it are that Christ, before establishing his kingdom, would go into the grave and would be raised from the dead and then establish his kingdom; that our gifts are intrusted to us and are not our own; that they are to be used and improved as we serve in his kingdom, for an account must one day be given of them; that greater or less diligence and conscientiousness in work will receive a proportionate reward; and that in the end all things will be put under the Lord's feet. To say the least of it, Brother Boll has not given infallible evidence that his application of it is true, and hence he cannot use it as positive proof of his proposition.

5. [Dan. 7](#). The "kingdom" mentioned in this chapter is the church. (Brother Boll admitted this in our [215] discussion on a former proposition); and if it is the church, then the saints are now reigning with Christ in this kingdom. Brother Boll's admission on this point is fatal to his present contention. So this point is taken from him.

6. [Matt. 19:28](#). As shown by the testimony of McGarvey, Lipscomb, and others, the apostles and saints are now reigning with Christ; so what they bind on earth is bound in heaven; or whatever the words of the apostles bound upon men upon earth, the same is ratified in heaven. ([Matt. 16:19](#).) So, again, this Scripture cannot be claimed to support (without doubt) Brother Boll's proposition.

7. [Rev. 19, 20](#). This Scripture takes Brother Boll into "the many so-called interpretations, wild theories, and imaginations men have spun around that book;" into the very field in which



Brother Boll gave such wise counsel several years ago. He does not know the meaning of the symbolical language used in these chapters, and therefore cannot give a correct interpretation of them; hence, his interpretations here are freighted with doubt and uncertainty, and therefore cannot support with any degree of certainty his proposition.

#### REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS.

1. The kingdom over which Christ is now reigning "shall stand forever" ([Dan. 2:44](#)); it "cannot be shaken" ([Heb. 12:28](#)). This is the description which the Holy Spirit gives to the kingdom over which Christ is now reigning. We need not look for another kingdom to be given unto him. If his saints reign with him, they must reign with him in this kingdom, which is the church. Brother Boll has failed to meet this argument.

2. God has not promised to give to Christ another kingdom than the one he *now* has. So, if the saints ever reign with him, they must reign with him over the one he *now* has, and the one which he *now* has is the one which Brother Boll has admitted to be the church. The Bible [216] speaks of only one reign of Christ (not two or more), and it represents him as reigning now. This refutes Brother Boll's position that he is to have another throne and another kingdom and that his saints will not reign with him until he comes and occupies another throne and receives another kingdom. Brother Boll has not met this objection.

3. Brother Boll wants the smiting of the image in [Dan. 2:44](#) to take place when Christ comes again, and his theory joins the saints with him in the smiting of the stone at that time. Now, in discussing a former proposition, Brother Boll admitted that the smiting of the image was done during the existence of the Roman Empire. Daniel said that it would be during the existence of the Roman Empire. Now, if Daniel told the truth, the smiting of the stone began on Pentecost, when the kingdom, or church, was established. We believe that Daniel told the truth when he said that it would be done during the existence of the Roman Empire. So Christ began his reign then, and his apostles and saints began reigning with him in his kingdom when it was established on Pentecost. Again, if Daniel told the truth, Christ is now reigning with his saints, and we need not look for him to have another kingdom given him in order for his saints to reign with him. Brother Boll has not met this objection.

4. In the description of the judgment as recorded in [Matt. 25](#), Brother Boll says: "Furthermore, in this judgment Christians are not among those who are being judged, for they are already with their Lord, past all judgment ([Col. 3:4](#)), and are themselves associated with the Lord in his judging. ([1 Cor. 6:2](#).) Moreover, Israel is not in this judging." ("The Kingdom of God," by R. H. Boll, page 84.) Now, Brother Boll has defined his proposition to mean that Christ with his saints will reign only over the wicked race then living when he comes. He would have Christ, a *righteous* Judge and *righteous* King, with his *righteous* saints, with *righteous* laws and a [217] *righteous*; kingdom, ruling for a thousand years over a *wicked race*. The reader will recall that Brother Boll has not touched this argument. He has not given it the courtesy of even referring to it. May we ask why?

5. Christ came on his first advent, which completed the opening of the gospel dispensation; he established his church or kingdom; he is now the Head of the church and the King of the



kingdom. The Scriptures are clear in teaching that he will return at the end of the gospel dispensation to raise the dead, to judge the world, to punish the wicked and to reward the righteous, and then deliver up the kingdom to God, the Father, that God may be all and in all. If the saints reign with Christ, *they must reign with him before he delivers up the only kingdom that he will ever have to God, the Father*. This refutes Brother Boll's contention that they will reign with him when he comes.

6. Christ has all authority now ([Matt. 28:18](#)); angels and authorities are now "subject to him" ([1 Pet. 3:22](#)); he does not have to wait until he comes again to receive this authority; he is reigning now in his kingdom ([1 Cor. 15:25](#); [Heb. 2:8](#)); his present reign will continue in his kingdom until the last enemy is destroyed; then he will deliver the kingdom to God. He will not reign *after his present reign ceases, for there is only one reign of Christ mentioned in the Scriptures*. His principles, spirit, and love will continue in force until the last enemy is conquered. It is a travesty on Christ and his kingdom to suppose that his kingdom is to be like that of Alexander the Great, or Xerxes, or any other mighty murderer on this earth. Again we see that his saints must reign now in his present kingdom with righteous laws and principles.

7. The influence of Christ and the power of his kingdom in the world may be seen on every hand to-day. Its influence will continue until the world shall be brought to his feet, not by compulsion of force, but by the irresistible might of love. As he reigns in heaven and on earth [218] through his saints, he also intercedes in heaven for his saints on earth. He is preparing a home for the saints in heaven. He is not preparing for them to become world rulers on earth. As rapidly as people now submit to his rule and come under his influence, so speedily his church or kingdom conquers all opposition.

8. The Lord's people are "a royal priesthood." ([1 Pet. 2:9](#).) A "royal priesthood" means a kingly priesthood, a priesthood of kings or a kingdom of priests. The two elements of priesthood and kingship are united in every faithful child of God. Every Christian is a priest and a king. Christians are priests to offer spiritual sacrifices through Christ, and they are kings to reign with him. As surely as the saints are priests unto God, so surely are they kings reigning with Christ; and as they are kings, Christ is indeed "King of kings," as he is our King. Brother Boll has made no reply to this argument.

9. Again, Paul tells us: "For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ." ([Rom. 5:17](#).) In this Paul tells us that the saints are reigning in this life through Christ Jesus. As Christ is now reigning over his kingdom through his saints, his saints are said to be reigning through him. Brother Boll has not answered this argument.

#### BROTHER BOLL'S FAILURES.

1. He has failed to establish his ability to interpret correctly unfulfilled prophecies.
2. For some cause he has failed to set forth clearly and fully his theory in regard to the thousand-years' reign, or millennium; he has chosen to fill his space with much irrelevant matter.

3. He has failed to meet the argument that the Bible mentions only one reign for Christ and that he is now reigning, and hence no other reign is to be given him. [219]

4. He has failed to meet the argument that, since Christ has but one reign or kingdom, if his saints reign with him, they must reign now with him in the church.

5. He has failed to meet the argument, based on [1 Pet. 2:9](#), that Christians are "a royal priesthood," hence reigning now.

6. He has gone to the book of Revelation for much of his proof for his proposition, yet he has failed to give the meaning of more than forty symbols and figures which were compiled for him as a test of his ability to understand the book of Revelation.

7. He has failed to recognize the weight of authority of Adam Clarke, McGarvey, Lipscomb, Sewell, and others who have been quoted. He has failed, in my judgment, to prove his proposition that "the Scriptures teach that Christ, when he comes, will reign with his saints over all the earth," meaning that Christ, when he comes, will reign with his saints over all the wicked people then living upon the earth for a thousand years. [220]

# PROPOSITION IV.

## CHRIST ON DAVID'S THRONE.

**Fourth Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne." H. Leo Boles, affirms;  
R. H. Boll Denies.**

### Chapter XI.

#### H. LEO BOLE'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.

There is a close relation between the propositions which I agreed to affirm with Brother Boll in this discussion. My first affirmation was that the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, and that it began its mission at that time; that the little stone began smiting the image on Pentecost. My affirmation now is that Christ, in reigning over this kingdom, is now on David's throne.

The definitions of the terms of the proposition are few and simple. By "Scriptures," of course, we mean the Old and the New Testaments, the word of God as revealed to us in the Bible. By "teach" I mean to declare, instruct, state; and this may be done either by precept, example, or necessary inference. "Christ" means the Anointed One, Jesus of Nazareth, the seed of David, the Savior of men, the Son of God, our Lord and King. "Now" means at the present time, during the Christian dispensation, from his ascension to his surrendering the kingdom back to the Father. By "David's throne" I mean "the throne of the Majesty," "the throne of his glory," "the throne of God," "Christ's throne;" not the mere wooden chair or throne that David used, but the authority and leadership of the Lord's people. "Throne" is usually the symbol of kingly power and dignity; it denotes governing or judicial power; it is sometimes equivalent to "kingdom" or "reign." [221]

Both the affirmative and negative sides of this question concede that Jesus is Lord and Christ ([Acts 2:36](#)); that all authority, both in heaven and on earth, hath been given unto Christ ([Matt. 28:18](#)); that Christ is now king ([Luke 23:2, 3](#)); that he now has a kingdom ([Col. 1:13](#)); that he is now reigning over the Lord's people, hence is now on some throne ([1 Cor. 15:25](#)). Furthermore, it is conceded that he was promised David's throne. ([Isa. 9:7.](#)) Brother Boll and I agree on so many points that the issue is very narrow.

#### THE ISSUE.

The proposition is simple, the simplest proposition that we have had to discuss. It is true or it is false. This investigation is to determine the truthfulness or falsity of the proposition. What, then, is the issue as set forth in the proposition? It is precise and definite. Christ is now reigning; he is on some throne. Is the throne which he now occupies called in the Scriptures "David's throne?" The affirmative claims that it is; the negative denies this. The affirmative claims that the throne which Christ now occupies, the one which he has at the right hand of God, at the throne

which the Scriptures call "David's throne;" the negative claims that he is not now on the throne which the Scriptures call "David's throne," but that he will occupy "David's throne" when he comes.

There should be no fear of misunderstanding what the issue is; there is no room for evasion; it will be difficult, indeed, to obscure this plain and simple issue. There is no desire on the part of the affirmative to evade it, but with boldness and confidence the affirmation is made that Christ is now on David's throne. On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ our King was throned, and sceptered, and crowned; on this Pentecost my Lord was crowned with glory, given the scepter of Judah, and took the throne of David. The Scriptures either teach that Christ is now on David's throne or they do not teach it. The burden of the affirmative is to show that the [222] Scriptures clearly and definitely teach that Christ is now on David's throne, and this task is cheerfully assumed.

### ARGUMENTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Families have their heads; tribes have their chiefs; states have their governors; republics have their presidents; empires have their emperors; and kingdoms have their kings. Rulers have their "chairs," "crowns," and "thrones." We necessarily connect kingdoms and thrones with kings. The throne is the emblem of the power and authority of the king. Authority is often designated by the crown or throne. The essentials of the kingdom are laws, subjects, territory, and a king. Since the kingdom of God has been established among men, or on earth, it has its laws, subjects, territory, and king. Christ is that King; hence, he is on some throne.

The Old Testament teaches that Christ was to be a King. God made a covenant with David, and in this covenant he said to David: "I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. . . . And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever." ([2 Sam. 7:12-16](#); [1 Chron. 17:10-14](#).) There are three elements in this prediction--(1) the everlasting reign of the house of David; (2) the erection of the house of Jehovah by the seed of David; (3) the exaltation of the seed of David to the rank of Sonship with God. This prediction finds its ultimate realization in Christ as the culmination of David's line. The dynasty of David is an everlasting dynasty; it continues from David to Christ becomes an everlasting throne.

The Psalmist emphasizes the same in [Ps. 110](#). In this Psalm is the oath of Jehovah to the Messiah, enthroning him at his right hand as the Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek. Here he stands at the right hand as he [223] goes forth at the head of a priestly army to the conquest of the nation. He is at the head of "a royal priesthood." In [Ps. 2](#) the Messiah is enthroned on Zion at the right hand of Jehovah as his Son, with all the prerogatives of universal and everlasting sovereignty. In [Ps. 72](#) we have Christ represented as the Messianic King, ruling in righteousness, mercy, and peace, receiving the homage of the nations, the source and object of universal blessing.

The prophet Isaiah says: "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." ([Isa. 22:22](#).) John, in

Revelation, quotes this prophecy and applies it to Christ. "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth." ([Rev. 3:7.](#))

The Old Testament teaches clearly and definitely that Christ was to be a King. The voice of Jehovah is heard above all the tumult of earth, declaring: "Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." ([Ps. 2:6.](#)) The Babe that Isaiah sees through prophecy born of a virgin is also "the Prince of Peace." "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever." ([Isa. 9:6, 7.](#)) In this prophecy Christ is called "the Prince of Peace;" he should have a government, a kingdom, "the throne of David." Again, the prophet said: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice." ([Isa. 32:1.](#)) Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, catches glimpses of his coming Lord and cries: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will [224] raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." ([Jer. 23:5.](#)) Again, another prophet sees the rise and progress, the decline and fall, of many mighty empires, but beyond all he sees the Son of man inheriting an everlasting kingdom. ([Dan. 7:13, 14.](#)) Still another prophet sees "the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days." ([Hos. 3:5.](#)) This "David their king" has reference to Christ. Still another prophet says: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass." ([Zech. 9:9.](#)) Here the prophet states that Christ should come as king to Jerusalem.

We have now learned that Christ was to be a King; that he was to come to Jerusalem; that he would be given a kingdom; that he would be given the throne of David; that he would be seated at the right hand of Jehovah in his reign. We now ask: Have these prophecies been fulfilled, or are they now in the process of fulfillment?

#### ARGUMENTS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament presents Christ as a King. Matthew, in tracing his genealogy, emphasizes his royal lineage as the Son of David. Both Matthew and Luke trace the lineage of Christ through David. He was born in Bethlehem as Micah ([5:2](#)) had prophesied. The angel, in announcing to Mary, says: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there [225] shall be no end." ([Luke 1:30-33.](#)) Isaiah had said that "the Prince of Peace" should occupy the throne of David, and now the angel announces to the mother of Jesus that "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." These Scriptures are too simple and clear to be misunderstood. It remains to be seen whether God kept his promise made through Isaiah and the angel. No doubt can be entertained that Christ came of the seed of David. Paul

declares: "Which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh." ([Rom. 1:2, 3.](#))

Let us now examine the claim which Christ made. It is familiar to all that Christ claimed to be a King and to have a kingdom. Throughout all of his teaching it is clearly implied that he was to be a King. He assumes to himself the highest place in the kingdom of God. In speaking of his kingdom, he says: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity. . . . Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." ([Matt. 13:41-43.](#)) Again, Christ speaks of some who should "see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." ([Matt. 16:28.](#)) Again, he promises his disciples that "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ([Matt. 19:28.](#))

When the mother of John and James came to Christ to ask a favor for her sons, she asked that one of her sons might sit on his right hand, and the other on his left hand, in his kingdom. Christ did not deny that he would be a King and would have a kingdom. ([Matt. 20:21-23.](#)) In the great picture of the coming judgment the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, and as a King blesses and condemns. (See [Matt. 25.](#))

One of the charges brought against Christ at his trial [226] was that he claimed to be a King. He was condemned as a King. When he was brought before Pilate, Pilate asked him: "Art thou the King?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest," which was equivalent to "yes." ([Luke 23:1-3.](#)) Again, it is recorded of him in his conversation before Pilate, that he said: "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." ([John 18:37.](#)) His claim to be a King is emphasized in the superscription which was placed on the cross in the three languages: "This is the King of the Jews." ([John 19:20, 21.](#))

His resurrection from the dead helps to emphasize his proclamation that he was to be a King; and Peter, by the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, proclaims the fact that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth has been raised from the dead and made Lord, or Ruler. He says: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." ([Acts 2:36.](#)) The early preaching of the apostles emphasized the Lordship and Kingship of Christ after his resurrection from the dead. His Kingship was not questioned by any of his disciples. The early disciples were heralds of the Kingship of Christ. The angel at his birth had announced that he would occupy the throne of his father David. He was frequently called during his earthly life "the son of David." ([Matt. 1:1, 20; Mark 10:47; Luke 20:41.](#))

On the day of Pentecost after his ascension, Peter, by the Holy Spirit, declares that the promise of God made to David, that "of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne," was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Nothing can be plainer than this declaration: "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of [227] his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." ([Acts 2:29-31.](#)) So the Holy Spirit declares that God had kept his oath and fulfilled his promise to David, and that Christ was the fulfillment of the promise, and that Christ was now



on David's throne. It seems that the proposition has been proved. To deny this proposition is to deny the word of God.

James makes substantially the same claim. He says: "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old." ([Acts 15:15-17](#).) In Christ, God has rebuilt the tabernacle of David and the ruins thereof; he hath set it up. This is the same as the establishment of the kingdom on Pentecost and the placing of Christ on David's throne. When Christ ascended, God made him "both Lord and Christ." ([Acts 2:36](#).) "Lord" means master, ruler, king. God made Jesus "King of kings and Lord of lords." Paul teaches us that Christ is now "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." ([Eph. 1:21](#).) Christ not only *now* is far above *all* rule and authority, but he has it *now for the world to come*--that is, he now has and exercises rule over all authority. Again, Paul declares: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." ([Phil. 2:9-11](#).) These Scriptures teach that Christ is [228]*now* Lord and Christ; that he is exalted above angels, principalities, and powers.

If Christ is not now on David's throne, he is yet to ascend higher when he takes it, or he is to come lower in authority and power when he takes it, or when he occupies David's throne it will add nothing to him. These three alternatives include all of the possible disjunctions. To ascend higher when he occupies David's throne (if Brother Boll's position is true) would contradict what the Scriptures declare about his now being above every name; to descend when he occupies David's throne would be to dishonor him and weaken his power and authority; and if it does not add anything to him or take anything from him when he occupies David's throne, then what effects will follow when he does occupy it? The inevitable conclusion is that to occupy David's throne is to occupy his present high and exalted position which the Scriptures ascribe to him. David's throne is the same as the throne of God. ([1 Kings 2:12](#); [1 Chron. 29:23](#).)

#### SUMMARY.

Christ's mission for the redemption of man and God's revelation of his will to man has been completed. The Word was made flesh. Christ revealed the will of God, died, was buried, was raised from the dead, gave his commission to his disciples, ascended to the Father, sat down at the right hand of God, sent the Holy Spirit to earth. He has finished the plan of salvation; he is now the mediator between God and man; nothing remains to be done. When he comes, it will be to gather up his jewels, render judgment, and deliver the kingdom up to his Father.

Eternal life is promised in his name, or by his authority, now. (See [John 10:28](#); [17:2](#).) He must have supreme and truly divine dominion to command eternal life to be promised in his name. He has this authority now. If he is not on David's throne now, to occupy it at some future



[229] time will give him no more authority over eternal life. So, again, we conclude that Christ is now on David's throne.

He now has all glory. (See [2 Thess. 2:14](#); [2 Tim. 2:10](#); [Heb. 2:9](#).) If he is not on David's throne now, to occupy it will add no glory to him. So, again, we conclude that Christ is now on David's throne.

He is now on the throne of God, and David's throne is called "the throne of Jehovah." (See [1 Kings 2:12](#); [1 Chron. 29:23](#).) Four times do we have these words used in the Hebrew letter: "Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" ([Heb. 1:3, 13](#)); "sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" ([Heb. 8:1](#)); "sat down on the right hand of God" ([Heb. 10:12](#)); and "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" ([Heb. 12:2](#)). These expressions all mean one and the same throne. They show his union with God in his Kingship, and they show that he is reigning now with God over his kingdom. Now, if Christ is not on David's throne, he cannot be placed any higher or any closer in his union with God, the Father, in his reign. Christ now shares the throne with God, his Father. If to occupy the throne of David will give him no more honor, then what advantage can there be in a theory which robs the Christ of his present majesty? The throne of the Majesty loses none of its essential glory through God's sharing it with Christ. So we conclude again that Christ is now on David's throne.

Christ is now victorious over death, hell, and the grave. He is to reign on the present throne until the last enemy, death, shall have been conquered. He will occupy his present throne with the Father until there shall be left nothing else for him to conquer. If he is not now on David's throne, there will be nothing left for him to conquer when he does occupy it. ([Rev. 1:18](#).)

Christ has all authority now, both in heaven and on [230] earth. ([Matt. 28:18](#).) If he is not now on David's throne, to occupy it will give him no more authority. Then what advantage will it be to Christ, angels, or men for him to occupy David's throne at some future time?

Christ is now High Priest; he is Priest-King. ([Heb. 3:1](#).) He, as such, is mediator between God and man. Man's full and complete redemption is now in Christ, with him on his present throne. Man's salvation and glorification are now to be had in and through Christ as a High Priest, with him on his present throne. If Christ is not now on David's throne, then to occupy it in the future will add nothing to man in his present or future state; it will add nothing to the redemption and glorification of the human race. So we finally conclude that the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne. [231]

## R. H. BOLL'S FIRST NEGATIVE.

The question now before us is whether Christ is now sitting on David's throne. Brother Boles affirms that he is; I am to deny. In this proposition everything depends on what is meant by David's throne and what is meant by Christ's sitting on it. And I will say at the very outset that if that means anything else or anything less in Brother Boles' mind than *the actual exercise of the rule and government allotted by God to David*, there is no use of carrying this proposition any further. As my respondent knows, I am not denying Christ's present *universal* authority and power, which, indeed, *includes also all the right to, and authority of, the throne of David*. This I affirmed and declared over and over again throughout the last two propositions. I did not merely *admit* it or *concede* it, but I avowed and gladly declared it, and have always done so. If, when he affirms that Christ is on David's throne now, Brother Boles means nothing more than that that right and authority is Christ's now, we will shake hands on it right here and stop further dispute. But if he means that Christ is now actively exercising the rule of David's throne, that Christ is now administrating the sphere of government which God committed to David, that is what I deny, and that only. I am not making this distinction only here in this debate. Brother Boles knows (or should know) that this has been my published position all along. Not only did I explain this fully in my little book on "The Kingdom of God" (pages 60, 61), published five years ago, but the distinction was pointed out to him again in the correspondence preceding this debate. On pages 60 and 61 of the kingdom book I wrote as follows (beginning at the bottom of page 59):

The risen Lord Jesus is indeed exalted and enthroned now, but the position of authority he occupies up there was in no sense inherited from his father David. David never occupied that throne, nor could have; just as it is equally evident that the Lord Jesus has never yet [232] exercised the authority of David's sphere of rule. The throne which our Lord occupies now is the all-inclusive sovereignty of heaven. It is a position of supreme authority held by him as the glorified God-man "until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet" ([Ps. 110:1](#)), upon which it will be surrendered ([1 Cor. 15:25-28](#)).

It may be argued that being in the place of supreme and all-inclusive authority ("all authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me"), the authority of David's throne, being comprehended in "all authority," is his now also. *That is entirely true*. It is his and no one else's. He has and holds the key of David. He is the anointed King of David's line, the Christ appointed for Israel. ([Acts 3:20](#).) But neither is that saying that he now sits and reigns on David's throne. David had been anointed God's king long before he actually sat upon his rightful throne over Israel, suffering indignities and persecution at the hand of Saul, and rejection at the hands of the people; and he never took the government until the people themselves willingly sought his rule and chose him and submitted. Yet all the while, though unrecognized by men, he was God's king. As it would be put in legal language, the throne was his "*de jure et potentia*" at first; and became his "*de facto et actu*" afterwards--that is, it is his by right and authority at first, and in fact and act afterwards.

Moreover, his all-inclusive authority does not remove the necessity of his special introduction into a special subordinate sphere of rule and investment with a specific authority. George V. became King of England, sovereign, therefore, over all its wide domains, upon which

the sun never sets. Yet some six months after his coronation in England he must needs go to Delhi to be there crowned Emperor of India. As King of England that crown belonged to him alone. Because he was King of England he was, by right, Emperor of India. Therefore, he went to Bengal to claim that crown. Let that serve as an illustration of a situation which is really simple enough in itself.

The meaning my respondent places on the term "David's throne," therefore, determines whether there is any issue between us. Now, what is his definition of the "throne of David?" He says: "By 'David's throne' I mean 'the throne of the Majesty,' 'the throne of his glory,' 'the [233] throne of God,' 'Christ's throne;' not the mere wooden chair or throne that David used, but the authority and leadership of the Lord's people. 'Throne' is usually the symbol of kingly power and dignity; it denotes governing or judicial power; it is sometimes equivalent to kingdom or reign."

Now, if really that is what my brother means by "throne of David," and if that is *all* he means, there is nothing to debate. If, by definition, the throne on which Christ now sits is the same as David's throne, the question is begged and also settled by his definition at the very start. What is the use of saying anything more, one way or another? For Brother Boles knows that I believe and teach that Jesus Christ is *now* exalted at God's right hand, on the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and on the throne of God, all things in the universe, visible and invisible, being subject to him; that neither of us thinks that "the mere wooden chair or throne that David used" is meant; and Christ now has "the authority and leadership of the Lord's people." If that is "the throne of David" (and my respondent says that it is), we are both heartily agreed, and so Christ is on David's throne now, and the dispute is ended. What is there left to debate about? Did Brother Boles think I would deny that Christ is now exalted to universal sovereignty, that he is now on "the throne of the Majesty" and has "the authority and leadership of the Lord's people?" If he thought I would deny that, he had no reason to think so on grounds of anything I ever said, but every reason to know better.

It seems to me a very unusual thing in a discussion that the affirmative should so define the proposition as to leave no ground for the real issue. To expect me now to state the proposition and to define it so as to bring out the real issue would be virtually the same as placing the negative into affirmation and shifting the burden of proof to the negative's shoulders. I could not consent to that, [234]and my respondent would not want me to do that. Let Brother Boles give us a clean-cut and distinctive definition of the throne of David. Let him tell us, if he will, that the throne of David is that sphere of rule and governmental authority which God delegated to David, and which Christ, by virtue of his Davidic descent in the royal lineage, has legally inherited from his father David, and then go to work and *prove* that the throne on which Christ now sits is that which he has inherited from his father David. That would be facing the issue squarely, and then we can proceed with the discussion. It is absolutely essential that Brother Boles give us a clear and distinctive definition of the term "David's throne," and also of what is meant by Christ's being or sitting on David's throne, whether it means only the possession of the authority, or the active exercise of it in governmental rule in the realm of David.

THE ISSUE BROUGHT OUT.

Further on the affirmative speaks much more distinctly. "Is the throne which he [Christ] now occupies called in the Scriptures 'David's throne?' The affirmative claims that it is; the negative denies this. The affirmative claims that the throne which Christ now occupies, the one which he has at the right hand of God, is the throne which the Scriptures call 'David's throne;' the negative claims that he is not now on the throne which the Scriptures call 'David's throne,' but that he will occupy 'David's throne' when he comes."

Good. That is the issue fair and square, provided only (as explained before) it be understood that Christ's present universal sovereignty *includes* all subordinate authority and power. The issue in its simplest terms is whether Christ is *now exercising* the rule and government implied in the term "the throne of David." For to *occupy a throne* has always meant to exercise the sovereignty of that throne. For example, to use a Scripture illustration, [235] David was God's anointed king over Israel years before he actually sat on the throne. Again, he lost his throne for a time during Absalom's rebellion. Yet all the time he was king. To sit on a throne is not merely to hold a rank and title of royalty, but the active exercise of that rule and government. Christ is God's universal King; yea, he is God's King of the house of David, whose own the throne of David is, the only living Heir, Claimant, and Possessor of the same. When he gets ready, he will exercise that right and rule. He has not done so yet, according to the negative's contention. It is the affirmative's duty to prove that Christ has assumed the active exercise of the power and rule which is his as the Heir of the throne of David, and which would constitute occupancy of the throne.

What, then, is that sphere of government? The affirmative rightly refers to God's promise to David in [2 Sam. 7:11-16](#). That, with [1 Chron. 17:10-14](#) (see also [Ps. 89:19-37](#)), is the fundamental Scripture teaching on the subject; only, my respondent does not give it in full. The promise begins at [2 Sam. 7:8](#). "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I took thee from the shepcote, from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be prince *over my people, over Israel*. . . . *And I will appoint a place for my people Israel*, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and *be moved no more*; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as at the first. . . . Moreover Jehovah telleth thee that Jehovah will make thee a house. . . . And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever." ([2 Sam. 7:8-16](#).)

It is clear from this that David's rule and authority was *over the people of Israel*. This was the sovereignty delegated to him by Jehovah. For Jehovah had specifically claimed the sovereignty over Israel for himself; but when they asked a human king, God first gave them Saul; and upon his failure, David. ([1 Sam. 16:1](#).) God, [236] however, never abdicated his kingdom and right over Israel, but *the throne*--that is, the right to administrate and exercise its government--he delegated to David and David's house forever. It is in that sense, and no other, that David and his sons "sat on the throne of Jehovah," according to [1 Kings 2:12](#) and [1 Chron. 29:23](#), two passages cited by my respondent. The affirmative ought to prove either that David once occupied the throne on which Christ now is at God's right hand, over all the universe, or he ought to prove that Christ is now ruling the realm of David's sovereignty, *the nation of Israel*. That was the only throne and kingdom David ever held, the only one, therefore, that Christ could have inherited from David his father, and the only one that could with propriety be called "the throne of David." The negative denies that Christ is now exercising the rule of David's dominion.

Among the many passages quoted or cited by my respondent (in many of which I could not discover any bearing on the question in hand) there is not one that states that Christ is sitting on David's throne now, and that now he is exercising the rule of David's realm. As shown above, David ruled over the people of Israel. The reign of David is specifically defined to be "over Judah and Israel." ([2 Sam. 3:10](#).) He was "shepherd of my people Israel" and "prince over Israel." He reigned "over all Israel and Judah." ([2 Sam. 5:2, 5](#).) David's kingdom was that over which Saul had previously ruled. ([1 Chron. 12:23](#).) David never had any other. He never bequeathed any other to his sons after him. The Scriptures do not mention any other. "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." ([1 Kings 2:4; 8:25; Jer. 33:17](#).) *The throne of David was, according to the Scriptures, the throne of the house of Israel.* David's seed, who inherited his throne, were to be "rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." ([Jer. 33:26](#).)

It was seen in the quotation from [2 Sam. 7](#), above given, that the perpetuity of David's throne demanded *the perpetuity of the people* over whom David ruled. If his throne was to be forever, then that people which constitute his realm must continue forever, and the land, and the people in the land, must continue. Therefore, God said: "I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first." ([2 Sam. 7:10; compare Amos 9:15-](#)-"And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God"). David himself perceived that in giving him this promise concerning the perpetuity of his throne, God had established Israel to be a people unto him forever. ([2 Sam. 7:24](#).)

The affirmative must prove that Christ is administrating the rule and government in the realm of Israel, over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in their land ([Jer. 23:5](#)), else Christ is not now occupying David's throne. For the Scriptures define the throne of David to be *the rule over Israel*, and never as anything else. This is also what the angel said to Mary, concerning the wonderful Child that was to be born: "The Lord shall give unto him *the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever*." ([Luke 1:32, 33](#).) Every one knows who the house of Jacob is. It is *not the church*. The expression, "house of Jacob," occurs often. Every single time that term is used in the Scripture it has exclusive reference to the descendants of Jacob, Jacob's family, the entire nation of Israel. Is my respondent at liberty to put a significance of his own upon these plain and well-defined Scripture terms, "the throne of David" and "the house of Jacob?" I want him to take the Scripture terms at their own meaning and definition and show us when our Lord Jesus has sat on "the [238] throne of David" and ruled over "the house of Jacob." Brother Boles says: "The dynasty of David is an everlasting dynasty; it continues from David to Christ and becomes an everlasting throne." The dynasty does not become a throne, but the throne was given to David's dynasty. Both the throne and the dynasty failed for some centuries, but were to be rehabilitated in Christ. They did not steadily continue, as my respondent thinks, but the throne of David was *cast down to the ground* ([Ps. 89:44](#)), and "the tabernacle of David," which is his royal house, his dynasty, *fell* and was broken down into *ruins*. After many years and centuries there came forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, long defunct ([Isa. 11:1](#)), and the great Son of David, Jesus Christ our Lord, came to fulfill all the promises. In him the tabernacle of David (David's royal house) is rebuilt and reestablished ([Acts 15:16](#)), for here is now an Heir apparent to David's throne--one who has the legal right to reign

upon it, and divine power to do so, and to whom by every right it exclusively belongs; one who represents both God and David. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. . . . Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it." ([Isa. 9:6, 7.](#)) "And a throne shall be established in loving-kindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness." ([Isa. 16:5.](#))

But these facts go to define "the throne of David" yet more clearly: *the throne of David is a throne that once stood, and was cast down to the ground, and was to be reestablished again.* The throne on which the Lord Jesus Christ *now* sits *was never cast down to the ground.* It is God's eternal throne in the heavens, the supreme sovereignty of all the universe, which stands from everlasting to everlasting. Of the throne of David, God said: "I will [239] overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, *until he come whose right it is*; and I will give it him." ([Ezek. 21:27.](#)) But the throne on which Christ now sits was never overturned; it is the eternal throne of God in heaven. "He that overcometh," said the Lord Jesus, "I will give to him to sit down *with me in my throne*, as I also overcame, and sat down *with my Father in his throne.*" ([Rev. 3:21.](#)) That is the throne Christ occupies now, at God's right hand, according to [Ps. 110](#), which my brother quotes and cites; the throne which never was or could have been "overturned" or "cast down to the ground." But will my respondent tell us on what throne, once cast down to the ground and overturned (so that it was "no more")--on what throne answering such a description Christ now is sitting? Let the affirmative explain this.

My respondent cites many passages--too many for the negative to examine and discuss each separately. But none of them declare either singly or in conjunction that Christ is now sitting upon David's throne and exercising the rule and government peculiar to it. Like the steward of David's house, Eliakim, who was put instead of the faithless treasurer, Shebna, Christ has the key of David's treasure house, and can and does even now dispense its blessings ([Isa. 22:15-25](#); [Rev. 3:7](#))--this is told us. And that is nothing strange. But nowhere are we told that Christ is now exercising the particular rule that pertains to David's throne. Brother Boles cites and quotes passages that teach the present unlimited sovereignty and Lordship of Jesus--all of which are gladly accepted and agreed to, as has been stated time and time again. Yea Christ is now "far above all rule, and authority," just as my respondent declares on the strength of [Eph. 1:21](#), and will hold the same supreme position in "the world to come" (Greek "the *age* to come"). I believe that with all my heart, and the fact harmonizes perfectly with all else I believe. I want it to be clear to the reader that on [240] this point there is no disagreement between Brother Boles and myself, and that the proofs and assertions of this fact which he continually advances are needless in this discussion. The same is true in regard to [Phil. 2:9-11](#), where it is stated that "God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." This high position Jesus holds *now*, although, as yet, every knee has not bowed to him nor every tongue confessed him, as Brother Boles admits. The fact of Christ's universal Lordship, therefore, is not denied or discounted by the fact that everything is not now actually under his rule and government as yet. Though all things are, by title, subject to him, we see not yet all things actually subjected to him. ([Heb. 2:8.](#)) Brother Boles himself said that in his second



negative of the preceding proposition. There is, therefore, nothing derogatory to Christ's present supreme exaltation in the fact that he is not now actually exercising a rule which is his by right and title already.

[Ps. 2](#), cited by the affirmative, points forward to the time when Christ shall rule the nations with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces as a potter's vessel. True, the raging of the nations began, and the conspiracy of kings and rulers with the combine of Herod and Pilate and Jews and Gentiles, as shown in [Acts 4:25, 26](#); but it is also still going on, and will continue until he rises up to rule and dash his enemies to pieces in righteous judgment. [Ps. 72](#) refers to Christ's Davidic reign, and applies to the future. [Jer. 23:5](#) (already referred to) also has reference to Christ's specific reign on David's throne over Israel, in *their own land*. In those days "Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely." And in connection comes one of the clearest and strongest predictions of Israel's return and restoration: [241]

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land." ([Jer. 23:7, 8.](#))

The force of this prophecy must be evident to all. Brother Boles quotes only [verse 5](#); but [verses 6, 7, and 8](#) are vitally connected with it. In order that the King of David's line may reign and "*execute justice and righteousness in the land*," the nation of Israel (the same which once was brought up out of Egypt) will have to be regathered from their world-wide dispersion; and this regathering will be so glorious as to eclipse even their marvelous deliverance from Egypt. *Then*, according to the Scripture meaning of the term, will Christ sit upon *David's throne*. Like David himself, who, though anointed, God-appointed, rightful King of Israel as he was, would not assume his reign over them until they submitted willingly and invited him ([2 Sam. 2:4; 5:1-4](#))--so neither will Christ assume his Davidic rule over Israel until they seek him. Therefore, Peter, *speaking to the Jews*, said to them: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and *that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus*: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old." ([Acts 3:19-21.](#)) If Israel turned, God would send them their Messiah, their Christ who was appointed for them, from heaven. "Ye shall not see me henceforth," said the Lord Jesus to disobedient Jerusalem, "till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." ([Matt. 23:39.](#)) When God sends him, and he so comes, and converted Israel welcomes him, [Jer. 23:5-8](#) will be made possible. The first time, when he came to [242] them according to [Zech. 9:9](#), they rejected him. When he comes again, they will hail him with gladness.

Brother Boles quotes [Acts 2:29-31](#), a passage which he considers as entirely clear and conclusive, to prove that Christ is now seated on David's throne. A careful examination of the passage reveals that it stops short of exactly the point that would help the affirmative. Instead of saying that Christ was seated upon David's throne, it declares only that he was raised up from the grave in order that God might set him on David's throne. *When* God would do that, whether immediately or in due time, is not indicated in this Scripture, but must be learned from other



passages. That Christ is now already occupying David's throne is precisely what Peter does *not* say, and what the affirmative ought to prove.

My respondent has laid out "three alternatives"--a sort of three-cornered dilemma--thus: If Christ is not now on David's throne, he is (1) either to ascend yet higher when he takes it, or (2) he is to come lower in authority and power when he takes it, or (3) it will add nothing to him. My respondent thinks that this "includes all of the possible disjunctions." But, as is the case generally in purely human reasonings, his conclusion falls short. The Lord Jesus Christ, holding all authority and power in heaven and earth, can proceed to assume his right in any sphere where he has not been actually exercising it, without either rising higher in his station, or coming down lower, or marking time in doing so. Such a logical or illogical speculation as my respondent here proposes would be a poor foundation for a man's belief that Christ is now exercising the rule and authority of David's throne.

Brother Boles has himself affirmed that Christ had all authority before his ascension ([Matt. 28:18](#)); he has also affirmed that the reign of Christ began on Pentecost. Well, then, having already all authority, could Christ still ascend, take the heavenly throne, and begin to reign on Pentecost? If he could do that, then he can do this. If, [243] consistent with the "all authority" which was already his, he could later begin his reign--on Pentecost--then he can certainly with the same consistency assume the actual exercise and rule of David's throne in his own good time.

#### ARGUMENTS UNDER "SUMMARY."

Under the heading of "Summary" my respondent lists some *new and additional* arguments. He says that when Christ comes there will be nothing for him to do but "to gather up his jewels, render judgment, and deliver up the kingdom to his Father." It would help his proposition if he could *prove* that, instead of merely making the assertion.

He also speaks of Christ's power to bestow eternal life. But that has nothing to do with the proposition one way or the other. The question is whether Christ is now sitting on David's throne, not what he could or could not do if he sat on David's throne in the future.

He says Christ has all glory now. Good. The negative believes that. But that does not nullify the fact that "when the Son of man shall come *in his glory*, and all the angels with him, *then* shall be sit *on the throne of his glory*." ([Matt. 25:31](#).)

He insists that Christ is now sitting on God's throne, on the right hand of the Majesty on high. We are agreed on that. But David never sat on such a throne, and the affirmative has failed thus far to prove that Christ sits on any throne like that of David's, which the Scriptures say was "over all Judah and Israel," "over the house of Jacob," and which was "overturned" and "cast down to the ground." Christ is not sitting on *that* throne now, is he?

Again, he thinks that if Christ is not now on David's throne, he will have nothing to conquer when he does come to sit on it, seeing he will sit on God's right hand until all his enemies are made the footstool of his feet. And yet Brother Boles surely believes and teaches that [244] at his coming Christ will destroy his enemies, vanquish "the man of sin," "the lawless one" ([2 Thess.](#)

[2:8](#)), and render vengeance to them that know not God and obey not the gospel ([2 Thess. 1:8](#)). Does Brother Boles mean to say that Christ will sit still in heaven until all these things have worked themselves out here below? And does he mean that when Christ comes again he thereby forsakes and abandons his high position and authority at God's right hand? And does he think that when Christ occupies the throne of David (granting he has not yet done so) he would have to abdicate his throne of universal sovereignty in order to do so? These are strange assumptions. I would like for Brother Boles to tell us if that is his conception of it. Unless he thinks something like that, his arguments would have no force.

Finally, he would like to disprove the possibility of a future occupancy by Christ of David's throne because, so far as he knows, it would not add anything to man in his present and future state. I have noticed similar arguments from my respondent in preceding propositions. But though neither he nor I could see what it would "add to man" if God did this or that, are we to censor the Bible's teaching by our idea of the usefulness of things? I am not going to be sidetracked into explaining to my respondent what good it would do if God did as he promised. It is *his business to prove that Christ is now sitting on David's throne, executing the rule and authority thereof.*

In conclusion, I want to ask my respondent to give us a clear, clean-cut, unequivocal definition of what is meant by Christ's being on, or sitting on, David's throne. And if, as he must, he defines that it means that Christ not only holds the right and authority, but is *now administrating and actively exercising the government of David's throne.* I want him to give us the Scripture proof that such is the case. [245]

## Chapter XII.

### H. LEO BOLES' SECOND AFFIRMATIVE.

The issue of this proposition is simple, emphatic, and clear-cut. It seems that no one could misunderstand it. Christ is either *now* on what the Bible calls David's throne or he is not on it *now*. No multiplicity of words can obscure it; no irrelevant matter can cover or hide the issue; it cannot be evaded or explained away. The affirmative is contending that the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne; the negative is denying that Christ is now reigning on David's throne.

Definitions of the terms of the proposition have been given. The negative thinks these definitions were not clear enough and asks that "the throne of David" and "sitting on it" be defined more fully. Of course, the term "sitting on it" is not used in the proposition. "David's throne" means "the throne of the Majesty," "the throne of his glory," "the throne of God," "the throne of Jehovah," "Christ's throne;" it means the authority of God to rule over the Lord's people ([2 Sam. 3:10](#)); it means that Christ is now exercising "the rule and government allotted by God to David" over the Lord's people. The "New Standard Bible Dictionary," defines "David's throne" as follows: "Jesus the Messiah is the true Davidic King, and his 'throne,' i. e., his power, etc.--sometimes his seat at the right hand of the Father--is the realized ideal of the Davidic throne of the Old Testament." The "Dictionary of the Bible," edited by James Hastings, defines it as follows: "Frequently 'throne' is used metaphorically for dignity, royal honor, and power. Thus 'the throne of David' often stands for the royal honor of David's house." ([2 Sam. 7:16](#).) Smith's Bible Dictionary says: "The throne was the symbol of supreme power and dignity. . . . Similarly 'to sit upon the throne' implied the exercise of regal power; and 'to sit [246] upon the throne of another person,' succession to the royal dignity." Hence, when we say that Christ is now on David's throne, we mean that Christ now has "the royal honor of David's house," and that Christ is now in actual possession of "the exercise of regal power."

But as Brother Boll is inclined to reject scholarship, we give him the Bible definition of "David's throne." The Bible says: "And Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father." ([1 Kings 2:12](#).) Again, the Bible says, speaking of the same thing: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah as king instead of David his father." ([1 Chron. 29:23](#).) And again: "Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on his throne, to be king for Jehovah thy God." ([2 Chron. 9:8](#).) So that which is called "David's throne" is called also "the throne of Jehovah." David was "king for Jehovah"--that is, he was reigning over the Lord's people by the authority of Jehovah and for Jehovah. Now, that is what is meant when we affirm that Christ is now on David's throne. It means that Christ now has "the actual exercise of the rule and government allotted by God to David." So the Holy Spirit says that "the throne of David" is "the throne of Jehovah." This is clear enough.

The argument has been made that God promised David that he would "set up thy seed after thee, . . . and I will establish his kingdom. . . . and thy throne shall be established forever." ([2 Sam. 7:11-16](#); [1 Chron. 17:10-14](#).) This same fact is emphasized in [Ps. 110](#). Isaiah said concerning Christ, that "the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder." ([Isa. 22:22](#).)

Again, Isaiah said that God would put Christ "upon the throne of David." ([Isa. 9:6, 7.](#)) Jeremiah said concerning Christ: "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely." ([Jer. 23:5.](#)) Another prophet said: "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to [247] his goodness in the latter days." ([Hos. 3:5.](#)) "David their king" has reference to Christ. Jehovah had said that Christ should have David's throne. The promise and prophecy of the Old Testament are clear that Christ should reign over the Lord's people, or have David's throne.

The New Testament announced positively by the angel to Mary that "the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." ([Luke 1:30-33.](#)) This has been fulfilled. Christ is called "the son of David;" he "was born of the seed of David according to the flesh." ([Rom. 1:2, 3.](#)) Again, it is declared of Christ: "For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah." ([Heb. 7:14.](#)) So Christ was of the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah. He is now King, having all authority "in heaven and on earth." We ask, Have the Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament announcements concerning Christ been fulfilled? Peter declared on the day of Pentecost, in proving the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, that God had fulfilled this in Christ. He said: "Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of Christ." ([Acts 2:30, 31.](#)) The Holy Spirit declares that God had kept his oath and fulfilled his promise to David and that Christ is now on David's throne. James makes the same claim. ([Acts 15:15-17.](#)) So the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne.

Again, the Bible declares: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this." ([Amos 9:11.](#)) In [Acts 15:16, 17](#), James declares that this prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ. [248]He says that David's "tabernacle" has been rebuilt and it set up" and "the residue of men" and "all the Gentiles" upon whom God's name has been called are seeking after the Lord. James shows how and when God set up "the tabernacle of David" and placed Christ "upon his throne." Peter said, "That of the fruit of his loins he would set up one upon his throne," was fulfilled in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus as the Christ at the right hand of God. Peter and James use almost the same expressions. Of "the tabernacle of David," James said God would "set it up;" and of "the throne of David," Peter said God would "set one upon" it. "David's throne" and "the tabernacle of David" are one and the same. When one is "set up," the other is also "set up." God "set one upon" David's throne at the same time and in the same way that he "set up" David's tabernacle.

The prophet had said: "And a throne shall be established in loving-kindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness." ([Isa. 16:5.](#)) This shows that "the tabernacle of David" and "the throne of David" and "the tent of David" all mean the same. "The tabernacle of David" and "the tent of David" could not be in existence several thousand years before "the throne of David" was in existence. The kingdom of God to-day is "righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Spirit" ([Rom. 14:17](#)), and Jesus has established his throne "in loving-kindness," and sits "thereon in truth, in the tent of David,

judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness." Paul declares concerning David and Christ, that "of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." ([Acts 13:23](#).) Paul further says that "the promise made unto the fathers" God has fulfilled in raising Jesus from the dead, and in so doing not only proving him to be the Son of God, but fulfilling the promise: "I will give [249] you the holy and sure blessings of David." ([Acts 13:34](#).) Whatever was included in "the holy and sure blessings of David" has already been bestowed. Who is bold enough to deny that "the throne of David," "the tabernacle of David," and "the tent of David" are not included in "the holy and sure blessings of David?" Again our proposition is proved that Christ is now on David's throne.

The Scriptures do not teach that "the kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of God," "the kingdom of Christ," "the holy and sure blessings of David," "the tabernacle of David," "the tent of David," "the throne of David," and "the commonwealth of Israel" ([Eph. 2:12](#)), in which Jews and Gentiles are all fellow citizens, are different kingdoms with as many different thrones; neither are they different kingdoms over which Jesus at different times is King; neither are they different thrones which at different times Jesus will occupy; neither are they different stages or phases of the same kingdom, but they are all one and the same, over which Christ is now reigning by the authority of the Father, and hence he is on David's throne now. There is no Scripture which teaches that Christ is now King over "the kingdom of heaven" and that he is now "at the right hand of God," but that later and finally he will occupy "the throne of David." The Scriptures declare that Christ would occupy an everlasting throne ([2 Sam. 7:12](#); [1 Chron. 17:11](#)); that Christ would occupy this throne after David's death; that he would reign on David's throne, not just for a thousand years, but forever. This also shows that the reign of Christ on David's throne would take place after David's death and while he slept with his fathers, *or before his resurrection*. The reign of Christ on David's throne is thus limited by Peter in [Acts 2:29-31](#) as being after the death of David and before his resurrection--that is, the reign of Christ on David's throne, as Peter says, began on Pentecost and will continue until the final resurrection. This makes the reign of Christ on David's throne continue [250] from the beginning of the church or kingdom of God on earth to the end, when Christ shall have put the last enemy under his feet. "For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet." "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." ([1 Cor. 15:24, 25](#).) We now see that the reign of Christ on David's throne began when the kingdom of [Dan. 2:44](#) was set up, or when the church was established on Pentecost, and that it will continue until Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father, which is the end.

All Christians, or saints, both Jews and Gentiles, now constitute "the Israel of God." ([Gal. 6:16](#); [Phil. 3:3](#).) Again: "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham." ([Gal. 3:7](#).) "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." ([Verse 29](#).) The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man ([Heb. 8:2](#)), includes God's people to-day. "The house of God" ([1 Tim. 3:15](#)) "the household of faith" ([Gal. 6:10](#)) "God's building" ([1 Cor. 3:9](#)); "the temple of God" ([1 Cor. 3:16, 17](#); [6:19, 20](#)); "an elect race," "a royal priesthood," "a holy nation," "a people for God's own possession" ([1 Pet. 2:5, 9, 10](#)); "a kingdom" ([Phil. 3:20](#))--these all mean the same thing and include the people of God to-day. They are "a spiritual house" ([1 Pet. 2:5](#)), *not one of flesh*. "The tabernacle of David" in the prophecies of the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament and includes *not fleshly Israel, but all Gentile Christians as well as Jewish Christians*. God's "holy nation," his "peculiar people," his

"royal priesthood," and his "kingdom" embrace and include "the Israel of God" in Christ to-day. The Israel of God "includes" the seed of Abraham" now. The prophecies concerning the establishment of "the tabernacle of David" and "the holy and sure blessings of David" are fulfilled in the restoration [251] of God's people and are included in "the Israel of God" and "the seed of Abraham" to-day.

Jehovah promised to make Abraham "a father of many nations," "a multitude of nations." ([Gen. 17:5, 6.](#)) Paul declares that this promise is fulfilled as follows: "For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel [born of Israel after the flesh]; neither, because they are Abraham's seed [after the flesh], are they all children. . . . That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed." ([Rom. 9:6-8.](#)) All now who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, "and heirs according to the promise." ([Gal. 3:28, 29.](#)) Paul thus shows that the promise to make Abraham "the father of a multitude of nations" is fulfilled when people from all nations become Christians by faith in Christ, and that the seed of Abraham, "the Israel of God," are the children of God to-day. The promises which were "sure to all the seed," or to all "the Israel of God," are fulfilled in Christ. Only as people from all nations become Christians, or Abraham's seed in Christ, do they constitute "the Israel of God," and only such Jews, or David's seed after the flesh, or fleshly Israel, now become "the true Israel," "the Israel of God," and "heirs of the promise," as those who accept Christ and submit to his reign. So "Christ is now ruling the realm of David's sovereignty," "the Israel of God." This is what Brother Boll says "the affirmative ought to prove," and it is what the affirmative has proved.

Brother Boll's theory is purely Judaistic. It is the position of the Judaizing teachers which the Holy Spirit condemned frequently through Paul. It is based on the false Jewish interpretations of prophecy and their false interpretation of Christianity. This is the theory in a nutshell. Fleshly Israel is to be gathered up and restored to Palestine; the Jewish kingdom is to be restored; Jerusalem is to be the capital city; the temple is to be rebuilt and the temple worship restored; Christ is to come in [252] person with his Jewish nationality prominent and sit on David's throne and rule over fleshly Israel just as David did anciently; that the kingdom has not been set up in its fullness, but that it will be when Christ comes. This is no new theory. Christ and the apostles met it and refuted it. The early Christians had to contend against it. This theory has been met and confuted in every age. At first it was found only among the Jews, but now it is found among the Gentiles. Brother Boll has espoused it with some modification and with others he has redressed it. But it is the same old theory. It is wrong for brethren to charge Brother Boll with the origin of it. He did not discover it by a profound study of the Bible; he adopted it from others. There is a faction in the Baptist Church, in the Methodist, Presbyterian, and many other denominational churches, which has adopted this theory. Of course, each one of these has modified the theory according to his own notion; even they have changed positions on it. Philip Mauro is a modern apostle of this Judaistic and literalistic theory. In 1918 he published a book, called "After This," or, "The Church, the Kingdom, and the Glory," in which he sets forth phases of this theory. Brother Boll, in "Word and Work," 1919, page 181, indorses this book with slight exceptions and commends it to the public. He mentions but one mistake in that book, and says that he "thinks that this point detracts but little from the general excellence of the work." Now, late in the year 1919, Philip Mauro published another book, entitled "God's Present Kingdom," and in this book he says that he has restudied the question and that "the result has been that he has had to modify, in some important particulars, the views previously held." (Page 14.) This is



mentioned because about the same time Brother Boll seems to have modified his own views on this theory. Be it said to his credit that his modifications are approaching nearer the truth.

The negative speaks of Christ's inheriting the throne [253] of David. The throne of David cannot be inherited. Even David's son, Solomon, did not inherit it. God gave the rule over his people to Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, and because of Saul's disobedience God took it from him. ([1 Sam. 13:14; 15:23, 28.](#)) When God took the throne from Saul, he gave it to David, who was of the tribe of Judah. ([2 Sam. 6:21.](#)) Solomon did not inherit the throne of David; Jehovah gave it to him. ([1 Kings 5:5; 8:20.](#)) Adonijah, David's son, tried to take the throne, but could not.

According to Brother Boll, Christ must be on David's throne when Israel is converted and restored to Palestine as a righteous nation. If Christ is to reign over fleshly Israel as David did, then the old law must be reënacted and the temple worship restored, for Christ as David's successor must reign in Jerusalem over fleshly Israel as David reigned over fleshly Israel in Jerusalem. Not a single Scripture can be given which sustains such a theory.

This position virtually denies the fact that Christ is King in fact now over God's people, as David was king over God's people. This Judaistic theory generally denies that Christ is a King now or that he has a kingdom now. It postpones the Kingship of Christ and defers the establishment of his kingdom until he shall come the second time. This position is modified some by Brother Boll, as he wants Christ to be a King in some sense, but not in the fullness until he sits on David's throne. Every reader who has closely followed Brother Boll in this discussion remembers that he has affirmed that the Scriptures teach that fleshly Israel will be converted nationally and then as a righteous nation restored to Palestine. He has also affirmed that Christ is only reigning in a certain limited sense now, but that he will reign with his saints over all the earth when he comes again. These affirmations of Brother Boll show that he does not believe that Christ actually now has and is exercising full and complete [254] sovereignty over the Lord's people as the Old Testament prophecies show that he would have such authority.

This position robs Christ of honor and glory and power; it destroys one of the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. This position postpones the fulfillment of the prophecies until Christ comes. It is vital; for if Christ is not now reigning over the Lord's people with all power and authority as God said he would, then the Christian religion rests upon a sandy foundation.

There is an inconsistency in Brother Boll's position which I am sure the reader sees. In one proposition he has affirmed that when Christ comes he will reign with his saints over all the earth. In the discussion of this proposition it was pointed out to Brother Boll--and he admitted it--that if Christ "reigns with his saints," then he does not "reign over his saints." Now he claims that when Christ comes he will then sit on David's throne and will reign just as David did only over fleshly Israel. But in his first proposition he said that fleshly Israel was to be converted and as a righteous nation restored to Palestine before Christ came. If the Jews are to be converted, then they become saints; and if they are restored as a righteous nation to Palestine, they are restored as saints; and if they are saints, Christ is not to "reign over them," but *they are to reign with him*. Now let him tell us how Christ can sit on David's throne and rule over fleshly Israel as David did. Surely he can see such an inconsistency.



[Ezek. 21:27](#), as quoted by Brother Boll, says that Israel will be overturned and "shall be no more until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him." The kingdom of Israel was overturned. God took the authority to rule his people from the line of David and left them without any ruler for centuries. [Amos 9:11](#) says: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old." James [255] says in [Acts 15:15-18](#) that this has been rebuilt in Christ and the tabernacle of David has been reestablished, which means that the right and authority to rule over God's people has been restored to the house of David in Christ. Nothing could be plainer than that the church and Christianity are the fulfillment of this Scripture and that God has restored the tabernacle of David, but at this time God has so enlarged it that it includes the Gentiles who accept Christ.

#### ACTS 2:29-31.

Brother Boll says that [this Scripture](#) does not prove that Christ is now on David's throne. He says that it only declares that Christ was raised up from the grave in order that God might set him on David's throne. It is true that Christ was raised from the dead for that purpose. But Brother Boll says that this Scripture does not state "when God would do that." If God did not do it when he raised Christ from the dead, then he did not do what he raised Christ from the dead to do. If he did not do this when he raised him from the dead, he has not yet given him all authority and power. Brother Boll's position is that after several thousand years, or when Christ comes, then God will do for Christ that which he raised him from the dead to do. This position is out of harmony with the Scripture and with the scholarship of Bible students.

J. W. McGarvey says, in commenting on this Scripture:

He had made him Lord by causing him to sit on God's own throne, to rule over angels and men; and he had made him Christ by causing him to sit on the throne of David according to the promise. It was God's throne, because it was the throne of universal dominion; and it was David's throne, because it was the lineal descent from David which made Jesus the rightful King. From this conclusion the Jewish hearers of Peter learned that, contrary to their previous conception, the promised Christ was to sit, not on an earthly throne, however glorious, but on the throne of the universe. ("Commentary on Acts.") [256]

Dr. Henry J. Ridley, in commenting on the same Scripture says:

The Messiah, who was to descend from him, was in like manner to be King of the Lord's people--namely, his spiritual people, of whom the nation of the Hebrews was only an emblem. . . . Christ, then, or the Messiah, was to sit on David's throne, or to be his successor, by becoming the King of God's spiritual people. . . . When we think of David's government, being a divinely instituted one, as emblematic of the Messiah's administration, and preparatory to it, we see how Christ, having established the new dispensation of religion, or laid the foundation of the Christian church, is said to sit on David's throne. ("Notes on Acts of the Apostles.")

In commenting upon the same Scripture, D. Lipscomb says:

The worldly throne of David typified the spiritual throne of Jesus, in which all the prophecies concerning the throne of David found their perfect and highest fulfillment. ("Commentary on Acts.")

#### SUMMARY.

The Old Testament Scriptures teach that Christ was to receive the throne of David. This was declared by a number of the prophets. He was to be a King, to have a kingdom, and in this kingdom to sit on David's throne.

The New Testament declares that Christ was of the tribe of Judah and lineage of David. The angel announced to Mary that Jesus would sit on the throne of David, his father; that Christ is called the Son of David; that he should reign over the house of Jacob forever; and that his kingdom should be an everlasting one. Peter declares that this has been fulfilled and that God had raised him from the dead for that purpose. James emphasizes the same fact. Paul declares that "the Israel of God" to-day are the people of God, and that "the seed of Abraham" are all who believe in Jesus Christ; that Christ is reigning now over God's people; and that [257] as God's people, or Christians, to-day are "the Israel of God," Christ is on David's throne.

Nowhere in the Scriptures are we taught that Christ is to have two or more thrones. A throne is an emblem of authority and rule in a kingdom. If there are to be two or more thrones, then there must be two or more kingdoms. There must be a kingdom for each throne and a throne for each kingdom. If Christ is not now on David's throne, then he is to occupy it later; but if he is now on the throne of God, he is on his own throne in his kingdom--he is on the throne of David. Brother Boll cannot show that Christ was promised two or more thrones. Since the Scriptures teach that Christ will have only one kingdom, and therefore only one throne, we conclude again that he is now on David's throne.

Brother Boll's position is self-contradictory. It makes Christ as a Jew sit on the throne of David and reign over fleshly Israel in Jerusalem, and only over the Jews. Such a position is Judaistic and literalistic and materialistic. It contradicts all the Scriptures which teach that God's people to-day constitute the "Israel of God," "the elect race," "the seed of Abraham," "a spiritual house." The Scriptures do teach that as David ruled over fleshly Israel, Jehovah's people, then, by the authority of God, so Christ rules over the Lord's people, "the Israel of God," by divine authority, and is thus on David's throne, which was to be proved. [258]

## R. H. BOLL'S SECOND NEGATIVE.

I am glad with my respondent over the clear-cut simplicity of the present proposition. The proposition is even simpler and plainer than my respondent seems to realize. It resolves itself into two exceedingly simple questions, the answer to which the affirmative must squarely and plainly set before us: (1) *What is the throne of David?* and (2) *Is Christ now exercising the rule and authority of that throne?* That is all. First of all, we must have the true definition of the term "throne of David," that we may know exactly what we are talking about--just what sphere of governmental authority is designated by that term; and, having clearly established that, the affirmative must show that Christ is now occupying that throne--that is, that Christ is now administering the governmental authority and function pertaining to that throne. That is very simple indeed. We will now see what the affirmative has done to establish this.

### THE DEFINITION OF THE TERM.

In my first reply to Brother Boles I pointed out that the definition given by him of "David's throne" was insufficient, and for the purpose of this discussion entirely worthless, seeing it assumed the very thing to be proved. In answer to my demand for a better definition, he gives practically the same thing over again. Let us examine the items he arrays under his "definition." David's throne (he says) means "the throne of the Majesty." What majesty? The word signifies "exalted dignity," "grandeur;" secondarily, "a title given to reigning monarchs; hence, royal state or rank." Brother Boles knows that I believe that Jesus Christ is *now* seated on the right hand of God, far above all principality and power, having absolute, unlimited authority over all the universe, visible and invisible. Now, when he says that the "throne of David" is "the throne of the [259] Majesty," that leaves nothing to debate about. He has begged the question in his definition. He understands perfectly what I believe on this point, and that I would be as far as he himself is from denying that Christ now sits on "the throne of the Majesty." The next definition he offers is, "the throne of his glory." But that is itself a term that needs to be defined. We have had it up before. I called attention to the Scripture statement that "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, *then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.*" ([Matt. 25:31.](#)) That makes "the throne of his glory" future. Now, if Brother Boles will accept the light this Scripture throws on the term, "the throne of his glory," of course I agree with him, and he has surrendered his proposition at the outset; but if he denies the futurity of "the throne of his glory," he ought to tell us what he means by that term.

His next definition of David's throne is "the throne of God." If he means by that the universal, unlimited throne of God in heaven, he knows that I believe that Christ holds that at the right hand of the Father now. The thing I am to deny in this proposition is that that is equivalent to the throne of David. Why should a man of Brother Boles' ability and experience as a debater seriously offer such definitions? Would he allow an opponent of his to assume the proposition and beg the question in his very definition of the terms? I dare say not!

Next he defines David's throne as "the throne of Jehovah"--without the limiting statement always found in the Scriptures, "the throne of Jehovah *over Israel*"--as if wishing to imply that by "the throne of Jehovah" was meant the absolute throne of Jehovah in heaven, on which, as he and I both believe, Christ is now sitting. If Brother Boles means *that*, then by his definition

he *assumes* what he ought to prove. This is a thing that was not to be expected, and I still trust he will correct it.

Again, he says David's throne is "Christ's throne." [260] Here is the same vagueness. To be sure, it is "Christ's throne." Now, I would thank him for a further elucidation of that. Does he mean by that the throne on which Christ now sits at the right hand of the Father? If so, there is again the same *petitio principii*--begging of the question.

In the rest of his definition he says: "It [David's throne] means the authority of God to rule over the Lord's people ([2 Sam. 3:10](#)); it means that Christ is now exercising 'the rule and government allotted by God to David' over the Lord's people." That would be nearer the facts if he had told us what he meant by "the Lord's people" just as the Bible defines it in 2 Sam. 3:10 (which he cites, but does not quote)--"*the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.*" All right; if it means *that*, we are agreed--only, that puts him in the predicament that he has to deny, or explain away, his own definition; and mine would be the privilege of showing that Christ is not now "exercising the rule and government allotted by God to David over the Lord's people," which, according to Brother Boles' citation of [2 Sam. 3:10](#), does not mean the church, but "all Israel and Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba."

All this is regrettable. Why the affirmative does not give us a simple, concise, inclusive and exclusive definition of the *throne of David* passes me. If he had simply said that it stood for that peculiar royal authority and rule which God allotted to David, it would have been sufficient and satisfactory. Instead, he begs the question, beclouds the issue, and makes a clean, clear-cut discussion impossible by a series of vague and ambiguous definitions. These he follows by quotations, one from the "New Standard Bible Dictionary," which is as inadmissible as his own definition; one each from Hastings' and Smith's, which, though acceptable, are not to the point. His conclusion from all that is that "Christ now has the royal honor of David's house," which is perfectly correct, but not to the [261] point. There is no issue between us as to that. Then he adds, "that Christ is now in actual possession of 'the exercise of royal power,'" which seems to me a strange use of language, and not calculated to promote clarity. "*Regal power*" can be said to be in a man's possession; *to exercise it* is action based on possession. But I do not see how he could be said to be "*in possession of the exercise of regal power.*" That is meaningless to me.

He thinks Brother Boll is inclined to reject scholarship. He is wrong about that. I depend on scholarship in all *matters of scholarship*; but I do not let scholarship prescribe to me in matters of faith and doctrine. (Brother Boles does not, either; or, if he does, he oughtn't to.) So he will give us Bible definition of the throne of David. He quotes [1 Kings 2:12](#). That strikes center. "Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father." Elsewhere we read that to Christ, the Lord, God will give "the throne of his father David." ([Luke 1:32](#).) Do the terms mean the same in the case of Solomon and of Christ? Did Christ ever occupy the throne (I do not mean the chair, but the sphere of rule) on which Solomon sat, and which Solomon derived from his father David? If so, then he is on David's throne. And did Solomon ever occupy a throne on the right hand of the Majesty on high? If not, then that heavenly throne is not David's throne.

Again, my brother shows correctly that Solomon sat *on the throne of Jehovah* as King instead of David his father. ([1 Chron. 29:23](#).) Good. But he concludes: "So that which is called 'David's

throne' is called also 'the throne of Jehovah.' . . . So the Holy Spirit says that 'the throne of David' is 'the throne of Jehovah.'" Yea, so it says. Now, will Brother Boles tell us whether that is the throne of Jehovah in a limited and delegated sense, or in the sense of God's unlimited, divine and heavenly sovereignty? If the latter, what was God doing while David and Solomon ruled? Who was sitting on the throne of God in heaven while David and Solomon were ruling on [262] God's throne? The negative desires an answer. But if the affirmative says it was the throne of Jehovah in a limited, subordinated sphere of rule, I want to know what were the specific bounds and limits of said sovereignty. He says that "David was reigning *over the Lord's people* by the authority of Jehovah." That is true, but not specific enough. Will he tell us *what* people? The Bible tells us plainly and fully that it was "over all Israel and Judah." (See [2 Sam. 3:10](#), cited by Brother Boles himself.) Inseparably connected with David's throne is David's people, the nation of Israel, the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ([Jer. 33:17](#)); and the territory, the land which God swore to them for an everlasting inheritance. This was emphatically brought out in the first negative, but my respondent has so far paid no attention to it. The "throne of David" is as definite a term in the Bible as, for instance, "the throne of the Hohenzollerns" in German history. It is defined both as to its line of occupants and the realm of its rule. If a stranger had seized the throne of David, or if one of David's line had ruled over an entirely different nation or in some different land, it would have ceased to be "the throne of David" in the accepted sense. Except one of David's line is ruling in David's land and over David's people, it is not the throne of David. The Davidic dynasty (the house or tabernacle of David) was broken up and the throne of David cast down to the ground. ([Ps. 89:44](#); [Acts 15:16](#).) There is a Man now of David's dynasty whose right it is, therefore the dynasty is repaired; but there has been no occasion as yet for him to sit on the throne of David, nor will there be till this King of David's house assumes the reign over "all Israel and all Judah," the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was pointed out in my last article. Is Christ now ruling over the nation David ruled over? Has he reestablished the throne of David? Is he sitting on that throne which was once cast down to the ground? His present position is one of [263] glorious, all-inclusive sovereignty, absolute and unlimited. But he who is Lord of all is also the promised King of the seed of David, and will, when the time comes, administrate the government of David's realm--which thing will be of the vastest consequence to all humanity, and an essential factor in God's great plan regarding man and the earth. "The Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*: and he shall reign *over the house of Jacob forever*." ([Luke 1:32](#).)

#### IS CHRIST NOW ON DAVID'S THRONE?

Since *a throne* stands for royal honor and power, *to sit on a throne* means the exercise of this regal power. On this we agree. We have seen that the throne of David is the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah *over Israel*, the rulership "over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," which God delegated to David and David's house forever. Now, to sit on that throne means to exercise that special government. It is evident on the face of it that Christ is not ruling now in *that* realm. Brother Boles no doubt believes like Brother David Lipscomb, and as I also believe, that the kingdoms of the world are in the power of Satan, that Satan is until yet the prince and ruler of the world. And no nation is more terribly in his grasp and blinding power than Israel.

In admitting this, neither Brother Boles nor Brother Lipscomb, nor this writer, is denying that Christ has *now* absolute and unlimited sovereignty at God's right hand, on the throne of the universe. I wish Brother Boles would get this point. Seemingly he has tried to make out a case against me to the effect that I do not believe in the *present absolute* and *universal* authority, Lordship, and Power of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his final negative of the preceding proposition he attempted to fix such a charge on me. I had called his attention to the fact that at the time our risen Lord uttered the words of [Matt. 28:18](#) ("all authority in heaven and on earth is [264] given unto me") he had not, as an actual fact, received it as yet, but did receive it about fifty days later, on Pentecost. But my brother vehemently asserted that Christ *did* have it even at the time when he uttered [Matt. 28:18](#), and that this shows that I do not believe in Christ's universal authority! Of course I am glad for him to have his point on [Matt. 28:18](#). If Christ had the universal authority *before* he was actually exalted to the throne on Pentecost, maybe Brother Boles sees how Christ can have all power and authority now, and yet will go on to take the throne of David when the time comes! But my brother continues to intimate that I deny the present supreme and universal authority of Christ. In former articles he stated that I was "forced" to admit this great truth, when all along I had upheld and declared it, also propounds and tries to explain to the reader some theory I am supposed to hold, and out of his own imagination suggests the idea that somewhere around 1919 I modified my views regarding the kingdom. Why does he do these things? It is not pleasant to think that a respondent in a brotherly discussion should be watching a chance to bring some grave charge against one. I will be exceedingly glad to accept my brother's disavowal of any such intention. If I believe in the present supreme Lordship of Christ just as he does--and *I do*--ought not my brother to rejoice in the fact that I stand with him in this great fundamental truth? It cannot be, surely, that he is sorry that I hold to this great truth, or that he is unwilling to give me credit for it. I trust not. Let it be understood, then, that *I believe wholeheartedly and unequivocally in Christ's present supreme and unlimited power and authority*. And, in my conception at least, this great truth is not affected by the question of whether or not Christ is now administrating his authority in the subordinated realm of David's throne. [265]

#### AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS.

We have seen that, according to the plain Scripture definition of "the throne of David," Christ is not now actually exercising that rule. But several direct arguments have been advanced to prove that Christ is now on David's throne. These we must briefly examine.

1. [Acts 2:30, 31](#). I replied to this in my first negative. I pointed out that *this passage does not say that Christ is now on the throne of David*, nor *when* he will sit on it, but merely states that God had raised up Christ from the dead in order to set him on David's throne, and that David foreseeing spoke of the resurrection of Christ. This every reader can see and verify for himself. But Brother Boles says that "the Holy Spirit declares . . . that Christ was now on David's throne." My brother should be careful. To put words in a man's mouth is generally risky; but to put our words and conclusions in the Holy Spirit's mouth is *far* more serious. Now, as the passage reads in my Bible, the Holy Spirit said no such thing, and my respondent ought to fear to impute words to the Spirit which he did not utter. Again, "the reign of Christ on *David's throne, as Peter says*, began on Pentecost." If Peter had said that, I would be glad to acknowledge it, and the discussion of this proposition would be at an end. Where did Peter say it? I doubt not that Peter



said some things from which my respondent draws such conclusions; but that is quite different. Note some of his human, speculative conclusions on this: "If God did not do it [i. e., set Christ on David's throne] when he raised Christ from the dead, then he did not do what he raised Christ from the dead to do." If that is his firm foundation, it is not such as one would want to build on. The passage does not say when God would do it. If God has not done so yet, it is no sign that he will not do it. Indeed, he will, for he said so; and the unexpected length of time does not nullify the promise. But my brother concludes more: "If he [God] did not do this [266] [i. e., set Christ on David's throne] when he raised him from the dead, he has not yet given him all authority and power." That does not follow. For example, God also gave all judgment into the Son's hands--yea, raised him from the dead for assurance to all men that he would judge the world by him ([John 5:22, 27](#); [Acts 17:31](#))--yet the judgment has not taken place though almost two thousand years have passed. Does that prove that Christ has not this authority, even though he has not exercised it as yet? What becomes, then, of my respondent's argument on [Acts 2:30, 31](#)?

2. [Acts 15:15-17](#). I will not go into a detailed discussion of this passage. It declares that the tabernacle of David which had fallen into ruins would be reestablished. The tabernacle of David is the royal house of David, the Davidic dynasty. It is not the same as the throne. Those of that dynasty have the right to the throne. But for many years that dynasty was defunct--hopelessly killed out in Jeconiah ([Jer. 22:29, 30](#)), miraculously revived in the virgin birth; so that in Christ there is again a God-appointed, God-approved Heir to David's throne, to whom it belongs by right and promise. When this Heir shall assume the throne is not told us in this passage. My respondent is quite mistaken when he says the tabernacle and the throne are the same. He can himself easily observe the distinction. He quotes [Isa. 16:5](#), which says that a throne shall be established and one shall sit thereon in *the tent of David*. That shows that the throne and the tent are *not* the same. He thinks the tent of David could not be in existence several thousand years before the throne. But there are many things that may seem unlikely to some of us, which are nevertheless both possible and true.

3. [Acts 13:34](#). "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David." On this he observes that "whatever was included in 'the holy and sure blessings of David' *has already been bestowed*." Again this does not [267] necessarily follow. An examination of Paul's argument in [Acts 13](#) will show that in the resurrection of Christ and his ensuing endless life all the blessings of David are forever guaranteed. But if Christ has any blessings for us which are yet in the future (and he certainly has), and if Brother Boles admits that those are to be reckoned among the holy and sure blessings of David (and he surely does), then these "holy and sure blessings of David" *have not all been bestowed*.

4. [2 Sam. 7:12](#); [1 Chron. 17:11](#). These Scriptures, the affirmative says, declare that Christ would occupy an everlasting throne. But he quickly modifies his statement. "Everlasting" ends when David is raised! And why? Because the reign of Christ on David's throne would take place after David's death and while he slept with his fathers, or before his resurrection! So this is Christ's everlasting reign? And this is the proof he offers: "When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom." ([2 Sam. 7:12](#).) It would be a curious piece of exegesis to gather from that that Christ's reign is limited to a space between David's death and resurrection. On the face of it the meaning of the statement in [2 Sam. 7:12](#) is that David, after his death, would have a



successor of his own seed; and in view of the context nothing more than this seems to be intended. But arguing purely from my respondent's point of view, I will show that his exegesis is untenable. Brother Boles will say that the general resurrection and judgment takes place at Christ's return. Therefore, David, too, must be among the raised dead at that time. But, according to Scripture, when Christ comes again, he will "sit on the throne of his glory." ([Matt. 25:31.](#)) Therefore, on Brother Boles' own ground, it is demonstrated that Christ will be reigning on the throne of David even *after* David's resurrection! [268]

5. One more argument is to be noticed--that the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, and the Davidic kingdom are not different kingdoms with different thrones. In this my respondent speaks truly. The terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" are virtually synonymous. The Davidic kingdom is a subordinate realm of God's universal kingdom, to the throne of which God has the only right, and the administration of which he forever committed to David and his seed. Therefore, it is Christ's, who will assume the government of it when he sees good. All of which is very simple, and I see no point of difficulty there.

None of the affirmative's arguments have established that Christ is now sitting on David's throne, administrating the government of David's realm. He has shown that Christ is of the seed of David after the flesh. We all believe that. He insists that Christ is now enthroned on God's right hand as Lord of all. I insist on the same. He avers that David's throne belongs to Christ, and that Christ is the promised King of David's line. I agree to that, and believe and teach it. He says the throne of the universe which Christ now occupies at God's right hand in heaven is the throne of David. That I deny, and that is what he has not thus far proved. David never sat on *that* throne. Christ, on the other hand, never sat on David's throne. The throne of David was once overturned and cast down to the ground. The throne on which Christ sits is the eternal throne of God, which has never been overturned or cast down to the ground, nor can be. Therefore, they are not the same, and Christ is not now on David's throne.

#### SPIRITUALIZING INTERPRETATION.

I could conclude my reply at this point; but I feel that it would not be just not to notice an argument--a basic assumption, rather--which really underlies the whole of my brother's position. It is this--that the original [269] David, and David's throne, and David's people, the literal nation of Israel, were only typical and emblematic, as it were, of the spiritual antitypes of the present dispensation; that the literal throne, people, and kingdom of David of old were but types and shadows of the higher spiritual verities enjoyed in the gospel age; and that the literal promises made to David and Israel did not mean what on the face of them they said, but were veiled prophecies of the spiritual blessings which are enjoyed now. Thus the throne of David was but an earthly figure of the glorious heavenly reign of the Christ; and David's people, the nation of Israel, a type of the spiritual people of God to-day; the promises and prophecies of old were fulfilled spiritually, not literally; Christ's exaltation at God's right hand fulfills all that was meant by the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Even if that be granted (for we have in the Scriptures many instances of *spiritual application* of the prophecies and of other portions of Scripture), such spiritual analogies do not deny or nullify the simple, straightforward meaning of the Scripture promises. The word of God

must stand. "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto." ([Gal. 3:15](#).) Now, God made a covenant of promise with David concerning David's house and David's throne, and confirmed the same with an oath. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David." ([Ps. 89:34, 35](#).) Now, if the meaning of the terms of the original covenant be canceled and a spiritual significance substituted in lieu thereof, the covenant is altered. The term, "throne of David," is plainly defined in the Scriptures, and the realm of David as well. Though I conceded every spiritual application that could be made, I believe in the perfect truth and accurate fulfillment of all the terms of the original [270] promise, and that God will keep faith and covenant with David exactly as he said.

No author has yet arisen who has dared to assert that the grammatical construction of the Old Testament language, received according to usual laws, does not convey the meaning found therein of a literal restoration of the Theocratic-Davidic throne and kingdom as expected by believing Israelites. . . . No one has attempted to call the fact of such an existing sense into question.

Believers, infidels, and semi-infidels teach this fact; every author and commentator consulted, every Life of Christ, every Introduction to the Bible, etc., fully admits it. With infidels, it is a standing joke that the prophets predicted such a kingdom. Thus, e. g., Renan (Life of Jesus, page 86) calls it "a gigantic dream for centuries," and "they dreamed of the restoration of the house of David, the reconciliation of the two fragments of the people, and the triumph of the Theocracy," etc. "They dreamed of the Messiah as judge and avenger of the nations," of "a renewal of all things." In view of this, he informs us (page 266) that "the first generation of Christians lived entirely upon dreams," and that it required "more than a century" for the church to disengage itself from such "dreams." (G. H. N. Peters.)

Blessed "dreams" were these, productive of faith, hope, and love, and unworldly lives, looking for "that blessed hope;" dreams that were based upon the simple meaning and belief of the promises of God. The thing Brother Boles calls a "Judaistic theory," which had to be fought by the apostles and early Christians, and which he thinks is a peculiar little heresy found among Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, *was the prevailing faith of the church universal for the first three hundred years*. All church historians testify so. (Mosheim, Schaff, Neander.) And the writings of the "Ante-Nicene Fathers" abound with evidence to this fact. Not till Origen, Augustine, and Jerome muddied the waters of primitive teaching with their allegorizing and spiritualizing interpretations did a general change come, and that was not until the professing church had headed deeply into worldly corruption. The author afore quoted says: [271]

Such an Origenistic application of language which casts loose from a sense *actually contained* in the inspired Record is taking dangerous and undue liberty with the Word of God. . . . It is a dangerous procedure, opening a wide door to arbitrary interpretations. . . . It removes the veracity of God's word in its grammatical sense, by leaving the fulfillment at the option of the interpreter; it weakens an appeal to prophecy, undermining its strength as proof.

So, while gladly conceding any spiritual applications and fulfillments pointed out in Scripture, we stand upon the ultimate foundation of God's word in its sure and simple meaning, fully assured that such a faith will never be put to shame.

My brother now makes the charge that I hold "the position of the Judaizing teachers which the Holy Spirit condemned frequently through Paul." This is not the case. The Judaizers were those who taught the Gentile Christians that except they be circumcised and kept the law of Moses they could not be saved. ([Acts 15:1, 5](#).) It was *that* that the Holy Spirit condemned; and Brother Boles cannot find one passage, nor a shadow of an instance, where the Holy Spirit condemns the position I stand for in this discussion. He seems also to fear that some one might think I found all this myself "by a profound study of the Bible." Why should that worry him? If all were taken away from us except what we have independently discovered for ourselves, perhaps neither Brother Boles nor I would have much left. We are all debtors; but let us see to it that we take no man's word blindly, as authority, but that all is verified by the word of God. "It [my supposed theory] is based on the Jewish interpretations of prophecy and their false interpretation of Christianity," he says. It is easier to make charges than to prove them. But we don't care at all for Jewish interpretations, or any other, but only for *what God says*. Nor are we appalled at the sinister suggestion that "Christ is to come in person with his Jewish [272] nationality prominent," and: "It makes Christ as a Jew sit on the 'throne of David' and reign over fleshly Israel in Jerusalem, and only over the Jews. Such a position is Judaistic and literalistic and materialistic." I serve notice that I *do* believe Christ is coming back in person, for he said so. And as for Jewish nationality, he is of the seed of David according to the flesh, else he would have no right to sit on the throne of David at all, whether now or then. Nor will he reign over fleshly Israel, but over spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is that people who are not only Israel after the flesh, but also after promise, a converted and regenerated people. Nor will Christ reign "over them only," but (because they are destined to be the head of the nations) through them, "from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth," over all nations, peoples, kindreds, and tribes *under the whole heaven*, "until the moon be no more." ([Ps. 72:7-11](#); [Dan. 7:27](#).) [273]

## Chapter XIII.

### H. LEO BOLES' THIRD AFFIRMATIVE.

The purpose of this discussion is to study what the Bible teaches on these questions. It has been stated repeatedly that neither Brother Boll nor I am striving for victory the one over the other; we are both searching for the truth. I shall be disappointed if there is not a kindlier and more brotherly feeling after this discussion has closed than there was before it began, between all parties and churches that have been affected by any disturbance over these questions.

In his second negative Brother Boll stated that the proposition "resolves itself into two exceedingly simple questions"--namely, "What is the throne of David?" and, "Is Christ now exercising the rule and authority of that throne?" My brother is mistaken. The simplicity of the proposition is clearly expressed in the simple wording of the proposition--to wit: "The Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne." The proposition resolves itself into but one question--namely, "Do the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne?" A definition of a term of a proposition is not an issue of the proposition. If that were true, there would be as many issues in a proposition as there are terms in the proposition. There is but one issue in this proposition, and that issue is simple and clear-cut.

The negative has raised objections to the definition of only one term of the proposition, and that is "David's throne." The affirmative refuses to be diverted from the issue of the proposition to a mere dispute about the meaning of terms. The discussion of this proposition cannot be reduced to a mere logomachy--a war about a word. The affirmative always has a logical right to define the terms of the proposition--yea, it is the duty of the affirmative to define the terms of the proposition. [274] The negative has a right to object to definitions of the terms, if these definitions are not according to standard authorities. The Bible and scholarship have been given as proof of the correctness of the definition of the terms of the present proposition.

For the sake of clearness and emphasis, the definitions of "David's throne" are given again. The affirmative means by "David's throne" the "throne of the Majesty," "the throne of his glory," "the throne of God," "the throne of Jehovah," "Christ's throne;" it means the authority given by God to rule over the Lord's people ([2 Sam. 3:10](#)); it means "the rule and government allotted by God to David" over the Lord's people.

The "New Standard Bible Dictionary" defines "David's throne" to mean that "Jesus the Messiah is the true Davidic King, and his throne--i. e., his power, etc.--sometimes his seat at the right hand of the Father--is the realized ideal of the Davidic throne of the Old Testament." Brother Boll says this definition "is inadmissible." By what authority does he reject such scholarship as is represented by the "New Standard Bible Dictionary?" Absolutely none. The definition just does not suit him, and therefore it is "inadmissible." But Brother Boll will not be permitted to ignore scholarship in such a way. Again, "The Dictionary of the Bible," by James Hastings, defines it as follows: "Frequently 'throne' is used metaphorically for dignity, royal honor, and power. Thus 'the throne of David' often stands for the royal honor of David's house. ([2 Sam. 7:16](#).)" But Brother Boll says this definition, "though acceptable, is not to the point."

Why is it not to the point? He is defining "David's throne." Smith's Bible Dictionary says: "The throne was the symbol of supreme power and dignity. . . . Similarly, 'to sit upon the throne' implied the exercise of regal power, and 'to sit upon the throne of another person,' succession to the royal dignity." When we affirm that Christ is now on David's throne, we mean [275] that Christ now has "the royal honor of David's house," that he has now succeeded "to the royal dignity" of ruling God's people. Brother Boll has no right or reason to reject these definitions. His objection to them is only a confession that he cannot meet the arguments which have been made, and unless he can raise an objection against the definition his case is hopeless.

In addition to the definitions of different scholars, the Bible definition was given. The Holy Spirit has very definitely defined the meaning of "David's throne." "Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father." ([1 Kings 2:12](#).) Again: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah as king instead of David his father." ([1 Chron. 29:23](#).) And again: "Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on his throne, to be king for Jehovah thy God." ([2 Chron. 9:8](#).) So it is clear that the Holy Spirit calls "David's throne" "the throne of Jehovah;" hence, "David's throne" is "the throne of Jehovah." David was "king for Jehovah"--that is, he was reigning over the Lord's people "to be king for Jehovah." So, when it is affirmed that the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne, it is affirmed that Christ is now ruling the people of God "for Jehovah." Just as David ruled over the Lord's people by the authority of Jehovah then, Christ is now ruling over the Lord's people by his authority, and is thus on David's throne. To deny this is to deny the word of God. Brother Boll's position makes him opposed to both the Bible and scholarship. This is an embarrassing situation for him.

The Old Testament teaches that Christ would rule over the Lord's people by the authority of God, or that he would occupy David's throne. The New Testament Scriptures emphasize the fact that Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, ruling the Lord's people. We are taught in the New Testament that Christ "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" ([Heb. 1:4, 13](#)), [276] and that he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens" ([Heb. 8:1](#)); again, that he it sat down on the right hand of God" ([Heb. 10:12](#)); and still again, that he "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" ([Heb. 12:2](#)). These expressions all mean that Christ is now enthroned and ruling over the Lord's people. "Throne" is a symbol of power. Christ now has the authority to rule over the Lord's people just as David had. In 1910 Brother Boll taught just what the affirmative is contending for now. He said: "Here and there in the Old Testament is a prophecy of the Priest that shall be King, the King that shall be Priest--predictions that were not fulfilled under the old order of things. We see here the great Priest's sanctuary, which is also his throne. ([Jer. 17:12](#); [compare Heb. 8:1, 2](#).)" ("Lessons on Hebrews," by R. H. Boll, page 93.) If Brother Boll does not believe this now, he should withdraw his book in which he teaches that Christ is now on his throne.

Surely Brother Boll will not deny that Christ is our High Priest; that he is now "a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" ([Heb. 5:6](#)); that he is our Mediator and is functioning as Priest and King. The prophet said: "Speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." ([Zech. 6:12, 13](#).) This Scripture teaches clearly

that Christ "shall sit and rule upon his throne" and that he "shall be a priest upon his throne." At the same time that he is to be "a priest upon his throne" he is to "sit and rule upon his throne." At the same time that he is to be a Priest, he is to be a King upon his throne in "the temple of Jehovah." As sure as he is now a Priest, he is also a King and ruling over the Lord's people; so sure [277]as he is in the sanctuary as a Priest, he is on David's throne as a King. I think the negative ought to meet this argument fairly and squarely. The angel announced to Mary that "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" ([Luke 1:32](#)), and the Holy Spirit declared through Peter that God had raised Christ from the dead "to sit upon his throne"--that is, David's throne. There is no way to escape this argument.

Brother Boll says that "inseparably connected with David's throne is David's people, the nation of Israel, the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ([Jer. 33:17](#))." Brother Boll should have read the [eighteenth verse](#) of this chapter. For the instruction of all, both verses are given here. "For thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to burn meal offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." ([Jer. 33:17, 18](#).) This Scripture which declares that "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" also declares that "neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to burn meal offerings." In the light of this Scripture, Brother Boll cannot consistently contend for a continuation of fleshly Israel for one to reign on David's throne without at the same time contending that the fleshly priests and Levites shall continue with all of the animal sacrifices. If, he contends that Christ is to sit on David's throne and rule over fleshly Israel, he must also contend for a reestablishment of the old Levitical priesthood with all of its rituals and sacrifices. Such a contention would bring back into use the entire law of Moses with its long retinue of priests and Levites. This Scripture proves too much for Brother Boll. He cannot contend for a continuation of fleshly Israel without also contending for the Levitical priesthood.

Brother Boll has said that "except one of David's line [278] is ruling in David's land and over David's people, it is not the throne of David." This Judaistic and materialistic theory reestablishes, not only fleshly Israel in Palestine, but also the Levitical priesthood with all of its animal sacrifices. Let us repeat the same language in regard to the priests: "Except one of Aaron's line is officiating in Aaron's land and for Aaron's people, it is not the priesthood of God." I challenge Brother Boll to say anything about a continuation of the fleshly lineage of David that cannot be said of the fleshly lineage of Aaron. The truth of the whole matter is that the line of David as king and the priesthood of Aaron meet and blend in Christ, and hence "he shall be a priest upon his throne;" and as Brother Boll once taught, Christ is "the Priest that shall be King, the King that shall be Priest." The Judaistic theory calls for a fleshly king over fleshly Israel with fleshly priests under the old law making animal sacrifices "which can never take away sins." ([Heb. 10:11](#).)

Brother Boll is mistaken. I am not trying to make out a case against him, neither am I trying to saddle any theory on him. I know that he has said repeatedly that he believes "whole-heartedly and unequivocally in Christ's present supreme and unlimited power and authority;" that he believes "in the present absolute and universal authority, Lordship, and power of our Lord Jesus Christ." I know that he has reiterated these statements. But I also know that he has repeatedly said that Christ does not now have and exercise universal authority; that he does not now rule



over the Lord's people as did David. The reader will recall this language of Brother Boll: "My respondent uses strong language regarding the matter of Christ's universal authority, which I showed is indeed his 'de jure,' though not as yet 'de facto et actu,' as the lawyers say--that is, 'by right,' but not yet 'in actual fact and act.'" Brother Boll published this in his book, "The Kingdom of God," page 61, and he has [279] repeatedly stated this in our discussion. He says that Christ does not yet "in actual fact and act" have universal authority. Now, how does he expect us to believe these two contradictory statements and positions of his? I can account for it only in this way: Under the pressure of the Scriptures which are pressed upon him, he admits and even states that Christ now has and is exercising universal authority; but when he begins to defend an unscriptural theory, he falls into the error which all advocates of this theory are in--namely, that Christ does not have and exercise absolute authority now; that he only has a right to it, is not using it, but that he will have this authority "in actual fact and act" when he comes to rule over fleshly Israel. This theory postpones the Kingship of Jesus until he comes, and then he is to have "in actual fact and act" this universal authority, at which time he will occupy David's throne. Brother Boll makes statements on both sides of this question of Christ's universal authority.

The kingdom of Israel over which David once reigned was born in rebellion against God. Though Israel had rebelled against Jehovah and had rejected him, yet he did not cast them off nor destroy them, but selected their king. The prophet says: "I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath." ([Hos. 13:11](#).) Jehovah destroyed the earthly descendants of the line of David and would not permit them any longer to sit upon David's throne. He says of Coniah: "Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no more shall a man of his seed prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling in Judah." ([Jer. 22:30](#).) Matthew Henry, in commenting on this verse, says: "In him the line of David was extinct as a royal line." Coniah was the same as Jehoiachin, and reigned only three months in Jerusalem. David's line should cease as king, and no one should again occupy David's throne until the Christ should come. [280] There was to be no other ruler sitting upon David's throne to govern the Lord's people until Christ should occupy the throne of David. The Lord has a people now. All Christians are the Lord's people. If Christ is now ruling them, he is on David's throne. If Christ is not on David's throne now, then the Lord has a people without a King or Ruler.

The prophet said: "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." ([Isa. 22:22](#).) Jesus, in [Rev. 3:7](#), says: "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David." Isaiah said that Christ should have "the key of the house of David," and Christ said that he had "the key of David." Whatever "the key of the house of David" meant, Christ was in possession of it. Dr. James Hastings says, commenting on these Scriptures: "The key is the symbol of authority and rule." ("Dictionary of the Bible.") Hence, Jesus had "the authority and rule" "of David's house," and therefore Christ is now on David's throne. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, in commenting on this, say: "Key--emblem of his office over the house. . . . Here plainly a type of the God-man Christ, the Son of David, of whom Isaiah ([ch. 9:6](#)) uses the same language as the former clause of this verse, and himself, in [Rev. 3:7](#), the same language as the latter clause." Adam Clarke, in commenting on this same Scripture, says: "Likewise was the key the mark of office, either sacred or civil." Matthew Henry, in commenting on this, says: "Our Lord Jesus describes his own power as Mediator by an allusion to this ([Rev. 3:7](#)), that he has the key of David. . . . His power in the kingdom of heaven, and in the ordering of all the affairs of that



kingdom, is absolute, irresistible, and uncontrollable. As "key" is the symbol of authority and rule, and since Christ has the key of David's house, then he is on David's throne, or ruling the Lord's people as [281] did David. The Lord's people with David was fleshly Israel; the Lord's people with Christ is "the Israel of of God," or Christians. The Lord's people in the time of David are described by the phrase, "from Dan to Beersheba," a term denoting all of the Lord's people; but to-day the Lord's people include all Christians, all the people of God, the whole "family in heaven and on earth." ([Eph. 3:15.](#))

The angel announced to Mary, as recorded in [Luke 1:32, 33](#), that "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

J. S. Lamar, in commenting on this verse, said:

But in what sense did Christ possess this throne? Certainly he did not reign, as David did, over the literal house of Jacob. His kingdom was not of this world, nor was his throne, like David's, upon the earth. But in truth David was God's king, reigning as the vicegerent of Jehovah over God's people, by God's special selection and appointment, and governing according to God's own law. All his legitimate royal authority, therefore, which is symbolized by the word 'throne,' was really and only God's authority. . . . Hence, when Jesus established the kingdom of God, and was crowned as its Christed or anointed King, having all authority in heaven and earth given to him; when he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, he became King over the true 'house of Jacob,' and possessed at once the throne of his father David and of his Father God." ("New Testament Commentary," page 30.)

What will Brother Boll do with this Bible scholar's clear and emphatic statement that Christ is now on David's throne? Dr. Thomas O. Summers, in commenting on the same Scripture, says: "The throne--the spiritual kingdom typified by David's." ("Commentary on the Gospels," Volume III., page 19.) Grotius says: "The kingdom of the Messiah, raised on the throne of David, extended to, and included, the Gentiles." (Ibid.) Dr. William Burkitt, in commenting on this Scripture, says: [282] "God would settle upon him a spiritual kingdom, of which David's earthly one was a type, which never shall be abolished." ("Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament," Volume I., page 258.) These scholars say that Christ is now on David's throne and emphasize that the Scriptures so teach. What will Brother Boll do with these scholars? They flatly contradict his position.

An argument was made on [Acts 13:34](#). Paul here says that God had fulfilled what the prophets had said and that God had given to Christ "the holy and sure blessings of David." Now, Christ had received "the holy and sure blessings of David." Whatever may be included in "the holy and sure blessings of David," Christ had already received. It was pointed out that "the throne of David" was included in "the holy and sure blessings of David," and that, therefore, Christ had already received "the throne of David." Brother Boll replied that there are some "blessings for us which are yet in the future" and that "the holy and sure blessings of David" have not all been given unto us. This may be true, but Brother Boll missed the point and failed to answer the argument. *We may not have as yet received all "the holy and sure blessings of David;" some of them, to us, may be in the future; but Christ has received all"the holy and sure*

blessings of David." And since he has received them, and the throne of David is included in them, then Christ has received the throne of David. All spiritual blessings are in Christ, for God "hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." ([Eph. 1:3.](#)) Again, Paul teaches us: "How many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us." ([2 Cor. 1:20.](#)) All the promises of God to man are affirmed and fulfilled in Christ. The promise was made to David that Christ should sit upon his throne; and since all of the promises [283] to man are in Christ Jesus, then Christ has David's throne.

[Acts 2:29, 31.](#) On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit said, through Peter, in speaking of David: "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." In this the Holy Spirit says that Christ has been raised from the dead that he might be set "upon his throne." The testimony of such Bible scholars as J. W. McGarvey, Dr. H. J. Ridley, and D. Lipscomb has been given showing that Christ is now on David's throne. Brother Boll did not make any reply to the testimony of these scholars. Their testimony is here repeated.

J. W. McGarvey:

He had made him Lord by causing him to sit on God's own throne, to rule over angels and men; and he made him Christ by causing him to sit on the throne of David according to the promise. It was God's throne because it was the throne of universal dominion; and it was David's throne because it was the lineal descent from David which made Jesus the rightful King. From this conclusion the Jewish hearers of Peter learned that, contrary to their previous conception, the promised Christ was to sit, not on an earthly throne, however glorious, but on the throne of the universe." ("Commentary on Acts," Volume I., page 36.)

Dr. Henry Ridley:

The Messiah, who was to descend from him, was in like manner to be King of the Lord's people--namely, his spiritual people, of whom the nation of the Hebrews was only an emblem. Hence, the Messiah was to sit on David's throne, ruling the people of God. . . . Christ, then, or the Messiah, was to sit on David's throne, or to be his successor, by becoming the King of God's spiritual [284] people. . . . When we think of David's government, being a divinely instituted one, as emblematic of the Messiah's administration, and preparatory to it, we see how Christ, having established the new dispensation of religion, or laid the foundation of the Christian church, is said to sit on David's throne." ("The Acts of the Apostles, with Notes," pages 42, 43.)

D. Lipscomb:

The worldly throne of David typified the spiritual throne of Jesus, in which all the prophecies concerning the throne of David found their perfect and highest fulfillment." ("Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles," page 42.)

[Acts 15:14-18](#). Paul and Barnabas had gone from Antioch to Jerusalem to confer with the elders and apostles at Jerusalem about the question of circumcising the Gentile Christians. Peter had made a speech and said, "That by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe;" then Paul and Barnabas made speeches, and after them James made the speech of this quotation. He called attention to the fact that Peter had rehearsed "how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." Then, in order to show that the Gentile Christians were to be included in the blessings of salvation without becoming circumcised or bearing the mark of fleshly Israel, he quoted the prophets and said that it had been fulfilled: "As it is written, After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old." In building "again the tabernacle of David" and in setting "it up," James says that it has been done in accepting the Gentiles into the church. Plainly and simply he teaches that "the tabernacle of David" has been rebuilt and that the Gentile Christians are a part of it. If this does not [285] have reference to the church, then there is no hope of salvation for any Gentile. Brother Boll and I have no hope of salvation, except in "the tabernacle of David" and in its being rebuilt. If it has not been rebuilt, no Gentile has any hope of salvation; but if it has been rebuilt, then Christ is on David's throne, for surely the tabernacle of David would not be rebuilt without David's throne being established.

The negative has quoted Dr. Peters; but Brother Boll will not accept Dr. Peters' theory. Brother Boll has argued that the Jews were to be converted to Christ and then as a righteous nation restored to Palestine. Dr. Peters says: "While rejecting the Whitbyan theory of a future conversion of the world *previous* to the second advent of Jesus as unscriptural and misleading, we at the same time hold to a future blessed conversion of the Jews and Gentiles *after* the second advent, as plainly taught in the Word." ("The Theocratic Kingdom," Volume III., page 210.) So Dr. Peters believes that the Jews will be converted after they are returned to Palestine.

#### THE ISRAEL OF GOD.

The theory for which Brother Boll is contending is literalistic because it calls for a strict literal interpretation of all prophetic language; it is materialistic because it contends for fleshly Israel located in Palestine, with Jesus on the throne of David ruling over fleshly Israel; it is Judaistic because it takes the erroneous conception of the Jews of an earthly kingdom when Christ comes. This theory contends that fleshly Israel will be restored to Palestine, Jerusalem to be the chief city, Christ to come in person with his Jewish nationality and sit on David's throne and rule over fleshly Israel; the temple worship is to be restored, the Aaronic priesthood resumed, animal sacrifices to be offered; in fact, the theory demands a restoration of the entire ritual of the law of Moses. Brother Boll follows this theory flinchingly and [286] in confusion. He has modified the general theory in some points, but in the main he contends for all of these points. The theory further states that God offered the Jews a kingdom when Christ was here upon earth, but that they refused it and that Christ did not then establish his kingdom. The theory says that when he comes the second time he will then set up his kingdom and will occupy David's throne; that his kingdom has been held in abeyance until Christ comes the second time. This is the theory generally held by all premillenarians. It is an ancient theory revived by Judaistic

minds, colored with many sectarian ideas. This accounts for Brother Boll's confusion when he attempts to modify this theory and make it fit the Scriptures.

The Scriptures abundantly teach that this theory is false, as Paul and other New Testament writers met and refuted it. Paul says: "Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more." ([2 Cor. 5:16](#).) Christ was once known "after the flesh;" his tribal lineage was pointed out; but since he has accomplished his earthly mission, Paul says that he is to be known "no more after the flesh." But Brother Boll says that he is to be known "after the flesh" when he comes again and that he will reign over fleshly Israel on David's throne. Any theory that calls for Christ to come back to earth with his tribal distinction and Jewish nationality prominent contradicts this Scripture. Not only is Christ not to be known any more "after the flesh," but none of God's people are to be known any more "after the flesh." This forever destroys this Judaistic theory.

Again, Paul makes a distinction between "Israel after the flesh" ([1 Cor. 10:18](#)) and "Israel after the spirit" ([Rom. 2:28](#); [Gal. 4:29](#); [6:16](#)). McGarvey says, in commenting on [1 Cor. 10:18](#): "In Paul's eyes the church was the true Israel, and the Jews were Israel after the flesh." ("Standard Bible Commentary," page 104.) The [287] "Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical Commentary," by Schaff, in commenting on "Israel after the flesh," says: "The designation is in contrast with that of 'Israel after the spirit;' it means the Israel which is so, not by virtue of a divine spiritual life arising from faith ([Gal. 3:7](#)), but by natural descent." ("First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," page 211.) The Bible makes a wide distinction between "Israel after the flesh," or fleshly Israel, and "Israel after the spirit," or "the Israel of God." All Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, now constitute "the Israel of God." ([Gal. 6:16](#); [Phil. 3:3](#).) Paul says: "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. . . . And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." ([Gal. 3:27-29](#).) "The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man" ([Heb. 8:2](#)), "the house of God," "a spiritual house," "the temple of God," "a royal priesthood," "a holy nation"--these are all different terms or phrases for "the Israel of God," "the seed of Abraham," "the tabernacle of David," "the church of God." Jesus is the head of "a spiritual house," his people are to honor him with "spiritual service" ([Rom. 12:1](#)), they are "to offer up spiritual sacrifices" ([1 Pet. 2:5](#)), and are to "worship the Father in spirit and truth" ([John 4:23](#)). Again, Paul says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." ([Gal. 3:27-29](#).) Brother Boll has not answered this argument.

Nothing is so plainly taught in the New Testament Scriptures as that the Lord's people to-day are "the seed of Abraham," "the Israel of God." Jehovah made a promise to Abraham that he would make him "a father of many nations." ([Gen. 17:5, 6](#).) Paul declares that this promise is fulfilled in Christ. "For they are not all [288] Israel, that are of Israel [born of Israel after the flesh]: neither, because they are Abraham's seed [after the flesh], are they all children. . . . That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed." ([Rom. 9:6-8](#).) All Christians are now "Abraham's seed "and heirs according to the promise" ([Gal. 3:28, 29](#)), "the children of the promise," "children of God." So, again, we see that "the Israel of God" are "the children of promise" and the people of God to-day. Now,

Christ is King over the Lord's people to-day; he is ruling over them; and as he is ruling over the Lord's people, "the Israel of God," he is on "the throne of David." Nothing could be plainer than this. Brother Boll has not answered this argument.

Furthermore, this Judaistic theory mixes the old and the new covenants, as is recorded in [Gal. 4:21-31](#). In this allegory, "Hagar," "Ishmael," "handmaid," "born after the flesh," "Mount Sinai," "bondage," "Jerusalem that now is"--all represent fleshly Israel with the old law and ritual of worship; "Sarah," "Isaac," "freewoman," "children of promise," "Jerusalem that is above"--these terms represent the new covenant. Paul says that the bondwoman with her children and the law represent the old covenant, and that the freewoman with her children represent the new covenant. But the Judaistic theory for which Brother Boll is arguing would perpetuate forever the old covenant and would nullify the new covenant.

Again, the New Testament teaches that the old law with its subjects and ritual of worship are types of the new covenant with its spiritual subjects and worship. "For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the thing, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh." ([Heb. 10:1](#).) It is frequently taught in the Bible that the prophets, priests, [289] and kings pointed to Christ; that every sacrifice pointed to the great sacrifice of Christ; that the temple and its worship typified the spiritual temple and the worship of the Lord's people to-day. Now, if these types are brought back into use, they are meaningless or else they nullify the antitype. The throne of David was the type of the throne of Christ. To claim that the throne of David is yet to be established is to nullify the antitype, which is the throne of Christ to-day. Christ is now on the throne which was typified by David's literal throne.

The Jews misunderstood the mission of Christ and had a misconception of his kingdom and reign. They thought that Christ had come to set up an earthly kingdom. Even his disciples expected him to be an earthly king. They had the same erroneous conception as this Judaistic theory for which Brother Boll is contending--namely, that Christ would be an earthly king and set up an earthly kingdom. When Christ first announced to his disciples that "the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again," his disciples thought that if this be true, then he never could establish his kingdom, that he never could become King over Israel. With this misunderstanding, "Peter took him, and began to rebuke him." Peter did not see how he could establish 'his kingdom and reign over it if he should be put to death; but Jesus "rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." ([Mark 8:31-33](#).) Here Christ placed the false conception of an earthly kingdom and his reigning over fleshly Israel as an earthly king as being "not the things of God, but the things of men." This Judaistic, literalistic, and materialistic theory for which Brother Boll is arguing is classed by the Son of God as belonging to "the things of men." He rebuked Peter then for contending for this theory, and he rebukes Brother Boll and all others who now so [290] contend for the things of men" as represented by this theory.

#### SUMMARY.

1. Christ's mission for the redemption of the human race and God's revelation of his will to man for this redemption have been completed; and when Christ comes again, it will not be to establish another kingdom and sit on another throne, but he will deliver up the kingdom which he now has to God. "Then cometh the end." ([1 Cor. 15:23-28.](#))

2. Eternal life is promised to the Lord's people by the authority which Christ now has. ([John 10:28; 17:2.](#)) Christ must now have supreme and truly divine command of eternal life to promise it in his name. If he is not on David's throne now, to occupy it at some future time will give him no more authority over eternal life.

3. He now has all glory. ([2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 2:10; Heb. 2:9.](#)) If he is not on David's throne now, to occupy it at some future time will add no glory to him.

4. He is now on the throne of God, and David's throne is called "the throne of Jehovah." ([1 Kings 2:12; 1 Chron. 29:23.](#)) Hence, he is now on David's throne.

5. Christ has now been exalted far above all principalities and powers and dominions and rule and authority. ([Eph. 1:20, 21.](#)) If Christ is not now on David's throne, to occupy it at some future time will give him no more rule or authority or honor and power than he now has.

6. Christ is now victorious over death, hell, and the grave. He is to reign on the present throne until the last enemy shall have been destroyed. If he is not now on David's throne, there will be no enemies for him to conquer when he does occupy it.

7. Christ has all authority now, both in heaven and on earth. ([Matt. 28:18.](#)) If he is not now on David's [291] throne, to occupy it at some future time will give him no more authority.

8. Man's full and complete redemption is now in Christ Jesus, with him on his present throne. Man's salvation and glorification are now to be had in Christ as a high priest, with him on his present throne. If he is not now on David's throne, to occupy it in the future will add nothing to man in his present or future condition.

9. The Old Testament Scriptures promised Christ the throne of David. ([2 Sam. 7:11-16; 1 Chron. 17:10-14; Ps. 110; Isa. 22:22; 9:6, 7; 32:1; Jer. 23:5; Dan. 7:13, 14; Hos. 3:5; Zech. 9:9.](#)) The New Testament claims a fulfillment of this promise. ([Luke 1:30-33; Matt. 13:41-43; Acts 2:29-31; 15:15-17.](#)) In Christ every promise has been fulfilled and affirmed. ([2 Cor. 1:20.](#)) Hence, Christ is now on David's throne.

10. The weight of Bible scholars who testify that Christ is now on David's throne. "Smith's Bible Dictionary," "A New Standard Bible Dictionary," "Dictionary of the Bible" (by James Hastings), Dr. T. O. Summers, Matthew Henry, Adam Clarke, Dr. Henry J. Ridley, J. W. McGarvey, and D. Lipscomb all bear witness on the affirmative side of this question. In addition to these, the Bible makes the evidence complete.

11. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we taught that Christ is to occupy two or more thrones. There must be a throne for each kingdom and a kingdom for each throne. Since Christ now



occupies one throne and is reigning over one kingdom, he thus fulfills all Scriptures which speak of his throne and kingdom. If he is not now on David's throne, to occupy it in the future will call for another kingdom.

12. Christ now has "the key of the house of David." ([Isa. 22:22](#); [Rev. 3:7](#).) "Key" is an emblem of office, power, and rule; and since Christ has the key of David, he has David's throne.

13. Christ was promised "the holy and sure blessings [292] of David." ([Acts 13:34](#).) He now has "the holy and sure blessings of David." The throne of David is included in "the holy and sure blessings of David." Hence, Christ is now on David's throne.

14. "The Israel of God" to-day is the Lord's people; Christ is ruling over them; hence, he is on David's throne. ([Gal. 3:7, 29](#); [6:16](#); [Phil. 3:3](#); [1 Pet. 2:5](#); [Rom. 9:6-8](#).) [293]



## R. H. BOLL'S THIRD NEGATIVE.

I appreciate my brother's good opening words, and earnestly hope and desire, as he does, that there may be a better understanding of our respective positions on these questions, and, as a result, a kindlier and more brotherly feeling after this discussion than there was before it began. At the beginning of this debate, in my second article, I said:

He [Brother Boles] is right also when he says that these matters should not be permitted to create disturbance. There is nothing inherent in these things that calls for or necessitates a disturbance (in the sense of clash and alienation); and if such disturbance has ever been caused, it must be due to a wrong spirit and attitude in presenting or opposing these matters. With Brother Boles, I discountenance such disturbance and the uncalled-for aggressiveness and intolerance that would produce it. Might we not hope that this discussion may itself be a means to help brethren everywhere to study, weigh, and discuss these teachings without allowing them to disturb their harmony and love and Christian fellowship?

Again, in my third article I expressed myself thus:

I have endeavored to show. . . that differences on such questions may exist among brethren simultaneously with loving Christian fellowship and kindly tolerance. If they occasion trouble, it must be due to a failure of Christian love somewhere; and that is far more serious than a mistake in such matters as these. For "if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge. . . but have not *love*, I am nothing." With Brother Boles, I deplore all dissensions, alienations, strife, disturbance among brethren over any of these matters, and would be ready to help prevent or remedy such to the limit of my ability. Brother Boles is wholly right when he says that such things should not be made a test of fellowship. I hold with him absolutely in this. And when he says that no barriers should be raised between brethren over such differences as these, he is right and only right. But what if the barriers have already been raised? he asks. Then let's tear them down. Whatever has been wrongfully done ought to be undone. That is the meaning of repentance. It matters [294] not who they are, or where, that have done such things, they ought to repent and undo the wrong.

I think this is a very important matter. If the day should come when we cannot in brotherly love and tolerance discuss our differences regarding such points as these, and when we should feel it incumbent on us to condemn, to brand and stigmatize and disfellowship one another on account of such differences, we shall have demonstrated to the world that our claims of brotherly unity in Christ were impracticable. If for disagreement on questions which do not interfere with our perfect unison in all fundamentals, in the acceptance of and obedience to the gospel, nor with our work or congregational practice as members of his body, the church--if for disagreement on points which do not clash with the foundation of our faith, or our work and worship together as Christians, we would have to disfellowship one another and cast one another out, then the cause of New Testament Christianity and unity in Christ would be hopeless, for there would be no end to the divisions and subdivisions that could and would be created on that principle. Let us, therefore, be brethren and study the word of God together in love and mutual helpfulness.

While on this point I should like to assure Brother Boles again that I have committed myself to nobody's theory, Judaistic or other, and that all of his search for, and keen analysis of, some theory I am supposed to have adopted is in vain, for there is no such thing. I am a free Christian and seek only for the teaching of God in his word. My brother really confesses his inability to classify me under some hateful theory or another. "Brother Boll," he says, "follows this theory *flinchingly* and *in confusion*. He has *modified* the general theory in some points," etc. So, after all, my teaching does not exactly fit into any pigeonhole he knows of. I evidently do not follow any cut-and-dried theory he has heard of, for, [295] according to his admission, I flinch and wobble and modify. But my brother is wrong. I have subscribed to no one but Jesus Christ and have accepted nothing but God's word. Could he possibly grant me credit for this and regard me as a brother along with himself and others, instead of laboring to put me into some human and heretical pen? All along he suggests the impression that I have gone off after somebody's theory and doctrine, and that I am not really just a simple Christian, simply endeavoring, like himself, just to find God's will and mind from the Book. At the risk of wearying my readers, I will quote a paragraph from my little book, "The Kingdom of God" (page 11), published five years ago:

The present writer deems it desirable at the outset of this study to remove any misapprehension as to his own position. He stands committed to no human theory (not even to his own, in so far as he may hold any); nor does he advocate or countenance "speculation." His one and only desire is to get all that God says on every topic, and as a free Christian he feels no necessity of manipulating the testimony of the Scriptures either to please any man or to make it fit any preconceived tenets or human standards of orthodoxy. But while maintaining his liberty and independence, he does not propose to ignore the positions generally held by his brethren; and in whatsoever he feels bound to differ with the views generally current he does not do so because of loving to differ, or counting himself wiser than others, but only and solely upon the ground of God's word, upon which alone, as simple Christians, we all stand. It may also be in order to add that the present writer rejects *in toto* the doctrinal system and theories of Adventism and Russellism; and that his study of the word of God has led him to no clash with the teaching held by his brethren in the church of Christ, in any matter of fundamentals or any point of obedience, or any congregational practice, or in anything that should affect our fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ. He believes that Jesus is King now, crowned with glory and honor, enthroned on the right hand of the Father. He believes in the full efficiency of the gospel unto its God-designed end, as the power of God unto salvation. Nothing he has found in the Scriptures contravenes these positions. [296]

Now, if my brother will just take me at my word and regard me as honest, and give me credit for my principles and expressed intentions, he could fight the whole thing out on a simple Scripture basis, without troubling about anybody's theories.

The first thing in my respondent's argument that demands attention is

#### THE DEFINITION.

He says that the question is not, "What is the throne of David," but, "Do the Scriptures teach that Christ is now on David's throne?" Very well; but if the reader is left in the dark as to what is

meant by David's throne, the proposition, however simple it may be, becomes entirely obscure. I objected to his definition and pointed out carefully that it did not define. His reiteration of the same definition does not make it a whit better or clearer. I had the right to demand a clear and concise definition of "David's throne," and to know what is meant by Christ's being "on David's throne." It was not only justice due me, but to the readers as well, that all might know exactly what we are talking about. I even suggested to him what would manifestly have been a fair and clear definition, that the throne of David stands for "*that peculiar royal authority and rule which God allotted to David.*" He did not accept it, but repeated the same vague, loose, unsatisfactory definitions which draw no line, and which, if accepted, would not have left an issue to debate about; for I, too, believe that Christ is now on "the throne of the Majesty," "the throne of God," "the throne of Jehovah," and has authority "to rule over the Lord's people." If that is the definition of the throne of David, there was nothing to dispute about. Why did not the affirmative give us a clear-cut, distinctive, and sharp definition, instead of one so broad and vague that no issue could be deduced from it? I am no more in favor of a war about words than he; but every reader will see how much depends on what is meant by [297] the term, "throne of David, which is under discussion. If my respondent is permitted to assume in his very definition that the throne on which Christ is now sitting is the throne of David, and thus beg the question to begin with, no discussion is possible. An experienced debater like Brother Boles should be able to see that. I might return his compliment and say that I very much suspect that he saw that a fair definition, according to the Scripture concept, the clear meaning with which "the throne of David" enters the New Testament from the Old, would make it impossible for him to meet the argument.

Brother Boles thinks I "ignore scholarship" because I refuse to admit the definition of the "New Standard Bible Dictionary." Let us note that definition. "Jesus the Messiah is the true Davidic King." Good so far. "And his throne--i. e., his power, etc--sometimes his seat at the right hand of the Father--is the realized ideal of the Davidic throne." I called that inadmissible. It is, in the first place, no definition, but a mixture of fact and current theological opinion, very much like Webster's definition of "baptism." And it is of no more value to Brother Boles than for me. He says that Jesus' throne as Davidic King is "*sometimes* his seat at the right hand of the Father." Then what is it at other times? Could it then, at other times, mean David's sphere of rule over Israel? I confess to no such blind devotion to what Brother Boles denominates "scholarship" as to accept a piece of buncombe just because it occurs in some "New Standard Bible Dictionary." Brother Boles ought to see that this "definition" is vague, unsatisfactory, and unfair, not only to me, but even to him. The definition of Hastings is good enough, but does not touch the point that must be brought out. "The 'throne of David' often stands for the royal honor of David's house." Yea. That is like saying the throne of David is David's throne. And even so Hastings only says that it means that "often." Not [298] always, therefore. What does it mean on other occasions? Smith's definition is perfectly good, but it is only a general definition of the terms "throne" and "sitting on a throne." What I have been wanting to know all along is what specific limit and province of rule and power is designated by the term, "throne of *David*"--whether it was something that David had and held, or something else. Just what was the sphere and scope of his royal authority? Was it only in a vague sense "over the Lord's people," as Brother Boles says, an elastic term which can be adjusted to mean any other people than those over whom David ruled? The discussion of that question does not belong to the definition, but *the definition must leave room* for that discussion, and not assume the question to start with. Is David's throne only a general expression which, though meaning civil authority in the Old Testament over the nation

of Israel, in a territory defined of God, means in the New Testament something totally different--a spiritual sovereignty over another people, without regard to place or location? That was the issue, and if the affirmative had defined his terms Scripturally the whole discussion would have been more clear and pointed.

He reiterates the Scripture definitions of the throne of David which he gave, but answers none of the questions, nor pays any attention to the negative's demands or arguments. I called his notice to the fact that the throne of David was a sphere of royal authority delegated to David and his seed, by Jehovah, over an earthly territory and a special people; that once it stood; that it was subsequently "cast down to the ground" and "overturned;" that it was "Jehovah's throne" only in this limited and delegated sense, not the absolute sovereignty God exercises in heaven; that David or Solomon never sat on the throne Christ now occupies, and Christ never sat on theirs. All this he passed grandly by. I asked what right he had to impose on the term "throne of David" a [299] sense different from that which the Scriptures plainly attach to it. No answer. I asked him pointedly what, if David sat on Jehovah's throne in the unlimited sense, God was doing while David and Solomon ruled on his throne, and who was running the universe during that time. No answer. I called specific attention to the fact that the promise of an everlasting throne to David involved the everlasting continuance of David's people, and their settlement forever in the land which God had promised them. I brought out that this is particularly taught in the context of the very passages which *he* used. ([2 Sam. 7:8-13](#); [Jer. 23:5-8](#); [Amos 9:15](#).) All this seems to have deserved no notice or answer from him. It went for absolutely nothing.

Why does the affirmative sweep aside the plainest and most specific testimony of the Scriptures on these points? The secret lies in his own preconceptions, in the spiritualizing interpretation he has adopted. To take God *at what he says* seems to him "Judaistic, literalistic, and materialistic." Therefore, things must be changed over into spiritual values and equivalents, metaphorized, allegorized--theological methods by which the word of God can be deprived of its obvious meaning, and other meanings substituted in lieu of the plain, literal terms.

"The Lord's people with David," says my respondent, was fleshly Israel; the Lord's people with Christ is 'the Israel of God,' or Christians. The Lord's people in the time of David are described by the phrase, 'from Dan to Beersheba.' This is a term denoting all of the Lord's people; but to-day the Lord's people include all Christians, all the people of God, the whole 'family in heaven and on earth.' ([Eph. 3:15](#).)"

Again he tells us that "the throne of David" was the type of the throne of Christ. To claim that the throne of David is yet to be established is to nullify the antitype, which is the throne of Christ to-day. Christ is now [300] on the throne which was typified by David's literal throne."

Here, then, we have the secret of the whole. The Scripture definitions of the throne, the people, and the territory of David, with all the promises and predictions pertaining thereto, are not to be taken at what they really say, but figuratively, at what Brother Boles says they *typify*. In this he tacitly admits that those statements in the Old Testament, *taken at what they say*, sustain the position of the negative. I thank him for that. But he says they must not be taken at what they say. To do so would be "Judaistic, literalistic, and materialistic." The whole thing must be thrown over into the realm of spiritual analogies, and the details made to fit according to the

interpreter's ingenuity. Thus "from Dan to Beersheba," for example, does not mean *the land* God swore to Israel from one end of it to the other (as it always means in Scripture), but it means "all the Lord's people," "Christians," "the whole family in heaven and on earth." This to me savors strongly of that private, arbitrary interpretation against which my brother took such a severe stand a few articles back. He not only claims that God's dealings in the spiritual realm correspond with certain points of his dealings in the earthly sphere (which would be good and true), but that the latter were only figures of the spiritual realities which Christ brought in. The oath of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, concerning their descendants, was but a vaporous image, as it were, of spiritual blessings which were to come to another people. The actual descendants get nothing; the spiritual meaning alone counts. And *the land* God swore to them for an everlasting inheritance for them and their seed after them was but a figure of some spiritual concept. And the oath God swore to David concerning his throne and his people was but a shadow of what God intended for the church, his spiritual people over whom Christ should reign, as David reigned over the [301] nation of Israel (though Christ is never spoken of as being in relation of King to his church). My respondent is afraid that by taking these things at their face value we might "nullify the antitype." Ought we not to fear, rather, lest we nullify the word of God, his promises, and his oath, by our theological preconceptions? No wonder my respondent thinks that prophecy cannot be understood. According to such principles of interpretation, a prophecy might mean almost anything when the time for its fulfillment comes around! It is not strange that he thinks that the negative's position is *Judaistic*. Certainly his view differs greatly from any impression that a Jew would have got from his own Scriptures, and he would have no little difficulty showing a Jew how it happened that all the prophecies of the Messiah's birth, humiliation, and rejection were literally fulfilled, but the prophecies referring to his glory and the promises concerning the land and the people and the throne of David were all "spiritual." Dr. Alex. McCaul, quoted in "Kingdom of God," page 59, says:

The Jews object that many prophecies, and those such as especially concern themselves, have not been fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth, and that therefore he cannot be the Messiah promised by the prophets. To this many Christian writers have replied that such declarations are figurative, and that under earthly emblems heavenly things that are intended--that the Jews are never to be restored to their own land, nor the Messiah to have a kingdom over Israel; that the only blessings which they have to expect are adoption into the Christian family here and admission into the heavenly Canaan hereafter. But to this the Jew objects that a mode of interpretation which is based upon two contradictory principles is necessarily false. "You prove that Jesus is the Messiah," he says, "by the grammatical principle--you evade difficulties by the adoption of the figurative. Choose one of the two. Carry through the figurative exposition, and then there is no suffering Messiah; carry through the literal, and a large portion of the prophecies are not yet fulfilled." The Jew's demand is reasonable, and his objection to this expository inconsistency valid: . . . to receive those [302] prophecies which foretell Messiah's humiliation and atoning death in their plain and literal sense, and seek to allegorize those which deal with his glorious reign on the earth over restored and blessed Israel, is to place an insurmountable stumblingblock before every Jew of common sense, and to hold up prophecy to the scorn of the infidel.

My respondent not only implies that all this business about *David* is now a thing of the past, but (arguing from [2 Cor. 5:16](#)) that it does not matter now whence Christ sprang. So "spiritual" has this "throne of David" on which (according to my respondent) Christ is now sitting become,

that sure enough it wouldn't be any infringement on *David's* rights if our Lord had sprung from any other tribe of people. Really his present rule has nothing directly to do with David's prerogatives and the promises made to him. Yet the Scripture keeps calling attention to the fact that Christ is of *David's* seed. Why? "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel," says Paul to Timothy long after Christ's ascension. Why? Was Paul too "Judaistic" and "materialistic?" In the last book of the New Testament, Christ is referred to as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" ([Rev. 5:5](#)), and at the very end of that book he calls himself "the root and offspring of David" ([Rev. 22:16](#)). If [2 Cor. 5:16](#) meant what my respondent thinks, why this special notice down to the very last, of Christ's Davidic parentage? Is Christ man now? ([1 Tim. 2:5](#).) If so, to what ancestry is his humanity assigned? By what right can he claim *David's* throne, and on what ground can he sit on that throne? Did not God swear to David that of *the fruit of his loins* he would set one upon his throne? Is the fact that Christ is of David's seed of no more force or significance to-day?

But, after all, Brother Boles has now himself proved *nolens volens* that *Christ is not now on David's throne!* According to him, the actual throne of David exists no [303] longer. That on which Christ now sits is not the throne of David, but a spiritual counterpart and equivalent, an *antitype* of it. Now the antitype is never the same thing as the type, but only a picture or model of it. For example, Moses was a type of Christ, but Christ is not Moses. Christ does not occupy Moses' seat, and Christ's law is not Moses' law. Christ is the antitype of Aaron, but they are not the same persons, nor is Christ's priesthood the perpetuation of the Aaronic service. If, then (as my respondent says), "the throne of David was *the type* of the throne of Christ, . . . Christ is now on the throne which was *typified by David's literal throne*," then Christ is evidently not on *David's* throne now, for David's throne was only the type of the one on which Christ now sits. If my respondent had shaped his proposition to read, "The Scriptures teach that Christ is now on a throne which was typified by the throne of David," I would not have gone out of my way to deny that. What I believe is that God, regardless of all antitypical fulfillments, will redeem his oath and promises made to the fathers at face value, and will do exactly as he said in his word.

My respondent thinks that the fulfillment of God's promise to David, according to [Jer. 33:17, 18](#), would demand the continuance of the Levitical priesthood. He tries to draw a "deadly parallel" thus: "Except one of David's line is ruling in David's land over David's people, it is not the throne of David;" and therefore, "except one of Aaron's line is officiating in Aaron's land and for Aaron's people, it is not the priesthood of God." This is not a true parallel. He should have said, "Except one of Aaron's family is officiating in the appointed sanctuary of God on earth, it is not the God-appointed service of the Aaronic priesthood." That will do, but not the other. The Aaronic priesthood was limited as to its duration, and reached its limit in due time. ([Heb. 9:6-10](#).) But the throne of David was by promise to be an [304] *everlasting* throne, to endure "until the moon be no more." Unless there is a similar extension to the Aaronic priesthood, the same time limit would not apply to both. I accept absolutely what is told us in Hebrews about the discontinuance of the Levitical worship. I believe now, as I taught in 1910, that Christ is our High Priest, and that he sits now upon the throne of all the universe at God's right hand, but not that he is as yet sitting on David's throne.

It is a rule of "honorable controversy" laid down in "Hedge's Logic" that a disputant is not to charge his opponent with the consequences of his teaching if he disavows them. If he thinks his opponent's doctrine would logically lead to bad conclusions, he can point out that fact; but he cannot charge his opponent with teaching or holding them. My brother fails here. He pictures out a theory which he says is generally held by premillennialists (which itself is a mistake), and while admitting that I flinch" and "modify," he says that "*Brother Boll . . . in the main contends for all these points.*" Among those "points" is that "the temple worship is to be restored," and "the Aaronic priesthood resumed, animal sacrifices to be offered; in fact, the theory demands the restoration of the law of Moses." He says that Brother Boll in the main "contends for all these points." I expected better of my brother. If, as he says, he is far from wishing to make out a case against me, or from intending to saddle some great and damaging charge off on me, why does he make such an unfounded charge as this, which he must know would "make my name to stink" among the brethren? Where is his proof, and what is his proof, that I teach such things? I invite him to present one iota of evidence that I have ever contended for such things as he charges upon me. Or if it was but a slip, I will gladly give him opportunity to retract it. This is too serious an accusation to be left unsubstantiated or uncorrected. [305]

I must also once more revert to a charge he made against me before, and which he is too unwilling to give up--namely, that I do not believe in the universal Lordship and authority of Jesus Christ. After all the times I have reaffirmed that I do believe so, he still thinks that I make inconsistent and contradictory statements concerning it. He refers to my book ("The Kingdom of God"). Well, in that--book I stated:

The throne which our Lord occupies now is the all-inclusive sovereignty of heaven. It is the position of supreme authority held by him as the glorified God-man. . . . It may be argued that being in the place of supreme and all-inclusive authority ("All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me"), the authority of David's throne, being comprehended in "all authority," is his now also. That is entirely true. It is his and no one else's. He has and holds the key of David. He is the anointed King of David's line, the Christ appointed for Israel. ([Acts 3:20.](#))

Is not this clear and satisfactory? I showed that, in common with Brother Lipscomb, my respondent himself believes that Satan still rules here below, and that the kingdoms of this world are not the kingdom of God as yet, and that all things are not yet subjected to Christ. In saying such things, does he, or does Brother Lipscomb, contradict the truth concerning Christ's universal Lordship and authority? My respondent will not say so. I stand exactly where he does in this thing.

It has been shown that though antitypical and spiritual comparisons and counterparts of the Old Testament truths and promises be conceded, those original promises and oath-bound covenants of God are not thereby canceled. If, for example, it be granted that Christians to-day are in a spiritual sense the "Israel of God," that would not make null and void the promises to and concerning the nation which descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. All their threats and predictions of evil have been literally fulfilled upon them, and God declared that he would [306] fulfill the promises of good upon the same people, in the same way. ([Jer. 32:42.](#)) The proof is partly under our eyes. God promised, for instance, to preserve Israel and never to make an end of them. ([Jer. 30:11.](#)) Is he not doing that very thing to-day? We see them until yet marvelously



preserved among the nations. (See T. B. Larimore's sermon on the subject.) What God is doing with "spiritual Israel" to-day has not affected his faithful dealings with the nation of Israel in this respect, and surely will not cause his promises to them to fail in the future. Spiritual equivalents do not nullify original facts and promises. If there is a Jerusalem above, that does not make void the clear and positive promises of God concerning the Jerusalem on earth. If, relative to our country, Boston were called our Athens, no one would be confused by such language. Boston is not Athens, and Athens is not Boston. If Boston is the Athens of America, it means simply that to us it is the equivalent of what Athens was to the ancient world. From all the arguments Brother Boles has made concerning the spiritual equivalents of the Old Testament people, land, and David's throne, it would not follow that God's definite promises and oaths to that people and to David, their king, about their land and their city and the royal throne, are thereby canceled, made void, and abrogated. God did not deceive Israel, nor will he ever break his promises to them on any pretense.

My brother is right when he says that the Jews expected a restoration of David's throne, kingdom, and people in the land. According to their prophecies, they had a perfect right to expect such things. Their error lay not in that, but in the fact that they had failed to see the necessity of a spiritual change in themselves before these promises could be fulfilled, and had failed to believe in the humiliation of the Messiah, which had been no less clearly foretold in their Scriptures than his glory. He is right again when he says that this is a very ancient [307] theory--that even Christ's disciples held the same idea. Just so. The Lord reproved them once for failing to believe in *all* that the prophets had spoken. ([Luke 24:25](#).) Yea, even after Christ's death and resurrection, even after he had *opened their mind that they might understand the Scriptures* ([Luke 24:45](#))--surely they understood their Scriptures *then!*--yea, even after he had given them forty days' special instruction on the kingdom of God ([Acts 1:3](#)), *they still held that same conviction*, as shown by their question, "*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*" Even more remarkable is the fact that the Lord in his reply, so far from correcting them, actually implied that sometime the kingdom would be so restored to Israel; only, it was not for them to know the times and the seasons, which the Father had set within his own authority. After saying which he called their attention to something that concerned them more immediately, which, he said, would happen in a few days. ([Acts 1:6-8](#).)

Not only did the disciples hold what Brother Boles calls that "Judaistic, literalistic, materialistic" theory, but for three centuries of its purest and most primitive existence practically the whole church held such beliefs.

#### ABOUT SCHOLARS, COMMENTATORS, AND GREAT AND GOOD BRETHREN.

My respondent quotes several scholars and commentators in support of his contention. This is proper when such quotations are properly used. We accept scholarship in matters of scholarship. We give due consideration to the words of commentators, and most especially do we weigh with respect the words of able and faithful brethren in the Lord. But no uninspired man can be an authority in spiritual things. Brother Boles doubtless does not mean to leave such an impression, but really he talks as though I ought to bow in humble submission to the various commentators which he produces, such as [308] Ridley, Burkitt, T. O. Summers, Grotius,

Matthew Henry, and Adam Clarke. One could "prove" anything under heaven on this fashion. "What will Brother Boll do with these scholars?" he asks; "they flatly contradict his position." Brother Boll will have to do exactly what Brother Boles did in the first proposition with Campbell, McGarvey, Barclay, and Milligan.

As for commentators, I see no reason why their say-so should count for so much more in this discussion than Brother Boles' own. I regard him more highly than I do some of these celebrities which he brings up, and would call their comments in question as quickly as I would Brother Boles', if I believed them wrong. The proposition says, "The Scriptures teach thus and so," not, "The commentators teach," or "The commentators say that the Scriptures teach this and that." I think my brother has made wrong use of his commentators throughout this discussion and has misunderstood my use of them also. When I quote from any writer, my respondent seems to think that I am inconsistent unless I accept that writer's whole teaching and theory. Would he do that? He quotes solemnly from James Hastings. Does he therefore subscribe to all the infidel modernism of which Hastings' Bible Dictionary is full? Will Brother Boles turn down such notable scholarship? But here is a good quotation from a commentary which Brother Boles quotes as often as any other, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, on [Rev. 3:21](#): "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne."

Two thrones are here mentioned:

(1) His Father's, upon which he now sits, and has sat ever since his ascension, after his victory over death, sin, and the world; upon this none can sit save God, and the God-man, Christ Jesus, for it is the incommunicable prerogative of God alone; (2) the throne which shall be peculiarly *his* as the once humbled and then glorified *Son of man*, to be set up over the whole earth (heretofore [309] usurped by Satan) at his coming again, in this the *victorious* saints shall share ([1 Cor. 6:2](#)). The transfigured elect church shall with Christ judge and reign over the nations in the flesh, and Israel the foremost of them. . . . This privilege of our high calling belongs exclusively to the present time while Satan reigns, when alone there is scope of conflict and for victory ([2 Tim. 2:11, 12](#)). When Satan shall be bound ([chapter 20:4](#)) there shall be no longer scope for it, for all on earth shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, N. T., page 563.)

My respondent says: "Nowhere in the Scriptures are we taught that Christ is to occupy two or more thrones." Well, what about Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown on that? What will Brother Boles do with such scholarship? For it is fully equal with that of most of the others he mentioned. If commentators count, here's a bull's-eye for the negative, and that from one of Brother Boles' own preferred authorities, too!

But I ask, what is all that worth to us? I would not think of placing any weight on such a thing for proof, though I might quote it for aptness of expression and to show that eminent men who were not counted as heretics and Judaizers held such positions. But it is no proof to anything. On many points I can quote Alford, Bengel, Calvin, Wesley, Luther, and some of our own strong brethren. But we are not searching out what men have said about these questions, but

what God has said. My beliefs stand or fall with what the Scriptures say, as nearly as I am able to ascertain it, not with what men say about it.

It has always been a principle with those who stand as simple Christians that we accept no man's authority in matters of God's teaching and religious faith and practice, that we call no man "father" or "rabbi." We do not thereby discredit the work of able men and commentators, but, like the noble Bereans, we go to the Scriptures as the one final and only court of appeal, to see whether these things be so; for, as Brother Boles knows, no uninspired man is an infallible interpreter. [310] If a commentator is a great and able man and knows the Scriptures so thoroughly, he ought to be able to point out to me what God has said, and do it in such a fashion that I can *see* that God said it. If he can show me that God said it, I will accept it. If he can't do that, I shall certainly not accept the man's word for it. If he can show me that God said it, I will accept it, not because the man said so, but because he showed me and I see that *God* said it. That I conceive to be the Christian's proper attitude toward scholars and commentators in matters of faith and doctrine.

In an earlier article my respondent complained that I had failed to recognize McGarvey, Lipscomb, Sewell, as of equal authority with myself. I do not remotely presume to measure myself with those good men. But this is not a question of human authority, whether theirs or mine (I claim none), but of the Scriptures. This question is not to be settled by the dictum of men, but by the word of God. I esteem Brother Lipscomb as highly as Brother Boles does. And I know what Brother Lipscomb's attitude was. He was as far as possible from setting himself up as an authority; and he never condemned even a boy or girl for differing with him, but always referred them to the Scriptures to see and judge for themselves. As Christians, we cannot do otherwise. Whenever we subscribe to any man, even the best of men, or to any set of men, blindly and *in toto*, we become followers of that man, or of that party, therefore partisans, and forfeit our high name and place as *Christians only*. Brother Boles does not indorse Brother Lipscomb in everything he has ever said at wholesale, not even everything I have quoted from Brother Lipscomb in this discussion; but he does not, therefore, exalt himself above Brother Lipscomb or "push him aside." Neither do I.

I stand in these matters as simple Christians stand, and where the whole brotherhood in Christ professedly stands. Brother Boles appears to think that we ought [311] to let the word of commentators settle the matter, and as though it were a grievous offense to set them aside. (If that is so, then which set of commentators shall it be?) If that is his conception of the Christian's principles, it is not mine. These commentators look no better to me than any one else, unless they can point me to a clear word from God. Then I thank them and follow *God*.

#### CONCLUSION.

At this point I have reached the limit. I have yet about seven type written pages, a review of the affirmative's "Summary," item by item, and then the negative's final summary. But although my respondent made me the generous offer to use all the space I want, I cannot take undue advantage of that, but must cut off those final pages.

The affirmative has not produced a passage that declares that Jesus Christ is now on David's throne, nor one that necessitates such a conclusion, either in itself or in conjunction with other passages. His argument that Christ "is now on the throne of God, and David's throne is called 'the throne of Jehovah,' hence he is now on David's throne," is like saying: "The sun is a luminary, the moon is a luminary; therefore, the sun is the moon." The absolute throne of God on which Christ now sits and the limited, subordinate sphere of God's government in Israel which he delegated to David ("the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah over Israel"-- [1 Chron. 28:5](#)) are as different concepts as the sun and the moon among the luminaries of heaven.

The affirmative's main contention has been to establish a spiritual, typical analogy between Christ's present spiritual rule and David's earthly rule. The negative did not feel obliged to deny this. Such spiritual correspondence does not prove that the ancient oath and promise of God to David concerning his throne and his people are nullified. Indeed, it would prove that Christ is not now [312] sitting on David's throne, for the throne on which he now sits would be only the antitype. Type and antitype are never the same thing. All the spiritual fulfillments my respondent may be able to point out do not destroy the faithfulness of God in the fulfilling at face value of all he has said and promised in the past.

Finally, the negative avows the same position in regard to Christ's present universal Lordship and authority that Brother Boles himself holds. The negative believes that all the right and authority of David's throne *is Christ's now*, and his alone. As to the actual exercise of it, he bides the time until disobedient Israel shall turn and seek him, and when they see him shall shout: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." ([Matt. 23:39.](#)) [313]

# PROPOSITION V.

## CHRIST'S COMING PREMILLENNIAL AND IMMINENT.

**Fifth Proposition: "The Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." R. H. Boll affirms; H. Leo Boles denies.**

### Chapter XIV.

#### R. H. BOLL'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.

It is with pleasure that I take up the affirmative of this final proposition of the "Boles-Boll Debate;" for here, at last, we reach the vital and practical center of the Bible's prophetic teaching, the heart of the matter, so far as we are concerned. In our correspondence preliminary to the debate I stated to Brother Boles that I regarded the first four propositions as incidental and subordinate--important and valuable, indeed, in their place, helpful themes for discussion among brethren, but not as necessarily affecting the main and central teaching, which is now before us in the present proposition. Here, then, we enter upon the most important question of the whole discussion. The proposition reads as follows: "*The Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent.*"

"*The Scriptures*" are the books of the Old and the New Testament, the Bible. The "*coming of Christ*" is his promised personal return from heaven, generally called his "*second coming*," a term derived from [Heb. 9:28](#).

"*Premillennial*" means preceding the millennium. The latter term (which is simply Latin for "a thousand years") is borrowed from the language of [Rev. 20:1-7](#), and is the popular name for that period of world-wide prevalence of righteousness, blessing, and peace foretold in both Testaments, during which Satan is bound and [314] removed, and the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. I have no doubt that my respondent believes that there is to be such an era, regardless of how it may be brought about, or when; and from some expressions during the debate I judge that he believes that this age or period is yet in the future. I shall assume, therefore, that there will be such an era of universal blessedness, and that it is yet in the future. If I am assuming too much and my respondent is not prepared to admit this as common ground, I will gladly offer proof for these two points in my next article. Meanwhile I shall proceed upon the assumption that it is agreed between us that there will be such a period of world-wide blessing and universal acknowledgment of God and Christ, and that this period is yet future. It is the affirmative's duty to prove that Christ will return from heaven *before the millennium commences*.

The definition of the term "imminent" I reserve until we take up that point. Let us now fix our minds on the first half of the proposition:

## I. THE COMING OF CHRIST IS PREMILLENNIAL.

This is seen, first of all, in the character and course of the present age clean up to the coming of Christ. (The Greek word for "age" (aion) is generally rendered "world," but the Revised Version margin calls attention in most or all cases where the Greek word "age" is so translated.) The period called "this age," or "the age that now is," is always spoken of as an *evil* age. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament so tells us, and the Scripture references amply substantiate the statement. Satan is "the god of this age" ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)), whose work it is to blind "the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them." Hence, he is called "the prince of the world," and the whole world is said to lie in the evil one. ([1 John 5:19](#).) [315] His throne is here below. ([Rev. 2:13](#).) He is the head of "the world rulers of this darkness," the leader of "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." ([Eph. 6:12](#).) He is "the prince of the powers of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience," in accordance to whose will and dictate all sinners walk "according to the course [age] of this world." ([Eph. 2:2](#)) Therefore, Christians are warned that they be not fashioned according to this age ([Rom. 12:2](#)) and that they love not this world ([1 John 2:15](#)). "Demas forsook me, having loved this present world [age]." ([2 Tim. 4:10](#).) But the Lord Jesus Christ have himself for us that he might deliver us out of it and out of all complicity with it. ([Gal. 1:4](#).) We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We are commanded to keep our garments unspotted from the world, and are told that the friendship of this world is a spiritual adultery and means "enmity with God." ([James 1:27; 4:4](#).) Like Jesus our Lord, we are strangers here, and go forth with him without the gate, bearing his reproach.

Another characteristic of the age is that Christ, the King, is absent. During his absence his servants are amid a hostile citizenship administrating his goods ([Luke 19:12-14](#)), and no other prospect is held out to these servants than that of suffering and persecution until their Lord returns. The more faithful they are, the more true to their Lord and separated from the world, the more certain they are to suffer persecution. "All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." ([2 Tim. 3:12](#).) (How foolish is the church when it hopes for the favor of the world and tries to obtain it!) And the promised share in that glory that shall be revealed is for us, only "if so be that we suffer with him." ([Rom. 8:17, 18](#).)

Such is the picture of the present age which the New Testament sets before us. The only hope and prospect of a change from these distressful circumstances is [316] connected with the coming of the Lord. Nowhere in the New Testament is the hope of a gradual improvement held out, or a hope that the world will gradually be absorbed in the church until at last the world will become the church. The one and only goal of hope set before the Christian is the Lord's return. We are to "live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world [age]; *looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.*" ([Tit. 2:12, 13](#).) Speaking of certain nominal Christians who were "enemies of the cross of Christ," "whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (alas, we have them now and yet!), Paul distinguishes himself and the faithful ones by this, that "our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" ([Phil. 3:19, 20](#)), and urges them all to stand fast in that attitude ([Phil. 4:1](#)). Never is it intimated that any other event or circumstance would bring rest and relief from the present difficult conditions. The church is hard beset with its warfare without and within. Grievous wolves would enter in (as the

apostle foretold--[Acts 20:29, 30](#)), not sparing the flock, and from among themselves would men arise speaking perverse things. The battle would not grow easier, but heavier with the progress of time. "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in latter times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." ([1 Tim. 4:1](#).) "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." ([2 Tim. 4:3, 4](#).) Yea, the last times will be the worst, not the best. "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come"--and there follows a description of lives abominable in God's sight, not of men confessedly out in the world (for [317] the world always followed more or less that sort of course), but of people who were "holding a form of godliness." ([2 Tim. 3:1-5](#).) Twice are we warned that in the last days scoffers and mockers would come, walking after their own lusts, and would contemptuously ask: "Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." ([2 Pet. 3:3, 4](#); [Jude 17, 18](#).) "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" ([Luke 18:8](#).) That there will be some faith is evident, for some who will then be living will be changed and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. ([1 Thess. 4:17](#); [1 Cor. 15:51](#).) But that true faith will be at a premium in those days is implied in the Savior's question. No world-wide acknowledgment of Christ is to be expected before Christ comes; but "as it was in the days of Noah," and as "in the days of Lot," so shall be the coming of the Son of man. ([Luke 17:26-30](#).) Great and small will then seek refuge in the mountains and among the craggy rocks and will cry to the rocks, "Fall upon us," and to the hills, "Cover us," and "hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?" ([Rev. 6:15-17](#).) Certainly none of this would lead any one to think that a converted world would be awaiting Christ at his coming, but exactly the opposite.

"Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord," says James. ([James 5:7](#).) The word *to be patient* is "*hupomeno*," to "*remain under*"--i. e., under a strain, under a burden. When Jesus comes, the strain is over, the burden lifted. We need not look for that relief any sooner, so far as conditions in the world are concerned. In fact, the whole creation is waiting intently for an event, "the revealing of the sons of God" (who are as yet unrecognized in the world, but who, like their Lord, shall shine in glory in that day, for they shall be [318] like him.) ([1 John 3:1, 2](#); [Matt. 13:43](#).) For "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together even until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." ([Rom. 8:19, 22, 23](#).) Now, the "redemption of our body" is the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the transformation of the living ([1 Thess. 4:17](#); [1 Cor. 15:51, 52](#); [Phil. 3:21](#)), which is the first thing to transpire at Christ's coming. It is a truth unanimously and universally held that the redemption of the body cannot take place till Christ himself comes back. For that event, still groaning, we must patiently wait. If there were a millennium before Christ's coming, it would be filled with the groans of suffering creation--yea, and Christ's own would still be groaning within themselves all along, waiting for the only real hope and relief, their adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body, at Christ's return.

In the evening of the apostles' day things were already shaping themselves for the final issue and taking on the characteristic features of the last hour. "Little children," says John, "it is the last hour: and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists;



whereby we know that it is the last hour." ([1 John 2:18](#).) But the Antichrist who was to come, of whom they had heard, and of whom the "many antichrists" were the precursors, is to be dealt with by the Lord Jesus personally at his coming--"whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming." ([2 Thess. 2:8](#).) John already in his day saw that issue taking shape. Paul says that the mystery of lawlessness was already working in his day--only, there was some one or something yet restraining; and when that hindrance should be taken out of the way, "then shall be revealed the lawless one," the "man of sin," the "son [319] of perdition," in whom this secret working of lawlessness would break forth into perfect embodiment and expression. ([2 Thess. 2:3-10](#).) It matters not, so far as this present argument is concerned, whether this "man of sin" be taken to be the Pope of Rome, as some hold, or some special individual of the last days in whom sin and lawlessness find their ultimate perfection, the evil forces were steadily working to that end; and when the restraint is released and the Antichrist comes, Christ will come to destroy him. This leaves no room for a millennium before Christ comes.

The "millennium," that era of universal blessedness and peace and lifting of the curse, is necessarily the same as "the times of restoration of all things whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old." ([Acts 3:21](#).) But that time will not be till Jesus comes--"whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things." ([Acts 3:20, 21](#).) Brother Lipscomb's comment on this passage is as follows:

Jesus had been to earth and returned to heaven. Heaven must receive him until "the times of restoration of all things." Then "the times of restoration of all things" must be when Jesus returns again to earth--the restoration of all things to their original relation to God. . . . When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the world will be restored to harmonious relations with God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. (David Lipscomb, "Queries and Answers," page 360.)

If, then, that era we call the "millennium" is a time of the restoration of all things in the world to harmonious relations with God, it cannot be till our Lord Jesus comes back from heaven.

I rest my argument on this point here. The next item under consideration is: [320]

## II. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE COMING OF CHRIST IS IMMINENT.

By "*imminent*" I mean impending in the sense of being *always liable to occur*; not that it is necessarily going to take place immediately, but that, so far as we can know, it may happen at any time. The Standard Dictionary gives as a second definition, "*overhanging as if about to fall*," and makes the comment, "An imminent evil is one liable to befall very speedily." It is in this sense I use the word. "Imminency" is not meant to designate "immediacy." The Scriptures teach the imminent coming of Christ; but the time of his coming, whether it would be immediate or later or just when, is not revealed to us; and all date setting as to this event is out of question and unwarranted.

It follows from the very fact that Christ is certain to come, while the time of his coming is concealed, that Christ's coming must be always imminent to his people. Since he has told us to watch for his returning and has not told us when he would return, we must expect him constantly. And so we are taught.

Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh. ([Matt. 24:42-44.](#))

But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord tarrieth; and shall begin to beat his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. ([Matt. 24:48-51.](#))

This evil servant in his mind *defers* the Lord's coming. The Lord shows that this is fatal. On the other hand, in the parable of the ten virgins, which immediately [321] follows, he shows that it may be equally fatal to expect his coming at once without making preparation for a possible delay. ([Matt. 25:1-13.](#)) In the parable of the talents, right after, he represents himself as a man going into another country and intrusting his goods to his servants. "Now *after a long time* the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them." ([Matt. 25:19.](#)) It may be a very short time, it may be much longer than they might think; in any case, the only safe and faithful thing to do would be to expect him always, and to live in view of his imminent coming.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, *whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning*; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. ([Mark 13:33-37.](#))

This, better than words of mine, sets forth the continual imminency of Christ's coming. Accordingly we find the apostles looking for the Lord's coming in their day already, and teaching Christians so from the first. Not that they ever committed themselves to a statement that the Lord *would* certainly come during their lifetime; but they taught, and exemplified it in their lives, that Christ is to be constantly and earnestly expected. They spoke of his coming as an event always just ahead, always about to occur. They turned the eyes of the church upon that event as the great goal. Corinth was "waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." ([1 Cor. 1:7.](#)) The Greek word here for "waiting" is very strong--a fervent, eager, earnest expectation. The Philippians also, jointly with Paul, were waiting for the Savior from heaven. ([Phil. 3:20.](#)) "The Lord is at hand," Paul says to them ([Phil. 4:5](#)), never far off. So James also: "Be ye also patient; establish your [322] hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Murmur not, brethren, one against another, that ye be not judged; behold, the judge standeth before the doors." ([James 5:8, 9.](#)) He may step in through that door, at what moment we know not. The Thessalonians, especially, from their conversion, took the attitude of waiting for God's Son from heaven; indeed,

that was a point and an object to them in their turning to God. ([1 Thess. 1:9, 10.](#)) When death began to invade their ranks, they were troubled, thinking, apparently, that those who had fallen asleep would have no share in the coming joyful event. Paul reassured them; for we who are alive and are left to the coming of the Lord (Paul told them) shall not have any precedence over the blessed dead, for "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*" ([1 Thess. 4:13-18.](#)) How vivid and strong was the expectation of Christ that could use such words! But in the process of time professing Christendom--like Israel despairing of Moses' return from Sinai's summit, and saying, "Up, make us gods, to go before us; for as for this Moses, we know not what is become of him"--became weary of the upward look and turned its eyes earthward, and largely forgot the imminent coming of the Lord. For the first three centuries the professed church was "premillennial," and looked yet for Christ's return. But when the church obtained the patronage of the world power and became allied with it, the "blessed hope" quickly died out. The effect of that change was to blight the spiritual life and power of the church. A return to the primitive hope and the earnest looking for Christ's coming would surely tend to revive that flagging life in our day. [323]

At the very first there appears to have been a certain margin of time within which Christ's coming was not likely to occur. Thus the apostles and early Christians were commissioned to disciple all the nations, and to be witnesses of him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It might be assumed that Christ would not come until that work was done. But that work was relatively accomplished within that generation ([Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:6, 23](#)); and moreover, they had no information to the effect that Christ would not come until that work would be finished, but intimation of the possibility that the Lord at his coming (as in [Matt. 10:23](#), for example) might find them engaged in the performance of it. "Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." ([Matt. 24:46.](#)) So they had no reason even then to postpone the possibility of the coming of the Lord. So likewise the intimations of possible delay in [Matt. 25:5, 19](#) and [2 Pet. 3:3, 4](#) were not such as to necessitate the conclusion that the delay would extend beyond a few years or beyond their lifetime. Evidently the apostles and first Christians were in a state of eager expectancy which cannot be laid to ignorance or misunderstanding; it was the normal attitude of God's children.

We also learn that Simon Peter knew that he would have to die for his Lord. But in a day when the apostles' lives stood "in jeopardy every hour" ([1 Cor. 15:30](#)) and Peter himself anticipated that "the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly" ([2 Pet. 1:14](#)), the possibility of the Lord's coming was not far away at any time. Paul, though he had hoped to be among those living when Christ came ([1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Cor. 5:2-4](#)), surmised the near approach of his execution, his "departure;" yet, though he well understood that the Christian's death was a blessed change to something "very far better" ([Phil. 1:21-24](#)), he looked beyond death and intermediate [324] existence to the crowning day, the day of Christ's appearing ([2 Tim. 4:6-8](#)). The departed saints look for and wait for that day, the same as the living. Death is never set forth as the goal of the Christian's hope, nor is the Christian ever asked to prepare for death; but the word of God urges him to be ready always for Christ's ever-to-be-expected coming, and that glorious event is held up to him as the goal of all his hope.

But to go back to the point. We have seen that if any generation had had an excuse to defer their expectation of Christ's return, it would have been that first generation of Christians; but they, instead of counting the day far away, looked for the Lord's return with peculiar fervency. So the New Testament testifies.

If I may be permitted to anticipate the commonest argument against the imminency of Christ's coming--namely, that based on [2 Thess. 2](#)--

Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. ([2 Thess. 2:1-3](#))--

the commonly accepted explanation of this passage is that the Thessalonians had become unduly disturbed and excited over the prospect of the Lord's near return; that some among them had quit their work and daily occupation, and that others were greatly troubled and shaken up. So Paul writes to assure them that they need not be so troubled--that Jesus Christ was not coming yet, that the great falling away would have to come first, and the man of sin be revealed.

This view of Paul's meaning puts Paul in opposition to himself and with his own teaching, both previous and subsequent to this utterance; it misrepresents the [325] Thessalonians' attitude toward Christ's return, and misconceives the real point of disturbance. Paul's teaching in every church, as the direct testimony shows, created an earnest, eager expectation of the Lord's coming--nowhere more so than in Thessalonica. Those people turned out of heathendom to wait for God's Son from heaven ([1 Thess. 1:9, 10](#)), and throughout Paul's first epistle to them, in every chapter, we have evidence of their eager desire and constant expectation of the Lord's return. On the face of it, it is not likely that Paul in his second epistle denied or so radically modified his former teaching to them. Nor in his later epistles (the Thessalonian letters are known to have been Paul's earliest writings) does he show any evidence of such a change of mind on the subject; but to the Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, to Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews, he holds out the hope of Christ's imminent coming. The Holy Spirit does not nullify himself in his teaching.

In the second place, the Thessalonians were not "shaken from their minds" and "troubled" at the prospect of Christ's coming. I fear the expositors who think that are measuring the early Christians' corn by the modern half bushel. Those Christians *longed* for Christ's return. To them it was a happy hope. They believed that Jesus would save them from the wrath that was ready to break in upon a guilty world, and that it would be a joyful reunion, the breaking of an endless, cloudless day of glory for them. All of this is manifest in the first Thessalonian letter itself. So far from their quitting their daily work in their agitation over the near advent of Christ, there is not a shadow of evidence that such a thing ever happened. It is pure surmise and fabrication. There were, indeed, certain at Thessalonica who did not work. It seems to have been a local trouble against which Paul had spoken in his first epistle already--yea, and before, while Paul was yet with them. ([1 Thess. 4:11, 12.](#)) But there is nothing to show that this [326] condition had

ever been due to their expectation of Christ's return. The hope of the coming, rightly conceived, has exactly the opposite effect on a man.

Nor is there any ground for thinking that Paul in [2 Thess. 2](#) gave the brethren new and additional information regarding the Lord's return, which supposedly stopped their instant expectation of him. No, Paul reminded them of something he had told them before those epistles had been written: "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" ([2 Thess. 2:5.](#))

But what were the Thessalonians troubled about, and what did Paul explain to them? It was concerning *the day of the Lord*, which in Scripture is always *the day of wrath and of vengeance*, from which the Christians hoped to be saved by Christ's coming after them. ([1 Thess. 1:9, 10; 5:1-11.](#)) Some one had troubled them by telling them that the day of the Lord was already come. (King James and the American Revised Versions have "at hand" or "just at hand." The Greek is "enesteken," which *always* means *to be present*. And so the English Revised, and, indeed, every other version and translation known to me, including Martin Luther's, the Roman Catholic version excepted, renders it.) Paul explains to the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord will not break until evil had reached its culmination in the "man of sin." And that left the Thessalonians again free to look for Christ's coming to receive them to himself before things came to such an issue, and before that day of wrath should come upon them. ([1 Thess. 5:9, 10.](#)) Those who believe that the Pope of Rome is the "man of sin" must admit that the coming of Christ is now imminent, no matter how they explain [2 Thess. 2](#); for, according to their belief, the "falling away" has already transpired, and the "man of sin" has been revealed, and even the great and terrible day of the Lord may break in at any time, unexpectedly as a thief. [327]

And for all *the signs of the times*, they existed in some measure from the first (as see [1 John 2:18](#)), and exist in remarkable degree now, so that we have far more reason than any generation that ever lived to look constantly for the coming of Christ. If wars, earthquakes, famines, and pestilence are precursors of that day, the worst and greatest of these in all the annals of history have befallen the world in the last dozen years. And the Lord did not tell us to wait until the signs had all come to pass before we look for him, but "when these things *begin to come to pass*, look up, and lift up your heads; for the time of your redemption draweth nigh." ([Luke 21:28.](#))

#### SUMMARY.

We have seen that the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ necessarily precedes that happy period of world-wide peace, righteousness, and blessing.

1. It was shown that this present age, ending at the coming of Christ, is an evil age throughout, in which Satan rules as the god and prince of this world (from which world Christians must keep themselves unspotted, walking in holy separation, avoiding all alliance with it); and that, throughout, the church, who is a stranger here and whose citizenship is in heaven, is persecuted, and has to suffer reproach and rejection with the Lord whom she represents. This condition will not be changed until Jesus comes. In fact, the last days just before his coming are not going to be the best, but the worst. Therefore, no millennium is possible until Jesus comes.

2. It was shown that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together until now, and that even God's people yet groan within themselves, waiting for their adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This condition, therefore, continues throughout the whole waiting time until our bodies are redeemed and the sons of God are revealed in glory--that is to say, until Christ comes again. ([Rom. 8:18-25](#).) If there were a [328] millennium before the coming of Christ, it would be a millennium filled with the groans of pain-stricken creation and the groanings of God's suffering people.

3. It was shown that the mystery of iniquity was already working in Paul's day, though under restraint, and that it would continue to work in this manner until the restraint should be taken away. Then that evil principle would come to a head and embody itself in the "man of sin," with whom the Lord will deal in person when he returns. This leaves no room for a millennium of peace and righteousness before Christ comes.

#### THE LORD'S IMMINENT COMING.

It was shown that no time was revealed, but that Christians were enjoined to watch for their Lord's coming always, and to be constantly in readiness; for relatively to us the Lord's coming is always "at hand," liable to occur, and, therefore, always to be looked for. The Christian life is to be lived in the light of Christ's coming. That constitutes the imminency of the Lord's return, according to the definition given of the word "imminency."

It was shown that the intimations of possible delay given in the New Testament were not such as to warrant any letting up in perpetual watchfulness and readiness.

I conclude, therefore, that the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ precedes the millennium, and that it is an event always to be expected; in other words, that "the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." [329]



## H. LEO BOLES' FIRST NEGATIVE.

Brother Boll attaches more importance to this proposition than he does to any of the previous propositions which we have discussed. I am not sure that it merits the importance which he gives to it. In his mind, the issues of this proposition express "the vital and practical center of the Bible's prophetic teaching." I do not know just how to measure the importance of any Bible truth. All truth comes from God. Neither do I know how to measure the unimportance of an error. All error is opposed to some truth. I do not believe that the premillennial theory is "the heart" of the Bible teaching in prophecy or in any other kind of Biblical literature.

The affirmative has a very difficult proposition. The two important words in the proposition, "premillennial" and "imminent," are not in the Bible; neither do these words have synonyms in the Bible. They do not express Bible ideas; hence, the two important words in the proposition do not express spiritual ideas, and it is to be seen later as to whether Brother Boll can employ them in such a way as to express Scriptural ideas. Again, the proposition presents another difficulty in that it imposes a twofold burden upon the affirmative. It is really a double proposition. If the affirmative should succeed in proving that the coming of Christ is premillennial, he would still have to prove that the coming of Christ is imminent; if he should succeed in proving that the coming of Christ is imminent, he would still have to prove that Christ's coming is premillennial. Not only is the proposition a double proposition, but the two parts of it are not closely related. The premillennial idea does not in any way depend upon the imminency of Christ's coming. The two terms are not interdependent in the proposition.

There is another difficulty which the affirmative must meet, and that is that Christ, neither before his death nor after his resurrection, ever said one word about the [330] millennium. No writer of the New Testament ever used the words "premillennial" and "imminent." The theory is based upon a false interpretation of one Scripture ([Rev. 20:1-10](#)), and this Scripture is highly figurative, symbolical, and allegorical. The theory of the millennium depends upon an interpretation of this Scripture. Brother Boll is forced back to his position of being an infallible interpreter of unfulfilled prophecy and interpreter of figures, symbols, and allegories, in order to get proof for the theory.

Brother Boll and I hold much in common. We both believe that Christ will come again; there is no dispute about this. We both believe that we are now living between the two visits of Christ to this world, his first advent and his second coming. We both believe that the Scriptures abundantly teach that Christ will come again. We believe this as firmly as we believe that he came the first time. I do not know of a gospel preacher who does not preach earnestly and hopefully the coming of our Lord. No Christian can eat the Lord's Supper intelligently without proclaiming "the Lord's death till he come." ([1 Cor. 11:26](#).) Every Christian entertains the fond hope that our Lord will return. So we both occupy common ground in regard to the coming of Christ. Furthermore, we occupy common ground in that neither of us knows when Christ will come. We both teach: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." ([Matt. 24:36](#); see also [Mark 13:32](#).) We do not believe in setting dates or attempting to calculate the time when Christ will come. I think that we both believe that no one knows, neither do the Scriptures teach, just when Christ will come.



So far we travel together; but when Brother Boll begins to say--and that, too, without Scriptural authority--that Christ's coming is premillennial, he goes "beyond that which is written." Let the reader bear in mind that [331] Brother Boll will not give a single Scripture which even remotely expresses the idea of his proposition. In discussing the proposition, "Christ is now on David's throne," and in denying that proposition, Brother Boll listed as one of his points that the affirmative had not quoted a single Scripture which said that "Christ is now on David's throne." If that were a point for him at that time, it is a point against him now. I ask the reader to follow him closely and see whether he finds a single Scripture which teaches that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent.

#### A THEORY.

The best that can be said about the millennium is that it is a theory, based upon a school of interpretations. Of course, the proponents of the theory claim that their interpretations are correct. The most zealous advocates of the theory do not claim any more for it than that it is a theory of interpretation; they do not claim that any direct Scripture teaches the millennium.

It is well in the very beginning of this discussion to get the main outline or chief points of the millennial theory before us so that the reader may understand just what Brother Boll is trying to do. The chief points as given by the proponents of the theory are as follows: That the kingdom of God is not yet in existence in its fullness and will not be until Christ comes; that the present dispensation of the gospel was not expected or intended to convert the world to Christianity; that the world is now growing worse and worse and will continue to do so until Christ comes; that his coming is always imminent, may happen at any moment; that the chief duty of every Christian is to "watch for it;" that first Christ will come and raise the righteous dead (the first resurrection) and transform the living saints; that he will catch them all up, both the dead and living saints, to meet him in the air--this they call "the rapture;" [332] that after "the rapture" there will be a period when God will pour out his judgments on the wicked--this they call "the tribulation;" that during this time Christ and his saints are supposed to be up in the air hovering over the earth, and at the end of "the tribulation" he and they will return to the earth--this return is called "the revelation;" that Christ will then bind Satan and cast him into the abyss and overthrow wickedness on the earth, set up his kingdom with Jerusalem as its capital, the Jews will be gathered back into Palestine (Brother Boll has them converted before they are gathered back to Palestine); that the ancient sacrifices will be restored in Jerusalem, and Christ, together with the resurrected saints, will rule for a thousand years over a world-wide kingdom of holiness--this rule of Christ's with his resurrected saints they call the "millennium;" that after the millennium there will be a violent outbreak of wickedness, and then the wicked dead shall be raised ("the second resurrection") and be judged; that this will be the end of the world. Now, I do not wish to saddle any theory on Brother Boll. I gather from his writings that he believes very much of the above-described theory. He has modified some points, but he can disavow any points that he does not believe and the reader will know what he does believe.

#### THE MILLENNIUM.

Brother Boll's proposition calls for him to prove that the coming of Christ is premillennial--that is, he is affirming that the Scriptures teach that Christ will come before the millennium.

Now, I deny that the Scriptures teach a millennium as interpreted by this theory. Brother Boll has *assumed* that the Bible teaches that there will be a millennium, and that it is in the future. He admits that he has made this assumption, for he says: "If I am assuming too much and my respondent is not prepared to admit this as common ground, I will gladly offer proof for these two points in my next article. Meanwhile I [333] shall proceed upon the assumption that it is agreed between us that there will be a millennium." And so he did proceed upon that "assumption." All of his article and all of his arguments are based upon this "assumption" and are worthless, so far as proving his proposition is concerned. We cannot let him "proceed upon" such an "assumption." I regret that he has now spent one-third of his time on this proposition and has occupied one-third of his space for this proposition upon the basis of a mere "assumption." If this proposition is so important as he declares it to be; if it is "the vital and practical center of the Bible's prophetic teaching;" if it is "the heart of the matter," then he ought to prove it and not merely *assume* it. He should not have "assumed" anything. Let the reader remember that he "proceeded upon the assumption" that there is to be a millennium, and based all that he said upon this huge "assumption."

Just here we now call upon him to prove that the Scriptures teach that there will be such a thing or time as this theory calls a "millennium." It should be remembered that if he cannot prove that the Scriptures teach a millennium, he cannot prove his proposition; for his proposition says that the coming of Christ is premillennial, or that Christ will come before the millennium. We want to know a little more about the millennium. Will the millennium be literally just one thousand years as we count time? What will be the order of the millennium? What laws will govern it? What will become of the wicked during the millennium? Will there be any sin during the millennium? Will there be any forgiveness of sins during the millennium? Will there be any sickness during the millennium? Will there be any pain or grief during the millennium? Will there be any death during the millennium? What will become of the wicked just as the millennium commences? Brother Boll should give us some information on this millennium.

The millennium is one thing and the coming of Christ [334] is another. Brother Boll confuses these two points in his article. The coming of Christ, even according to the theory, is not the millennium; neither is the millennium the coming of Christ. The affirmative is to prove that the coming of Christ is *before* the millennium. May we ask him how long *before* the millennium will Christ come? Will the millennium begin the moment Christ comes? How much time will intervene between the coming of Christ and the millennium? Christ taught that the Son and even the angels did not know when his coming would be. ([Matt. 24:36](#); [Mark 13:32](#).) If the Son did not know when he would come, then he did not teach that it would be premillennial. If he did not know when he would come again, and if he did not teach a millennium, then he could not teach that his coming is premillennial. If he did not teach that his coming would be premillennial, then all the Scriptures and parables which Brother Boll has used have been misapplied and erroneously interpreted. If the millennium begins just when Christ comes, as Brother Boll seems to teach, and if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any time--then the millennium is as imminent, or liable to come at any moment. Why not affirm that the millennium is imminent? Will Brother Boll answer this?

#### BROTHER BOLL'S ARGUMENTS.

Brother Boll has made three arguments on the "premillennial" phase of his proposition. His first argument is based upon what he calls "the character and course of the present age." This argument emphasizes one of the chief points of the theory, which is "that the world is now growing worse and worse and will continue to do so until Christ comes." It is, like the entire article, based upon an "assumption." He has not proved that the world is growing worse and worse and that it will continue to do so until Christ comes. The negative demands the proof of this before the affirmative can use it in [335] support of his proposition. It is true, because the Bible so teaches, that "evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." ([2 Tim. 3:13.](#)) But the Bible as clearly teaches that good men are getting better and better; that the Lord's people who are faithful to him are growing more and more into the likeness of Christ; and "that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose." ([Rom. 8:28.](#)) Here Paul teaches that "all things" "work together"--that is, tend toward the ultimate good of the Lord's people. "All things work together for good"--not merely seeming good, but real good, good in view of eternity. Brother Boll and I, with all of our patient readers, if faithful to the Lord, are growing better and better; and as the Lord's people grow better, conditions in the world are better.

This argument based on the assumption that the world in toto is growing worse and worse discredits the kingdom of God on earth. The Scriptures abundantly teach, and Brother Boll has admitted it, that the church is the kingdom of God on earth; so this theory makes the church an absolute and monumental failure on the earth. The theory teaches that in spite of the church, over which Christ is the head, the kingdom of God on earth, over which Christ rules as King, is a miserable failure; that the world is no better because of the church and its work, but that the world is growing worse and worse and will continue to do so until Christ comes. All the Scriptures which he used in support of this point are misinterpreted and misapplied. If he has not misinterpreted and misapplied these Scriptures, then we must say that the Scriptures teach that the church is an absolute failure on earth.

This theory also discredits the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came to earth and took up his abode in the church. The work of the Holy Spirit in the world [336] to-day, with all of his righteous agencies, is an absolute failure, if it be true that the world as a whole is growing worse and worse.

Again, this theory belittles the gospel as God's power to save and redeem the human family. It is an absolute failure, if this theory is true. God's highest conception of human society is to be realized in the perfection of the church on the principles of the gospel of Christ. I here call on Brother Boll to name one condition or characteristic of the millennium that the gospel, the Holy Spirit, and the church cannot bring about. The agencies of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, and the Bible, which are now at work, will bring about every condition and characteristic which is claimed by the most zealous admirers and proponents of the millennial theory. Will Brother Boll attempt to mention a single one that these God-appointed agencies will not bring about if accepted now?

This argument based on an assumption, if true, makes the first advent of Christ a failure. He came to earth to seek and save the lost; he gave the principles of redemption in the gospel, and shed his blood and gave his life to save man; but if the world is growing worse and worse with

all these means of grace and salvation, then the mission of Christ is a failure. Christ revealed the will of the Father to man, and we have that will in the Bible. There are more Bibles printed and sold than any other book in the world; it is translated into every language and dialect; it is read and studied as no other book; there are more consecrated minds devoted to teaching the Bible than any other book in the world. If the world is growing worse and worse in spite of all these agencies at work, then the Bible is a colossal failure.

Brother Boll's second argument is also based upon an assumption, an admitted assumption. Not only does he assume that the world is growing worse and worse and will continue to do so until Christ comes, but he also [337] *assumes* that the only hope of stopping this demolition is the coming of Christ. He says concerning this that "the only hope and prospect of a change from these distressful circumstances is connected with the coming of the Lord." The Scriptures cited by him do not prove his contention. I accept every Scripture quoted by him, but I do not accept his misapplication and misinterpretation of them. This assumption, like the other one, discredits all the agencies of truth and righteousness in the world and makes the church, the Holy Spirit, the gospel, and the Bible failures. It holds out a misconception of the purpose of the coming of Christ. The coming of Christ is not taught in the Scriptures as that which was intended to stop the evil tendency of the world as pictured by Brother Boll.

The third argument of the affirmative is based on the misconception of the work of Christ and the church. His argument is that the purpose of Christianity is merely to hold in restraint the evil of the world until Christ comes. The true purpose of Christianity is the redemption of the human family, and not merely that of restraining evil. Christ came to earth, lived among men, died for all, and gave the plan of salvation for all. ([1 Tim. 1:15](#).) He "went about doing good." ([Acts 10:38](#).) All who follow him must, as he, go about doing good; they must bless the world. God promised Abraham that in his seed "shall all the families of the earth be blessed." ([Gen. 12:3](#).) Hence, the purpose of Christ was to do good and bless the world and save man. Christ did not merely live a negative life; he did not live here upon earth merely doing no evil or holding evil in check; "he went about doing good." He lived a positive and aggressive life; he instituted a warfare against evil--a warfare which was taken up by the church and is to be waged under the guidance of the Holy Spirit according to the principles of Christianity until evil is destroyed. Christianity can make no compromise with evil; it is a [338] fight, a bitter fight, unto the end. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" ([Rom. 12:21](#)), is the instruction which every child of God has received. It is not the instruction merely to restrain evil and recede from it, but to "overcome evil with good." So all three of the arguments which Brother Boll has made are admittedly based upon one huge assumption, and the arguments themselves are mere assumptions. So far he has not proved that the coming of Christ is premillennial.

#### THE COMING OF CHRIST IMMINENT.

The second part of his proposition includes "the Lord's imminent coming." Be it remembered that this term "imminent" is not in the Bible, and therefore the idea expressed by it is not a Bible idea. Brother Boll has defined this term of his proposition to mean "always liable to occur" "it may happen at any time." He did not quote in full the definition given by the New Standard Dictionary. It defines the word as meaning "threatening to happen at once, as some calamity; dangerous and close at hand; impending; as, imminent peril." His proposition then teaches that

the coming of Christ as taught by the Scriptures is "liable to occur at once," or "it may happen at any time." His proposition says, according to his own interpretation of it, that the Scriptures teach that Christ is liable to come at any moment.

*Now, if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then everything the Bible teaches that must occur before Christ comes is also imminent, or liable to occur at any moment.* In discussing our first proposition, Brother Boll argued that the Jews were to be converted to Christ first and then as a righteous nation restored to Palestine; and when they were restored to Palestine, then Christ would come and sit upon David's throne and rule over them with his saints. According to his position, the Jews must first be converted to Christ before Christ comes; and if the [339] coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then the conversion of the Jews nationally is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. Brother Boll can never escape the force of this argument; it falls with crushing weight upon him and his position. His position makes him teach that the national conversion of the Jews is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any time. But since the Jews must be converted to Christ nationally before Christ comes, and since there is no prospect of the Jews' being momentarily converted to Christ, then, according to Brother Boll's meaning of "imminent," the coming of Christ is not imminent.

Peter teaches in [Acts 3:19-21](#) that the heavens must retain Christ "until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old." That is, after Christ ascended to the Father, he must remain there until all things which had been spoken by the prophets concerning him should be fulfilled. Brother Boll admits that there are some unfulfilled prophecies even concerning Christ. Then Christ will not come until those things be fulfilled; heaven must retain him, or he must remain in heaven, until these things are fulfilled. Again we conclude, since all the prophecies have not been fulfilled concerning him, that his coming is not imminent as Brother Boll interprets it. The Scriptures teach that Jerusalem was to be destroyed. ([Matt. 25](#).) Jerusalem was not destroyed until A. D. 70. A period of time of about forty-seven years elapsed from the establishment of the church until Jerusalem was destroyed--that is, the church was about forty-seven years old when Jerusalem was destroyed. During this time a great portion of the New Testament Scriptures was written. If the New Testament Scriptures which were written at this time taught that the coming of Christ was "imminent"--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then the Scriptures taught that Christ was liable to come before that prophecy was [340] fulfilled. But the Scriptures taught the same during that period that they teach now; and if they did not teach that Christ was liable to come at any moment before the destruction of Jerusalem, then they did not teach the "imminency" of the coming of Christ. And so Brother Boll has failed to prove this point.

Again, the Savior, in the commission, taught his disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." ([Mark 16:15](#).) They were to go and "make disciples of all the nations." They had the promise that while going into all the world and preaching the gospel to the whole creation Christ would be with them "always, even unto the end of the world." ([Matt. 28:19, 20](#).) Jesus knew that it would take some time, considerable time, for them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He knew that they could not go into all the world in a moment, neither could they preach the gospel to the whole creation in a moment. Therefore, in giving the commission, Jesus understood that it would require much time.

He commanded them to go and do this. Now, if his coming were imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then he gave a command to his apostles that was liable to be null and void at any moment. We do not believe this, and, therefore, we do not believe that the coming of Christ is imminent as interpreted by Brother Boll.

Again, Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, says: "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." ([1 Cor.13:10.](#)) There was an imperfect condition, not only in the church at Corinth, but in Christianity in general. We need not stop here to inquire what is meant by "that which is perfect is come." It is enough for us to know that it had not come, but that it would come in the future; that it would take some time for "that which is perfect" to come. Now, it was several years after Christ ascended to the Father before the Holy Spirit gave this instruction. Nearly all the [341] Scriptures used by Brother Boll were written during this time, and they did not teach then that the coming of Christ was imminent; and since they teach now just what they taught then, they do not teach now that the coming of Christ is imminent.

Again, Paul taught while he was in prison at Rome, very near the close of his life, that apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were given to the church "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." ([Eph. 4:11-13.](#)) The imperfect condition of the church and the imperfect revelation of God's will preclude the possibility of Christ's coming until the perfection should be attained. Again, these Scriptures and conditions preclude the argument which Brother Boll makes on the coming of Christ being imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment.

Again, Paul teaches in [2 Thess. 2:1-12](#) some precursors to the coming of Christ. The Lord's coming was to be preceded by two manifest signs. They were not to know by these when the day was to be, but they were to know that it *was not yet to be* until these two things occurred. The first of these was "the great apostasy;" the second was the fully developed and public advent of the "man of sin." Now, we need not stop here for the present discussion to inquire what these mean. We are to learn that the day of the Lord is not "just at hand," nor will it be until these occur; "for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed." This Scripture flatly contradicts Brother Boll's definition of "imminency." Paul says that it will not be till a certain thing (it does not matter what that is) happens. So the coming of the Lord could not be imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--until after these things occurred. Neither does it matter to us whether these things have already occurred or whether they are still in the [342] future. The Scriptures teach now just what they taught then; and since they did not teach the imminency of the coming of Christ then, they do not teach it now. The Scriptures must teach *now* just what they taught *then* when they were written.

#### REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS.

The Scriptures teach that the judgment is to take place at the coming of Christ. (See [Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 14:9-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1.](#)) People are to be judged by the gospel. ([Rom. 2:16.](#)) All are to be judged at the same time. ([Matt. 25:31-46; Rev.](#)



[20:11-15](#).) There is no room for the millennium to come between the coming of Christ and the judgment.

The gospel is God's power unto salvation. The church is the institution which God has ordained for the conversion and redemption of the human family. The church will complete its work before Christ comes. There can be no conversion of the nations after Christ comes, and we need not look for any conversion before he comes, except by the gospel, and that through the church. The coming of Christ is the finality with the judgment of saint and sinner. (See [2 Thess. 1:7-10](#); [Eph. 5:25-27](#); [1 Thess. 3:13](#); [Jude 24](#).)

When Christ comes again, his mediation between God and man will cease, and his second coming will fulfill the object of the Scriptures, when he shall reward the saints and condemn to punishment the wicked. If the nations are to be brought into subjection to Christ after his second coming, then the word of God and the means of grace which are now used will be discarded as failures; the New Testament will be of no further use. Christ said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." ([Matt. 24:35](#).) If Brother Boll's theory is true, then the word of God must pass away. All who are saved must be saved in this present [343] dispensation. There is no such thing as a second chance. There can be no more salvation after Christ comes.

The intercession of Christ and of the Holy Spirit will cease at the coming of Christ. If people are saved after the coming of Christ, they must be saved without the work of the Holy Spirit. The theory of Brother Boll teaches that people will be saved after the coming of Christ. The Scriptures do not so teach.

The church is now the kingdom of God upon the earth, and Christ is now the Head of the church and the King of the kingdom. When he comes the second time, he is to deliver up the kingdom to the Father. ([1 Cor. 15:24-28](#).) He is not to set up another kingdom, neither is he to lay down new terms of redemption for man. After the judgment and the righteous are rewarded and the wicked condemned, the finality of the work of the Son of God shall have been concluded.

If people are saved after the second advent of Christ, there must be new means of salvation, a new gospel, and a resurrection. But the Scriptures nowhere teach these things, and again we conclude that the theory which is taught by the premillennialists is not true. [344]



## Chapter XV.

### R. H. BOLL'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE.

I am somewhat perplexed how to deal with my brother's first negative; for if it is the negative's duty to follow the affirmative and to take up the arguments and Scripture proofs presented and to reply to them, he certainly has failed of that duty. I do not think he undertook to examine and reply to hardly so much as one passage of Scripture out of all the number I presented in proof of the proposition. Instead, he dismisses them all, in *a priori* fashion, with a few disparaging remarks, and goes on to raise issues of his own, make arguments of his own, and fails almost wholly to give attention to the affirmative's argument. It devolves now on to me to show the reader that the negative has not fairly met the issue, but has evaded and beclouded it, however unintentionally that may have been done. I trust that in his next two articles he will come up more squarely.

It seems that, throughout, my respondent, instead of meeting the Scriptures and arguments I present, is combating some sort of "premillennial theory." Thus, in his first paragraph he says, "I do not believe that the premillennial theory is the 'heart' of the Bible teaching in prophecy;" and the last words of his article are, 'the theory which is taught by the premillennialists is not true.' Now, if in my affirmative argument I had advanced or advocated or defended one of the several "premillennialist theories," the negative would do well to fight that. But I not only did not present any theory to him, but I specifically disavowed all complicity with human theories and made my whole fight on Scripture alone. Why does my respondent prefer to turn from the duty of examining and replying to the Scriptures I presented to assail something I never introduced, but specifically repudiated? It must be much easier to combat a "theory" [345] than to meet a Scripture. I am not sponsoring theories here; with God's word alone I propose to stand or fall. My brother still would like, it seems, to line me up with some strange doctrine and prove me to be an exponent of some peculiar "theory." In the last negative of the proposition preceding this I quoted from my book, "The Kingdom of God," in disavowal of theories, "my own included in so far as I may have any." In *Word and Work*, 1918, page 372, I wrote as follows:

I would explain here that I defend premillennialism, not in the sense of a sectarian, denominational, or interdenominational creed or movement, but purely in the simple sense of the word. A man is a "premillennialist" simply because he believes that according to God's word Christ returns before the millennium, just as an "immersionist" is one who believes that according to Scripture baptism is immersion. If a Christian says he is a premillennialist, he means just this, and nothing more, and not that he has subscribed to any man's or set of men's position and creed, or is the representative of some human theory. He cannot, therefore, be charged with the follies and extravagances taught by some who hold the premillennial position. A simple Christian indorses and accepts nothing on this or any other subject, except that which he finds in God's word.

Again, in *Word and Work*, Volume 1916, page 548, I said:

If ever a sect of premillennialists should spring up, or a system of doctrine called "premillennialism," I should feel obliged to disavow all connection and complicity with it--just as I would disavow belonging to the "immersionist" sect, or would subscribe to a system of doctrine dubbed "immersionism." I am no premillennialist in a sectarian sense, nor do I hold by any system of doctrine (if there be any such) known as "premillennialism." We beg the privilege of being simply Christians, with freedom to search and see, to believe and speak whatsoever God has spoken.

Really I'm striving to be only a simple Christian who goes to God's word for his faith and stands for nothing else. Will my brother believe me? All his battle with [346] those "theories" is not against me, but is a fight against straw men.

And I would like to remind him to clear me of the charge he inadvertently made in his article before the last, that I contend "in the main" for all such points as "that the temple worship is to be restored, the Aaronic priesthood resumed, animal sacrifices to be offered; in fact, the theory demands a restoration of the entire ritual of the law of Moses." I requested him once before to clear me of this charge or else to substantiate it.

As to my statement that this present proposition is the most important thus far, my respondent says he cannot see that; and he does not know how to measure the relative importance of a truth, or the relative unimportance of an error, he says. Yet he is bound to know that some things are of relatively more importance than others. Justice, mercy, and faith, for instance, are weightier matters than tithings of mint, anise, and cumin. A camel is bigger than a gnat. One commandment was greater than all, and a second was like unto it. Things have intrinsic and also relative values. The New Testament is more important than the Old, though we are very far from thinking the Old unimportant. Love is greater than faith or hope, though faith *must* be that love *may* be. Now, our first proposition was important, but does not touch *us* quite so closely; nor the second, nor the third, nor the fourth. But for us all the questions of prophecy focus in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the attitude a man takes toward that will profoundly affect his life. It makes some difference whether or not a man sees reason to look constantly for the return of the Lord, and to watch and be ready for the same. If the coming of Christ is taught to be postmillennial, I shall certainly not be looking for him--it would be a psychological impossibility; but if no millennium is to come first, and if I am to expect Christ every day, it is a highly practical matter to me, as the many Scriptures I quoted show. [347] That is why this question gets nearer to the heart of things than the preceding four. I told Brother Boles in our preliminary correspondence that if the first four propositions were waived and conceded, it would not essentially affect this fifth and most important one.

Brother Boles' statement that he does not know "how to measure the unimportance of an error" is rather a dangerous utterance. If that were correct, no difference among brethren could be tolerated. Every disagreement necessarily involves an error somewhere; and if one error may be as important as another, every disagreement on any point, however small, if we could not measure the importance of it, would necessitate a division. The ultimate effect of that would be to put every man in a church to himself.

"PREMILLENNIAL" AND "IMMINENT."

My respondent says that the words "premillennial" and "imminent" are not in the Bible, nor their synonyms, and concludes, therefore, that they do not stand for Bible ideas.

That sort of reasoning could be properly used in the case of some unbiblical substantive noun. These, however, are predicate adjectives *describing a Bible subject--viz.*, the coming of our Lord. Though they be not used in the Bible, yet the facts they describe may well be there. For example, if I should say, "The Old and the New Testaments are mutually supplementary and explanatory," it could not be required that the two predicate adjectives, "supplementary" and "explanatory," should be found in the Scriptures, but we ask only whether they describe the facts in the case. When we say, "The coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent," the question is not so much whether these two adjectives are found in the Scriptures, but whether they describe facts. So when I show that no millennium can intervene before the Lord comes, and that God wants us to live in continual expectancy of Christ's return, I have shown that the coming [348] of the Lord is premillennial and imminent. And this I have done. But to satisfy my brother still further, let me point out that both these ideas *are* in the Bible.

1. "*Premillennial.*" That means "preceding the millennium." "Millennium" means "a thousand years," exactly as "century" means "a hundred years" and "a decade" is "ten years." None of these terms, "millennium," "century," "decade," are found in our English Bible, but terms of ten, a hundred, a thousand years are spoken of. If the Bible speaks of a thousand years, it there speaks of a millennium. A special period of a thousand years is mentioned six times in [Rev. 20:1-7](#). This is "the millennium." *Everything preceding that period is necessarily "premillennial," and everything subsequent to it is "postmillennial."* The synonym and the idea are both, therefore, in the Bible.

2. "*Imminent.*" A thing is imminent when, so far as we know, it may occur at any time. The coming of Christ is imminent, because it is *certain*; but *the time is unknown*, and we are charged to watch and pray *always*, and *to be ready*, for we know not when our Lord cometh. So the idea of the word "imminent," as we have accepted and used it, is there also.

But my respondent sees still more difficulty. He says that "Christ neither before his death nor after his resurrection ever said one word about the 'millennium.'" Does he (like the pedobaptist who says the word "immersion" is not in the Bible) mean that the term "millennium" is not used? "Millennium" is the simple Latin for *a thousand years*. Therefore, "millennium" is mentioned six times in [Rev. 20:1-7](#). I want to know whether Brother Boles means to say that the words found in [Rev. 20:1-7](#) are not Christ's? Did John speak by the Holy Spirit? Did the Holy Spirit impart Christ's words to John? The New Testament says the apostles spoke by the Spirit, and that the Spirit gave them the words of Christ. ([John 16:13, 14](#)). In Revelation especially the [349] whole message, including [Rev. 20:1-7](#), where the millennium is mentioned six times, is ascribed to Christ personally. ([Rev. 1:1, 2; 22:16.](#)) So Brother Boles cannot say that Christ never spoke of a millennium.

The negative grows bolder. He goes on to deny that there will ever be such a thing as the millennium, such as I spoke of in my first. He thinks it is a "theory," and that it depends on a "false interpretation" of one Scripture, and "this Scripture is highly figurative, symbolical, and allegorical," and "Brother Boll is forced back to his position of being an infallible interpreter of

unfulfilled prophecy," etc. But in saying this he certainly takes a position contrary to that held by the brotherhood generally, from Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, Moses E. Lard, down to Dr. Brents, David Lipscomb, J. A. Harding, and Daniel Sommer. I think the majority of the brethren (as, indeed, the majority of Protestant Christendom) have always believed in a millennium, a period of bliss and triumph, in the near future. My respondent is mistaken when he says the millennium "is a theory based upon a school of interpretations." The millennium is not a theory. There may be theories *about* the millennium, but the millennium is a *Bible theme*. Does Brother Boles believe that there will never be a time when the curse that rests on the earth will be lifted? When thorns and thistles shall be no more? When creation now groaning and travailing in pain shall be delivered from her bondage? Does he not believe that there will be a time of the restoration of all things of which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old? Will there be a time when Satan shall be bound and imprisoned that he may not deceive the nations? A time when the lion shall lie down with the lamb and a little child shall lead them, and the nations shall learn war no more, and there shall be an abundance of peace; when the meek shall inherit the earth, and the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea? Well, that is [350] the time we call the "millennium," let it come whenever and however it may. This deathless hope burned in the heart of the church during the first centuries of her primitive existence, and has always been general among those who loved Christ's appearing and believed in his word. It will take more than a little modern theological spiritualizing of God's oracles to stamp this expectation out of believing hearts. I might quote here the testimony of the very earliest Christian writers and of Gibbon, the famous historian of Rome's decline and fall, as to the prevalence of this doctrine from the earliest days. Among the pioneers and leaders in the Restoration Movement, Campbell, Scott, Lard, W. K. Pendleton, Barclay, Milligan, and others, the doctrine of the millennium was freely and earnestly discussed and taught, and, so far from condemning one another for such teaching, they seemed to regard it as an important item of the divine revelation, to be diligently considered, studied, taught, and believed. Thus, for example, one who signed himself "A Friend of the Truth," asked Alexander Campbell:

Does not the popular doctrine of the spiritual millennial reign involve or comprise a denial of Christ's personal reign, as taught in the Scriptures, or that he no longer exists personally as the Son of man? And is not this a denial of an important part of the faith in Christ, which we are required to exercise in connection with repentance and baptism, in order to obtain salvation? Is not his future literal and personal reign, as the Son of man, so important an office resulting from his obedience here on earth as that a denial of it amounts to a serious apostasy from the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and him crucified?

In the course of his reply to this, Alexander Campbell said:

The subject of the millennium is one of growing importance and of thrilling interest to the Christian community. We have had it often before our minds, and are glad to see that it is eliciting more attention than formerly, both in our own country and in the Old World.

As preparatory to these questions, there are certain [351] preliminary matters, which seem to command the attention of the student of prophecy. Such as:

1. The restoration of Israel to their own land.
2. The rise and fall of Babylon the great.
3. The one thousand two hundred and sixty days.
4. The coming of the Lord.
5. The first resurrection.
6. The thousand-years' reign of the saints.
7. The descent of the New Jerusalem.
8. The scenes following.

These are to be our themes, the Lord willing, so soon as our readers are increased to ten thousand. We have had this subject often before our mind, and more recently has it become more engrossing. We design to give to this great theme much attention, and to spare no pains to assist our readers in the investigation of the prophetic oracles; for the time has come "when many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." We are evidently approaching a new crisis in the ecclesiastic and political affairs of the world. . . . We shall be preparing our materials and placing things in order for such a development as the progress of the age and our means and facilities may furnish. . . . It will unquestionably soon be, if it is not already, one of the most engrossing topics of our generation. (Millennial Harbinger, 1854, page 354.)

So far as being in splendid good company goes, I do not need to feel bad at all in the belief in the millennium. Take this, for example, from the pen of Moses E. Lard:

The time has now come to speak of the millennium proper, and first as to the meaning of the word. The term, as many of our readers well know, is derived from the Latin, *mille*, a thousand, and *annus*, a year. It hence means a thousand years. And although it is not found in the New Testament, yet the expression "a thousand years" is, and this expression and the term "millennium" are used to denote the same thing. These thousand years, however, are not a thousand ordinary years, but a thousand glorious years, to which Christians, from the earliest ages of the church, have been looking forward with the deepest solicitude. These thousand years of sinless and painless bliss constitute the millennium. Such is the meaning of the term, and such is the period it denotes. [352]

The millennium will commence in the precise instant in which Satan is bound and locked up in prison. . . . Of the events which are further to characterize its commencement we shall now speak more particularly.

1. All the living saints will be changed. . . .
2. The sleeping saints will be raised. . . .

3. The actual personal, literal reappearance of the Savior. We confidently expect this event to take place in the commencement moment of the millennium. That Christ is to revisit the earth one day, as literally as he left it, is what we think no Bible student can deny, without in the act avowing a principle which, if sound, at once extinguishes the truth of Christianity. . . . I hence conclude that Christ will literally come in person at the commencement of the millennium, and literally remain here on earth during the entire thousand years. (Lard's Quarterly, October, 1864.)

Such brethren as David Lipscomb, Dr. Brents, James A. Harding, have also left testimony of their faith regarding this theme. Daniel Sommer teaches strongly and boldly in the same line.

#### MY ASSUMPTION.

It was not strange, therefore, that I assumed that Brother Boles believed in a future millennium; and I did not surmise that he would take a freak position, denying the whole thing as referred to in the first affirmative. When we arranged our propositions for this debate, I took pains to explain to him my position on all points where I thought he might not understand. I might have expected a similar kindness of him; for, of course, if I had known that he repudiated the millennium, as commonly conceived, altogether, I would not have wasted time discussing whether the coming of Christ is premillennial. If there is no millennium, it would be folly to talk about anything being premillennial or postmillennial. But he failed to inform me beforehand of this peculiar position. And because I said I assumed *that he and I held common ground* on the fact and futurity of the millennium, he tries to make it appear that my whole article is based on [353] an *assumption*, that I assumed *everything*; and on that "assumption" he harps throughout. But it would be too easy and convenient to dispose of the first affirmative argument in such overhanded fashion. I did, indeed, say:

I have no doubt that my respondent believes that there is to be such an era, regardless of how it may be brought about, or when; and from some expressions during the debate I judge that he believes that this age or period is yet in the future. I shall assume, therefore, that there will be such an era of universal blessedness, and that it is yet in the future.

But this assumption did not at all affect my *argument*. It only left a possible room to supply the evidence on this point, in case my respondent demanded. Moreover, *I offered to do this*, if necessary, in my next article. So evidently I did not make my argument *dependent* on that. Nay, I actually did incidentally furnish enough proof and Scripture testimony in my first article to establish that point. And my respondent is utterly unable to point out even one single argument that rests upon an assumption in the entire article. I challenge him to show even one point that rests upon any sort of assumption.

Yet, when I say that the "coming of Christ is premillennial," it is not so much my purpose and interest to argue for the millennium (though, of course, I stand for that, too), but, rather, my point is that, according to Scripture, *no millennium can intervene before Christ comes*; that the coming of Christ is not to be delayed by the period of a thousand years, but that we must be looking for him now and always. If the Bible teaches that the millennium must first come and run its course, the coming of Christ is thereby projected into the far-away future, which would destroy its meaning as a present hope and as a motive to continual watchfulness. When, therefore, I maintain that the coming of Christ is premillennial, my point is not to prove that there will be a millennium (though I do show that incidentally), still [354] less to launch forth into explanations of details concerning the millennium, but to show that no millennium can come in before Christ's coming for us. In denying the millennium my respondent has relieved me of further concern on this point; for if there is no millennium, then no millennium can intervene before Christ comes. And that is as far as my interest goes just here.

## "THREE ARGUMENTS."

On the "premillennial" phase of the proposition, says my respondent, "Brother Boll has made three arguments. His first argument is based upon what he calls the character and course of the present age."

Now, instead of examining the Scripture proofs I presented, candidly and carefully, he forthwith takes up "one of the chief points of the theory"--of some theory I never presented to him nor avowed as mine, and a "point" in the theory which I did not make--namely, "that the world is now growing worse and worse and will continue to do so until Christ comes." "It is, like the entire article, based upon "an assumption," he adds. Then he proceeds to fight that "theory" and the statement I did not make; but of the Scriptures I advanced which show the Christian's position in a hostile world, and the character of the world and of the entire age, he does not deign to notice even one. He brings up on his own hook [2 Tim. 3:13](#) and [Rom. 8:28](#), which have nothing to do with my argument, and makes a number of philosophical arguments, to prove that the world cannot be getting worse: (1) that if it were it would discredit the kingdom of God on earth; (2) it would discredit the work of the Holy Spirit; (3) it would belittle the gospel; (4) it would make the first advent of Christ a failure. It is easier to punch a bag than to meet an opponent. So long as he ignores my arguments and Scripture proofs, I have no obligation to follow him or to refute his human arguments. [355]

For the benefit of all, I cite again some of the Scripture proofs I gave. This present age (according to Thayer's Lexicon, *ho aion houtos*, "the time before the appointed return or truly Messianic advent of Christ," "the period of instability, weakness, impiety, wickedness, calamity, misery. . . . Hence, the things of 'this age' are mentioned in the New Testament with censure"), I said, is under the rule of Satan. (As Thayer again says, "*ho theos tou ai toutou*, the devil who rules the thoughts and deeds of the men of this age."[2 Cor. 4:4](#).) He is "the god of this age." [1 John 5:19](#), the whole world lies in his bosom. His throne is on earth. ([Rev. 2:13](#).) He is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. ([Eph. 2:2](#).) It is "this present evil world [age]" ([Gal. 1:4](#)), and Christians must not love it ([2 Tim. 4:10](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#)), nor imitate it ([Rom. 12:2](#)), nor make friendship with it ([James 4:4](#)), but keep themselves unspotted from it ([James 1:27](#)). Christ's servants administrate their Lord's goods now in the midst of hostile environment, while waiting for their Lord's return. ([Luke 19:12-14](#).) The whole creation groaneth, and the people of God also, during this age, waiting only for the coming of Christ, when our bodies will be redeemed and all creation will be released from her bondage. ([Rom. 8:18-23](#).) No relief promised till Jesus comes. ([James 5:7](#); [Phil. 3:19-21](#).) Instead of the last times being the best, they are, in regard to religion, the worst. ([1 Tim. 4:1](#); [2 Tim. 3:1-5](#); [4:3, 4](#); [Luke 18:8](#).) When Jesus comes, it will be as it was in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, and great and small will cry for the mountains to fall on them and the hills to cover them. ([Luke 17:26-30](#); [Rev. 6:15-17](#).) These Scriptures show abundantly the evil character of the age up till Christ's coming, and that no happy millennium can intervene before them.

What did my respondent do with this teaching of God's word? He did nothing but to disparage it on general [356] principles. He said in effect that all these Scriptures must have been misapplied and misinterpreted, since they clashed so badly with his ideas of how things ought to be. Here are his words:



All the Scriptures which he used in support of this point are misinterpreted and misapplied. If he has not misinterpreted and misapplied these Scriptures, then we must say that the Scriptures teach that the church is an absolute failure on earth.

Now talk about theories! Who is more theory-ridden than the man who first decides how things ought to be, and then refuses *a priori* to accept any Scripture testimony that clashes with his conception? Why does my respondent not take up those Scriptures and *show*, if he can, that they are misinterpreted and misapplied? He grandly waives the word of God aside and refuses even to consider anything that does not harmonize with his own preconceived notions.

The church, indeed, is not going to be a failure, any more than her Lord was a failure, although he was displeased and rejected of men and died on the cross forsaken of all. The church is even as he was, in the world. We go out with him without the gate bearing his reproach. Brother Boles is making the same mistake regarding the church that Christ's contemporaries made concerning *him*. They thought he would and ought to make some great demonstration and earthly show. Brother Boles thinks the church must sweep and swamp the world before Christ comes. The Scriptures teach the very opposite, and we do not well to try to torture the Scriptures into agreement with our preconceived ideas. In my judgment, one ounce of Scripture is worth ten tons of such grave "reasons" as my respondent offers to the contrary.

My "second argument," he says, is "also based upon an assumption." But there is no "also" to it until he examines those Scriptures and shows that there has been [357] any "assumption." "The Scriptures cited by him do not prove his contention," says Brother Boles. Well, why does he not show that? "I accept every Scripture quoted by him," he adds. But he will not accept them *at what they say*, and that is the same as not accepting them. "I do not accept his misapplication and misinterpretations of them." Before all such high talk it would behoove my respondent to show where and how there has been any "misapplication and misinterpretation." The simple fact seems to be that he cannot face these Scriptures, and that his position is judged and condemned by them.

The "third argument" which he says I made I did not make at all. He probably got it out of some "premillennial theory" somewhere, or out of some book written against "premillennialism."

#### REGARDING THE IMMINENT COMING.

Again, on this subject of the imminence of Christ's return, he does not dare to meet the Scriptures presented, although both candor and his duty on the negative require him to do so. I yet hope he will reply to these Scriptures and show how or where they were misinterpreted or misapplied. I want him to do it in his next article, and not in his final negative. I want a chance to review his objections, and I have no come-back to the final negative.

In my first affirmative I set forth the imminency of Christ's coming by means of the Scripture statements themselves, saying that the Scriptures did it better than words of mine could do it. Here are some passages I used: [Matt. 24:42-44, 48-51; 25:1-13, 19; Mark 13:33-37; 1 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 3:20; 4:5; James 5:8, 9; 1 Thess. 1:9; 4:13-18](#). Will my respondent please take them up and show reason why they should not be accepted just as they stand? Until he does that, why should I

trouble about his reasoned counter arguments, however [358] "crushing" he may fancy them to be? Because *he* cannot *see* how the coming of Christ can be imminent while at the same time certain prophecies await fulfillment, is that reason for discarding the direct teaching of the Scriptures on the subject? Nay; our conceptions of how things are to come out are generally inadequate, but *what God says* is always *right*.

In his argument on [Acts 3:19-21](#) he mistakes the meaning of the passage. Jesus is not to stay in heaven *until after* the predicted times of restoration, but, as Brother David Lipscomb said: "Heaven must receive him until the times of restoration of all things. Then the times of restoration of all things must be when Jesus returns again to earth. . . . When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the world will be restored to harmonious relations with God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe." ("Queries and Answers," page 360.)

Regarding [2 Thess. 2:1-12](#), my respondent fails to distinguish between the day of the Lord, which is the day of wrath and vengeance ([1 Thess. 5:1-10](#)), and the coming of Christ for his saints, to save them from the wrath to come ([1 Thess. 1:10](#)), which necessarily precedes, we know not by how long.

Finally, in his rebuttals he places a wrong interpretation on [1 Cor. 15:24-28](#). That passage does *not* say that *at the time* of Christ's return he will deliver up the kingdom to God. The word "then" is the one used in enumerations, and signifies "next in order," without intimating how long or short a time must intervene. But this point has no essential bearing on the proposition, nor have any of these "rebuttal" arguments, so far as I can see.

I conclude with Walter Scott's well-put statement of the meaning of the imminence of our Lord's return:

It is important to the character of those who have entered upon discipleship to Christ by obedience to the true [359] gospel, that they have their hopes elevated to the appearing of Christ, and fixed upon the purity, perfection, and glory of his kingdom. . . . Let us, then, who advocate original Christianity, preach to the saints for their perfection, the second coming of Christ, with all its adjuncts, for its intrinsic merits, its own divine importance alone, and leave the chronological question where Christ and his apostles left it; that is, let us leave it in the moral uncertainty in which they left it, and *in the hope of its speedy occurrence*, purify ourselves from all filthiness, of the flesh and spirit, *thatwhether he comes at midnight, at cockcrowing, or in the morning*, we may be accounted worthy to stand before him." (Italics mine.) (Walter Scott, from William Baxter's Life.) [360]

## H. LEO BOLES' SECOND NEGATIVE.

Brother Boll states that he was "somewhat perplexed as to how to deal" with the negative's first reply. His second affirmative, indeed, shows that he was very much "perplexed," as he did not answer any argument that was made by the negative, neither did he attempt to answer any. He complained against the negative's reply. Well, it did not occur to the negative that the affirmative should be consulted as to how the reply should be made; neither does the negative think that the affirmative is a very good judge as to whether his arguments were answered. It may be that the affirmant is prejudiced in favor of his side of the question and would therefore be incompetent as a judge. So it is best for both of us to let the readers be the judges as to whether his arguments have been answered.

It may be well to observe here that authorities on logic and argumentation give three effective methods of refutation. They are: (1) The *reductio ad absurdum*--that is, reducing the opponent's arguments to an absurdity. (2) The dilemma. In this the opponent's case is reduced to an alternative, which shows that if one position be true, the other must be false. (3) The method of residues. In this method a careful analysis is made of all possible theories and that another position is more plausible than the one which the opponent has espoused. The negative always has the right to choose his own method of reply. In the present case the negative used the second and third methods in replying to the affirmative.

Brother Boll's second affirmative, as the reader will see, deals largely with irrelevant matter and does not treat the proposition in a clear, definite, logical way. In fact, it is difficult for one to gather from what Brother [361] Boll has said his proposition. I seriously doubt that any one who has not followed this discussion closely could get his proposition from his second affirmative. He is to prove that "the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." He has forsaken his proposition in the hour of greatest need. He wandered and rambled around and made no new argument, no new Scripture introduced. He dealt largely with irrelevant matter. Let the reader bear in mind that he has a double proposition. He cannot prove either member of his proposition. Even should he prove one member and fail to prove the other, he has lost his proposition. He must prove that the coming of Christ is "premillennial," and then he must prove that the coming of Christ is "imminent."

## THE THEORY.

Brother Boll gives some quotations from his former writings showing that he does not belong to "a sect of the premillennialists." His quotations are not to the point, since no one has accused him of belonging to "a sect" of this school of interpreters. However, he has with some modifications espoused the theory of the premillennialists. It is one thing to believe and teach the theory of the premillennialists and quite another thing to belong to "a sect" of them.

The principal points of the theory, as stated by their ablest writers, are repeated here. They are as follows: That the kingdom of God is not yet in existence and will not be until Christ comes; that the gospel was not intended to convert the world to Christianity; that it merely holds in restraint evil and wickedness; that the world is now growing worse, and will continue to grow worse and worse until Christ comes; that his coming is always imminent; that the chief duty of

the Christian is to watch for his coming; that Christ will come and raise the righteous dead and transform the living saints and catch both classes up in the air--this is called "the rapture;" next [362] there will be a time when God will pour out his judgment on the wicked--this is known as "the great tribulation;" that Christ and his saints remain up in the air hovering over the earth while "the tribulation" continues, and that he will return to the earth--and this is called "the revelation;" that Christ will then bind and cast Satan into the abyss, and will overthrow all wickedness, and will occupy the throne of David, making Jerusalem as the capital of the world while he reigns over all the earth--this is called the "millennium;" that after the end of the thousand years there will be a violent outbreak of wickedness, when the devil will be turned loose for a season. "The millennium" is one of the chief corner stones of the great scheme of the premillennial theory. Brother Boll was asked to disavow any points in this theory that he does not believe. He has failed to do this.

I think that the affirmative owes it to himself and to the brotherhood at large to state just such parts of this theory as he does not believe. Many believe that he teaches the theory in full. He has the opportunity now to set himself right before the brotherhood on these questions, and he should be glad of the opportunity to clear this matter up. The negative has no desire to convict him of any error or saddle upon him any theory. The negative will be glad to have him state just such points of this theory as he does not believe. I am sure the many thousands of readers will be glad to bear him declare himself on these points. I do know that Brother Boll has written much in Word and Work on all phases of this theory. I have before me volumes of Word and Work from 1916 to 1926, and in these volumes he has frequently commended to his readers a number of books which indorse and teach all phases of the premillennial theory as outlined above. Brother Boll has written upon such themes as "How Will Christ Come?" "Premillennialism," "The Millennium," "The [363] Restoration of the Jews," "The Great Tribulation," "His Coming Imminent," etc. In fact, each item of the premillennial theory has been commented upon favorably in Word and Work for the last ten years. This is mentioned that Brother Boll may see the importance of just stating to the brotherhood what he does believe on these points. I hope that he may see his way clear to do so.

#### A CHARGE.

Just here I think that attention ought to be given to what Brother Boll calls a "charge" which he thinks I have made against him. He says:

I would like to remind him to clear me of the charge he inadvertently made in his article before the last, that I contend "in the main" for all such points as "that the temple worship is to be restored, the Aaronic priesthood resumed, animal sacrifices to be offered; in fact, the theory demands a restoration of the entire ritual of the law of Moses." I requested him once before to clear me of this charge, or else to substantiate it.

Now, I did not give this as a charge against him. I showed that his reasoning and teaching led to just such a conclusion, and I quoted from his own writings evidence sufficient to prove the point. But as he calls upon me to either "clear him of this charge, or else to substantiate it," I propose to substantiate it by his own writings. In Word and Work, 1917, page 354, Brother Boll said: "It is to be noted that this prophecy sees Israel back in their land in the end-time: their

temple is rebuilt, their sacrifices again resumed. . . . Once returned, they will, of course, at once rebuild their temple and resume the temple service." This is evidence enough to sustain the "charge." But there is more evidence. In writing on "The Abomination of Desolation," in *Word and Work*, 1917, pages 387, 388, in summing up he says:

1. Israel is back in their land just before the Lord's glorious coming: the temple is rebuilt, its service resumed. [364]
2. The last great world power, Rome, in her final shape, flourishes.
3. The man in supreme rule exalts himself above all that is called God.
4. He sits in the temple (either in person or his image installed there), setting himself forth as the object of worship. This is the "abomination of desolation."
5. When that thing occurs, all believers in Jesus who are in and around Jerusalem are warned to flee instantly.
6. For then shall be unparalleled tribulation.
7. The glorious appearing follows *immediately upon this tribulation*. ([Matt. 24:29](#).)
8. The "lawless one," that wicked leader, meets his doom at the hands of Jesus at his coming.

If the temple is to be rebuilt and the service of the Jews resumed, this will bring into force again the Mosaic ritual of worship; and this will call for a priesthood and animal sacrifices. Brother Boll knows this. Why should he deny "the charge?" If he does not believe that now, why does he not say: Yes, I taught that at one time, but I do not believe it now, neither do I teach it now?

#### THE MILLENNIUM.

It was pointed out that Brother Boll had assumed that there would be such a time as the premillennial theory calls a "millennium." He was called upon to prove his assumption. Every gospel preacher known to me preaches that there is coming in the future a time of peace, joy, and bliss to the faithful saints; the home of the soul, heaven, which the saints will enjoy, with all that heaven means. Much that Brother Boll describes as belonging to the millennium belongs to heaven itself. I deny that the Bible teaches that there will be such a period of time as the theory calls a "millennium." I deny that the Bible teaches that there will be such a period of time as Brother Boll calls the "millennium." Brother Boll means by the "millennium" that period of time of one thousand years immediately after Christ's return, when Christ will sit on David's throne in [365] Jerusalem and rule with his saints in person over all the earth. This is what Brother Boll calls the "millennium." He means that time when the Jews will be restored to Palestine and make Christ their King, seat him on the throne of David, rebuild the temple, and resume the temple worship. This he says will be done for a thousand years and will suddenly cease. This is what Brother Boll calls the "millennium;" this is what the premillennial theory calls the "millennium."

This is exactly what I deny. Brother Boll has not given a single Scripture that teaches it; he will not give one, because there are no Scriptures that teach it.

No one has ever denied that there will be "bliss and triumph in the future" for the Lord's people; but this will be in heaven, and not on earth just for a thousand years. It is one thing to deny the bliss and happiness and triumph that shall be enjoyed in heaven and quite another thing to deny the theory which is commonly called the millennium." Brother D. Lipscomb never taught the "millennium" in the sense that Brother Boll uses that term.

But Brother Boll thinks that he is in good company when he espouses the theory of the millennium. He gives a quotation from the "Millennial Harbinger," 1854, page 354; but he leaves out a very important sentence in the quotation that he gives from A. Campbell. The sentence which Brother Boll leaves out is: "We have been, and still are, hearing both sides, and collecting documents in aid and furtherance of such an object." A. Campbell recognized that there were able men on "both sides" of this question, and he gave them space in the Millennial Harbinger. Even A. Campbell in his early days had a misconception of the Bible teaching on this question and named his paper "The Millennial Harbinger," thinking and believing that the millennium was very near, but later in life he modified his views on this question.

Brother Boll also gives a quotation from Lard's [366] Quarterly. He should have examined a little closer, and he would have found that the quotation which he gave was from M. E. Lard, who wrote under the title, "A Theory of the Millennium." Brother Boll objects to calling his position a "theory," but Lard called it a "theory," and Brother Boll quotes from his discussion of the theory. But if Brother Boll had read a little more of Lard's "A Theory of the Millennium," he would have found the following:

On no subject of Christianity can authorities be consulted with less satisfaction than on the millennium. Where men have written on it at all, their views are both confused and contradictory.

Further on in the same article Lard says of the paragraph which Brother Boll quoted and others in the article that "they are intended to wear no air of dogmatism, yet it is hoped that they will rise something above mere feeble conjectures." Further on, in giving his excuse for writing on "A Theory of the Millennium," he says: "There is not among us, as far as I know, a single elaborate article in print on the subject; and I have never heard a discourse on it, nor even so much as heard of one being attempted." Further on he says: "I have no theory to advance" on "the time when the millennium is to commence." He had a theory of the millennium, but he had no theory as to when it would commence.

Brother Boll makes another complaint. He thinks that I left him "in the dark" as to my "peculiar position and waited until now to spring it." He says: "I did not surmise that he would take a freak position." Brother Boll knows that I did not want to take any advantage over him, and he also knows that I have not sought to take any advantage. I fear that his complaint grows out of his irritation in not being able to answer the arguments which were made against his theory. There has been no occasion to discuss this issue until now. While [367] discussing the other propositions, the discussion of the present proposition would have been irrelevant matter.

Brother Boll's first affirmative was based on an assumption--an admitted assumption. He said:

I shall assume, therefore, that there will be such an era of universal blessedness, and that it is yet in the future. If I am assuming too much and my respondent is not prepared to admit this as common ground, I will gladly offer proof for these two points in my next article. Meanwhile I shall proceed upon the assumption that it is agreed between us that there will be such a period.

The point was made that he could not prove that the coming of Christ was premillennial until he proved that there was to be a millennium. I was not willing to grant the assumption that the Scriptures taught any such a period as Brother Boll and others call a "millennium;" and if the Scriptures do not teach that there will be any such period as is called in the theory a "millennium," then the Scriptures do not teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial. Brother Boll did "proceed upon the assumption," and I called upon him for the proof. He promised to give it in his next article, but he did not give it. Now the affirmative comes in his second article and says:

I actually did incidentally furnish enough proof and Scripture testimony in my first article to establish that point.

This seems strange. In his first he says, "I shall assume" and "proceed upon the assumption." In his second article, instead of offering the proof for this assumption, he says: "I actually did incidentally furnish enough proof. . . in my first article." I do not see how to reconcile such inconsistent statements. He says, in substance: "I will give the proof for this assumption, if it is demanded, in my next article." It was demanded, and then he comes back and says, "I have already given it." Such is his logic. [368]

#### PREMILLENNIAL.

Brother Boll is to prove that the coming of Christ is premillennial--that is, he has agreed to prove that the Scriptures teach that Christ will come before a period of time which the Bible does not mention--a millennium. He need not argue against a postmillennial theory. I will help him combat that theory. I am as stoutly opposed to it as I am the premillennial theory. I have no more use for the one than I do for the other. The Scriptures do not teach either theory.

Brother Boll makes a peculiar statement. He says of the negative's arguments: "So long as he ignores my arguments and Scripture proofs, I have no obligation to follow him or to refute his human arguments." He thinks this is a very easy way of dismissing the arguments made by the negative. To my mind, it is childish. It is the same as saying: "You would not notice my argument, and therefore I am not going to notice yours." It is a tit-for-tat procedure. This is an acknowledgment that he would not notice the arguments and Scriptures of the negative; but there was no use in his saying this, as the readers know that he did not answer them. However, the negative thinks that he is mistaken when he says that the arguments of the affirmative were not met.



Not a single Scripture which he gave says one word about the issue of his proposition. Let the reader turn to the following Scriptures which Brother Boll cited and see whether there is one word in them about the coming of Christ being premillennial or his coming being imminent. Here is a list of them: [2 Cor. 4:4](#); [1 John 5:19](#); [Rev. 2:3](#); [Eph. 2:2](#); [Gal. 1:4](#); [2 Tim. 4:10](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#); [Rom. 12:2](#); [James 4:4](#); [James 1:27](#); [Luke 19:12-14](#); [Rom. 8:18-23](#); [James 5:7](#); [Phil. 3:19-21](#); [1 Tim. 4:1](#); [1 Tim. 3:1-5](#); [2 Tim. 4:3, 4](#); [Luke 17:26-30](#); [Luke 18:8](#); [Rev. 6:15-17](#).

Brother Boll confuses the Greek words "aion" and "kosmos." He gives Thayer's definition of "aion," "age," [369] and then gives Scriptures where "kosmos" is used; for example, [James 1:27 and James 4:4](#). James does not use the word "aion" in his entire letter. Again, [Heb. 1:2 and Heb. 11:3](#) use "aion," but the word does not mean "age" in these Scriptures.

Brother Boll's analogy between the suffering and rejection of Christ and the church is not correct. It was prophesied that Christ would be rejected and crucified; but it was also prophesied that the church or kingdom of God was to "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." ([Dan. 2:44](#).) Again, Paul said: "Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever." ([Eph. 3:21](#).) So the church is to stand forever and conquer all opposing forces; it should be triumphant unto the end. ([1 Cor. 15:24-28](#).)

The quotation which Brother Boll gave from Brother Lipscomb does not teach Brother Boll's position in regard to Christ's coming being premillennial. In commenting upon [Acts 3:20, 21](#), Brother Lipscomb said:

"The restitution of all things" refers to the restoration of God's order and rule on the earth, which had been disturbed by the rebellion of man and the transfer of the rule of earth to the evil one. The restoration of the rule and authority of God as the only ruler of the heavens and the earth through the anointed Savior had been foretold by the prophets from the beginning of the world. When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, then he will deliver up the kingdom to God, the Father, that he may be all and in all. ([1 Cor. 15:24-28](#).) ("Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles," page 54.)

So Brother Lipscomb taught that Christ must reign in heaven as King of his kingdom until all rule and authority and power had been put down, and then he would deliver the kingdom up to God. Brother Lipscomb did not teach the present conception of the premillennial theory as presented by the affirmative. [370]

Brother Boll makes a brief reference to [1 Cor. 15:24-28](#). He says that this Scripture "does not say that at the time of Christ's return he will deliver up the kingdom to God. The word 'then' is the one used in enumerations, and signifies 'next in order.'" Very well; if, when Christ comes, the next thing in order is the delivery of the kingdom to the Father, then there is no room for a millennium to come between the advent of Christ and the delivery of the kingdom to the Father, for Brother Boll says that "the next thing in order" is for him to deliver up the kingdom to the Father.

Brother Boll gives a quotation from Dr. Brents. If Brother Boll had looked a little closer, he would have found that Dr. Brents said:

We have read much of what has been written on the subject, and Brother M. E. Lard is the only man whose writings have fallen under our notice who seemed to have a tangible theory as to what the millennium really will be. On this point we believe his theory is correct, but we shall write as though he had not written. ("Gospel Sermons," page 325.)

So I am in very good company when I speak of Brother Boll's position as a "theory." Others have also called it a "theory."

Brother Boll complains that the negative has disposed of his Scriptural quotations and arguments "in *a priori* fashion." Again, he says that the negative "refuses *a priori* to accept any Scripture testimony." The negative respectfully denies this charge; but even should it be true and his arguments were disposed of *a priori*, does he not know that "*a priori*" is a logical and legitimate course of reasoning? "*A priori*" simply means reasoning from cause to effect, from any assumption to its logical consequences. All logicians give it as a logical course of reasoning. So Brother Boll inadvertently pays the negative a compliment when he says that his arguments were [371] disposed of *a priori*. He only ascribed to me a legitimate course of reasoning.

In the introduction of the subject the negative merely stated that he did not agree with Brother Boll when he made this the most important question of all, and especially when Brother Boll made it "the vital and practical center of the Bible's prophetic teaching." The negative stated that, since all truth came from God, he did not know how to measure the importance of any Bible truth above another; neither did he know how to measure the unimportance of an error. Brother Boll thinks that he does know how to estimate the importance of one truth above another truth and the unimportance of one error below another error. Of course this has nothing to do with the proposition, but we would like for him to give us his standard by which he can determine the degree of the importance of a truth and the lowest value of false doctrines. There is one thing the negative does know, and that is that the Bible nowhere says that the coming of Christ is more important than the obedience to the gospel. Another thing the negative knows is that the Bible nowhere states that "the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent."

#### IMMINENT.

Brother Boll tries to find the idea and synonym of "imminent" in the Bible. The negative has stated that the words of his proposition, "premillennial" and "imminent," are not in the Bible, neither are their synonyms in the Bible. There is no use to waste space in arguing this point. Let Brother Boll give the synonym of "premillennial," let him give us the synonym of "imminent," and show us where they are found in the Bible. That would settle the matter.

He has defined "imminent" to mean "always liable to occur," "it may happen at any time." He now states that the coming of Christ is imminent "because it is certain." [372] This is a very loose way of reasoning. If the coming of Christ is imminent "because it is certain," then the resurrection is imminent, because the resurrection is certain. Again, if the coming of Christ is imminent, liable to happen at any moment, "because it is certain," then the judgment is imminent, because it is certain. Brother Boll's way of reasoning makes the resurrection and the judgment imminent, "liable to occur at any moment." Has he given any proof that this is true?

Brother Boll did not meet the argument based on [2 Thess. 2:1-12](#). He attempted to evade the force of that argument by saying that "the coming of the Lord" and "the day of the Lord" are different, but the context shows that they are the same. Again, Paul, in [1 Thess. 5:2](#), shows that they are the same. It was pointed out to Brother Boll that "the coming of the Lord," or "the day of the Lord," would not be until at least two events occurred. Paul says that the Lord will not come until "the great apostasy" occurs and "the man of sin" be fully developed. The Scriptures at that time taught that these two events must occur before the Lord would come, and they teach now just what they taught then; and if they did not teach that the coming of Christ was imminent, liable to occur at any moment, then, they do not so teach now. Brother Boll failed to meet this argument.

I repeat that *if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then everything the Bible teaches that must occur before Christ comes is also imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment.* A number of things were mentioned that the Scriptures teach must occur before Christ comes. Brother Boll did not notice these things. They show that his proposition as interpreted by him cannot be true; the Scriptures do not teach it.

Brother Boll's former writings contradict his present, interpretation of his proposition. Brother Boll taught in *Word and Work*, 1917, page 354, in commenting on the [373] prophecy of Daniel, that human government would be centralized in one king before Christ came. He said "that in the end-time a mighty king shall have all but universal dominion; that this king will defy God, exalt himself above God, oppress God's people most terribly, and shall finally come to his end without the hand of man." Now, if Brother Boll's interpretation of this prophecy is correct, this "willful king" must come before Christ comes; and if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment--and this "willful king" is to come before Christ comes, then the coming of this "willful king" is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment. Does Brother Boll even believe this now?

Again, Brother Boll taught in *Word and Work*, 1917, page 387, that "Israel is back in their land just before the Lord's glorious coming: the temple is rebuilt, its service resumed." Now, if, as Brother Boll taught, Israel must be back in Palestine, the temple rebuilt and the services resumed, before the Lord comes, and if the coming of the Lord is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment--then the restoration of Israel and the building of the temple and the resumption of the services are also imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment. But if these things which Brother Boll says must occur before Christ comes are not imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment--then the coming of Christ is not imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment.

Again, Brother Boll taught in 1917, in *Word and Work*, page 390, in interpreting [Dan. 7 and Rev. 13](#), that the Roman Empire was to be reestablished before Christ come. Here is his language: "If this great event was to happen in the days of the Roman world rule, and Rome has long since passed away, how can the prophecy, if it was not fulfilled then, be at all fulfilled now? The answer is, *Rome comes back*. . . . It is simply Rome, which for a time is passed into abeyance, but shall be revived and return in new power." So Brother Boll [374] taught then that the Roman Empire must be "revived"--"Rome comes back"--before Christ comes. Now, if the Roman Empire must be reestablished before Christ comes, and if the coming of Christ is

imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment--then the reestablishment of the Roman Empire is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment. Even as late as last year (1926) Brother Boll taught that the Roman Empire would come back. In *Word and Work*, 1926, page 100, under the title, "Rome Coming Back," Brother Boll says: "Mussolini may or may not restore the Roman Empire; at any rate, he is showing the easy possibility of the thing, and the fact that the matter is in the air." Again with emphasis we press upon the affirmative that if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment--and the Roman Empire must be reestablished before Christ comes, then the return of the Roman Empire is imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment. Has Brother Boll given a single Scripture which leads to such a conclusion? The negative maintains that he has not.

In my humble judgment, the affirmative has utterly and completely failed to prove his proposition, "The Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." Can the reader put his finger upon a single Scripture that has been given to sustain such a proposition? We leave the matter with the readers as to whether or not he has proved his proposition. He has but one more article to write on this proposition, and, without anticipating him, I want to venture the assertion that the discussion will close and no reader will be able to quote a single Scripture which sustains the affirmative of this proposition. [375]

## Chapter XVI.

### R. H. BOLL'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE.

The close of my part in this proposition finds us just where we were after my second affirmative, and where we were after the first exchange affirmative and negative, so far as any progress in the discussion is concerned. My respondent has failed to notice and take up my arguments and has not faced any of the Scripture teachings and the passages I presented in proof of the proposition. He had every reason and every opportunity to do so. The fact that he did not indicates that he could not. If he could have met those Scriptures, he would no doubt have done so. He has made many remarks about one thing and another. He has informed the readers of how irrelevant my argument was, how I have wandered, how I had "forsaken" my proposition "in the hour of greatest need," and has told them that my whole argument rested on "assumption," and that the Scriptures I presented were "misinterpreted" and "misapplied." But he never took up the affirmative's points, nor did he face any of the Scriptures I presented, nor did he *show* that any one of them was "irrelevant" or misinterpreted or misapplied, or that any of my arguments were based on "assumption" (though I specifically challenged him to do so), and he ignored, entirely or almost so, the whole affirmative argument.

When, in the second proposition, I was in the negative, he reminded me that "*it is the duty of the negative to follow the affirmative and answer the arguments which are presented in support of the proposition.*" (Gospel Advocate, page 578.) But now he has forgotten that wise maxim. When N. L. Rice was in the negative against Alexander Campbell, the latter called him to task on that point: [376]

I certainly have a very singular opponent--one of his own class. He presumes not to respond to a single argument that I offer, in any of the usual forms of debate. There is nothing more generally established in the literary world than that, in all discussions in the form of debate, there should be a proposition, parties, an affirmant, and a respondent; and that there are duties which devolve upon these parties as they severally stand, to the thesis to be discussed. In all schools, not merely ordinary debating schools, but in all the high schools and colleges, one law obtains; the proof lies upon the affirmant, and the disproof upon the negative. *Whatever arguments, therefore, are adduced by the affirmant, it is the duty of the negative to respond to them in some way or other. If they are weak, irrelevant, or inconclusive, he should expose them and refute them. If they are good, and relevant, and conclusive, he should acknowledge it and yield to them; but not to notice them at all is at once to confess inability.* (Italics mine.) ("Campbell-Rice Debate," page 455.)

My respondent has tried to disqualify the affirmative argument on general principles and upon foregone conclusions; and attempted to dismiss it, proof and all, with a few assertions and disparaging remarks. There is nothing better now than to set once more, briefly, the affirmative argument before the readers to let it speak for itself, and that the readers may judge for themselves whether or not the argument is irrelevant, and whether the Scripture teaching presented is conclusive.

The proposition was: "*The Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent.*"

The first point to be established was,

#### I. THE COMING OF CHRIST IS PREMILLENNIAL.

I defined "premillennial" as "preceding the millennium." I did not assume that there would be such a millennium "as Brother Boles believes in," but I assumed that Brother Boles, in common with the brethren generally, believed in a period of triumph and peace and bliss, and [377] that this period is still in the future. I assumed that there was that much of common ground between us. That was all there was of "assumption." But my respondent seized upon that word and strove to make it appear that I "assumed" the whole argument. I denied this, and challenged him to show *one instance* where I rested even one of my arguments on an assumption. He did not do it, yet he repeats the same assertion concerning that "assumption."

In reply to my supposed "assumption," he denies, first of all, that he believes in any such millennium "as Brother Boll believes in." It does not matter, however, what sort of millennium he believes in. The nature of the millennium does not enter into this question at all. The one point is that, whatever sort the millennium may be, if it is a millennium in the accepted sense at all--that is, a future time of triumph and bliss--*the coming of Christ must precede it*. It would no doubt be very interesting and profitable to discuss the nature of the millennium, but that has no bearing on the present issue. We are not debating about the millennium, but the question is whether such a period will intervene before Christ's coming. We must keep our proposition clear of false issues.

But my respondent went further. He denied that there is any such thing as the millennium, and says "millennium" is not in the Bible. I referred to that as a "freak" position (perhaps I should have said an "extraordinary" or "unusual" position), and said he should have told me that when we were arranging our propositions. For I faithfully explained all my positions to him on everything where he might have misunderstood, and that he might be under no disadvantage. If he had done the same, I would certainly not have discussed the "premillennial" issue with him. He says: "Brother Boll knows I did not want to take any advantage over him, and he also knows that I have not sought to take any advantage." I gladly absolve him from all evil design [378] and motive in the matter. The *fact* remains, however, that he did not tell me, and I regret the futility of having to debate a question about something being "premillennial" with him, if he believes in no millennium at all.

In signing up the proposition that "the coming of Christ is premillennial," he implied that he believed in a millennium as well as I. If he did not, he should not have agreed to such a proposition; for the proposition assumes that there is a millennium, and looks only to the question whether the coming of Christ will precede it or not.

Now, the word "millennium" is not in our English Bible, just as the word "immersion" is not in our English Bible. But *the thousand years* is. Moses E. Lard, quoted in my last, carefully showed that "millennium" meant a period of one thousand years (from Latin, *mille*, a thousand,

and *annus*, year), specifically that period of a thousand years mentioned six times in [Rev. 20:1-7](#). My respondent says I quoted from Dr. Brents. I had not; but I will here. After quoting verbatim [Rev. 20:4-6](#), Dr. Brents says:

*This is the millennium.* If this does not express a literal reign with Christ for a literal thousand years, we know not what assemblage of words would be capable of expressing that thought.

But to my respondent this passage seems to mean absolutely nothing. There is solemn warning at the close of the book of Revelation against taking away, as well as adding to, the words of that prophecy, which we shall do well to heed when by any sort of pretext we try to sweep the significance of any portion out of it. Of course, my respondent says he does not reject Scripture--only the "interpretation." But I am offering him no interpretations. [Rev. 20:1-7](#) speaks six times of a period of a thousand years, which follows the personal descent of Christ from heaven, and during which Satan is bound and imprisoned, and Christ reigns with his saints. It [379] *says* that. If Brother Boles sees good to deny it or to sweep it aside as meaningless to us, he will do so at his own peril.

But even that would not help him in the present issue. If there is no millennium at all, that proves that no millennium can intervene before Christ comes. And that is all I care to prove here. I am not debating about the millennium as such, though I believe in it, but am merely seeking to show that before there is or could be such a period, Christ must come, and that no such period can intervene before Christ comes.

But after all that, my respondent says that "every gospel preacher known to me preaches that there is coming in the future a time of peace, joy, and bliss." Very well, then; that is enough. Call it "millennium" or whatever you please, let it be on earth or in heaven, let it be a thousand years or longer, the one and only point is that *that future time of the final triumph of the saints and universal glory and bliss cannot be before the coming of Christ.*

The affirmative made the following argument in proof:

The present age, which ends at the coming of Christ, is throughout an evil age in which Satan rules here below, evil predominates, and God's people suffer. Therefore, no millennium can intervene before Christ returns.

This argument was based directly upon the statements of Scripture. It was shown from [2 Cor. 4:4](#); [Eph. 2:2](#); [6:12](#); [Rev. 2:13](#); [John 14:30](#); [1 John 5:19](#), that Satan is the god of this age and the prince of this present world order, the spirit that energizes and actuates all the "sons of disobedience," and that the world lies, as it were, in his embrace. That is the rulership of this age.

Jesus died to deliver us out of "this present evil age" ([Gal. 1:4](#)), and therefore God charges those who belong to his kingdom not to be conformed to this age ([Rom. 12:2](#)), not to love it, nor to love the world ([2 Tim. 4:10](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#)); to keep ourselves unspotted from the [380] world and to enter into no friendship with it, for to do so is spiritual adultery and enmity against God ([James 1:27](#); [4:4](#)). My respondent will not dare to say that these were only temporary injunctions; they are the Christian's standing instructions *till Jesus comes*. Till then we



must be true and fight and suffer and endure. But so long as such a situation exists there can be no millennium. Therefore, there is no millennium till Christ comes, and the coming of Christ is premillennial.

Again, from [Luke 19:12-14](#) it was shown that during the age the King is absent. His servants are left behind to administrate his goods amid an opposing populace, *till he comes*. There will be no millennium for them till the King returns. Throughout the age Christ's faithful servants must suffer. ([2 Tim. 3:12](#).) If we suffer with him, we shall be glorified together with him. My respondent never made a more serious mistake than when he denied the analogy between the suffering and rejection of Christ and the career of the church during this age. The church, if true to her Lord, must share her Lord's lot here below. She, like him, will be rejected and hated by the world in this age, even as her Lord was, and for that very reason. ([John 15:18-20](#).) With him we go forth without the gate, bearing his reproach. ([Heb. 13:13](#).) We are called into fellowship with him to share his sufferings and his cross, his service and mission, and at last his glory. ([1 Cor. 1:9](#).) As he is, so are we in the world. When he shall be manifested, then shall we also with him be manifested in glory. ([Col. 3:4](#).) The church's triumph comes with her Lord's return. Alexander Campbell with much clearness and power spoke on this point as follows:

The New Testament being only adapted to Christian in suffering state, it never can mount the throne, nor become a court religion; and, therefore, any religion *called* Christian, which has been by law established, has been an impudent imposition or base counterfeit, and not the religion of Jesus Christ. When Christianity gains the throne, [381] Jesus Christ will place it there himself; and wherever he sets up his throne, from that place shall go forth the law adapted to his subjects in their triumphant state.

We again repeat it, from the Sermon on the Mount to the fourth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, every address delivered to Christians contemplated them as suffering adversity. At different periods of the prophecy we have the anticipated triumph spoken of; we hear the echo from afar, saying: "Alleluiah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigns!" "Rejoice over her, you saints, and apostles, and prophets, for God has avenged you on her." "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his anointed, and he shall reign forever and ever." But till Jesus appears in the clouds of heaven, his cause and people can never gain the ascendant. . . . Now is the time for fighting the good fight--the time that tries men's souls--the time for the perseverance of saints--the time for suffering with him, that with him we may reign. (Millennial Harbinger, 1833, pages 120, 121.)

Moreover, *religiously* also the age will be full of trials ([Acts 20:29, 30](#)), and the last days will not be better, but worse ([2 Tim. 3:1-5](#); [Luke 18:8](#)), and God's people are bidden to hold fast in patience *until the coming of the Lord* ([James 5:7-11](#)). For that only were they to hope and wait. Amid such conditions there can be no millennium till Christ returns.

The world at large also will be found at Christ's coming as in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot; and men will cry for the mountains and the rocks to fall on them. ([Luke 17:26-30](#); [Rev. 6:15-17](#).) The world was wicked when Jesus left; it will be wicked when he returns; and between, the mystery of iniquity is always at work, moving on to its climax in the "man of sin." ([2 Thess. 2](#).) And there will be wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, to the end. ([Matt. 24](#).) If

there is to be any millennium, it cannot be before Jesus comes. Therefore, the coming of Christ is premillennial. And only when our bodies are redeemed--that is to say, in the resurrection (which admittedly takes place at Christ's return)--will God's [382] people, still groaning, be delivered; and groaning creation also travails in pain until that day. ([Rom. 8:18-23](#).) If there were any millennium before then, it would be full of the groans of suffering creation and the groans of God's people.

Such are the proofs, dear reader, which the affirmative presented to establish the fact that Christ's coming is premillennial; and these are the Scriptures which my respondent would not deign to notice. He was content to attack theories and to present abstract reasonings of his own why this and that could not be; but the *Scripture* teaching presented he ignored and called it "misinterpreted" and "misapplied." I must leave the conclusion to the reader's judgment.

Neither do any of these facts belittle the gospel. The gospel was not designed to compel faith and submission. It is the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth*. To those who do not believe it becomes "a savor of death unto death." ([Rom. 1:16](#); [2 Cor. 2:15, 16](#).) The gospel does its work perfectly.

Nor is the kingdom of God disparaged by these facts. The church does, indeed, represent the kingdom of God on earth; but their citizenship is in heaven, from whence also they wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ([Phil. 3:20](#).) Their triumph and glory will not be till he comes.

In regard to [1 Cor. 15:24-28](#), Brother Boles is obliged to concede that the "then" denotes, not simultaneousness, but succession, without intimation of how close or distant the succession. Thus, in the verse preceding, "Every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; *then* they that are Christ's at his coming," the "then" has already covered nearly two thousand years. ([1 Cor. 15:23](#).) Many other things have transpired since then, but the next step in the order which Paul was enumerating has not come yet. Weymouth renders: "Christ having been the first to rise, and *afterwards* Christ's people rising at his return. [383] *Later on*, comes the end, when he is to surrender the kingship to God." (Italics mine.) And in the footnote he says:

The "then" of the Authorized Version is only a correct translation in the sense of "next in order." The Greek word denotes sequence, not simultaneousness. (Cp. [Mark 4:28](#).)

This is not an interpretation, but a matter of cold fact and scholarship. There will, therefore, be abundant *room* for the millennium after Christ's coming.

## II. THE COMING OF CHRIST IS IMMINENT.

On this point I made the following arguments, each amply sustained by Scriptures:

1. The coming of Christ is absolutely certain.
2. The time of Christ's coming is not revealed, therefore uncertain.

3. Therefore, Christians are admonished to expect him constantly; for, so far as they know, he may come at any time.

4. The New Testament Christians, under the apostles' teaching, were earnestly and constantly looking for him.

The first two points, *taken together*, constitute the imminency of Christ's coming; the latter two corroborate the fact.

I had said in my first affirmative that "it follows from the very fact that Christ is *certain* to come, while the *time* of his coming is concealed, that Christ's coming must be always imminent to his people." My respondent says in reply: "He now states that the coming of Christ is imminent 'because it is certain.' This is a very loose way of reasoning. I rather think it was he that dealt loosely with my argument. I did not say that it is imminent because it is certain. The *certainty* of it is just one of two factors I mentioned. But because the coming of Christ is certain, *and* because the time of it is left wholly [384] uncertain, we must necessarily look for his coming always, and the event is ever imminent to God's people.

[Matt. 24:42-44 and 48-51 and Mark 13:33-37](#) set forth in clear light the *certainty* of Christ's coming and the *uncertainty* of the time; the continual possibility of it, and the consequent necessity of perpetual watchfulness and readiness on our part. This is what is meant by "imminency." I also showed that under the inspired teaching of the apostles the Christians looked earnestly, constantly, eagerly, for the Lord's return, and they always counted upon the likelihood of Christ's soon appearing. ([1 Cor. 1:8](#); [Phil. 3:20](#); [4:5](#); [1 Thess. 1:9, 10.](#)) To them the Lord's coming was always "at hand," and they conceived of him as standing "before the doors." ([James 5:8, 9.](#)) To them, therefore, the coming of Christ was ever imminent, always likely to occur; and the resulting expectancy was the proper, God-taught attitude for them, as it is also for us.

To none of these Scriptures, Scripture teachings, and Scripture arguments did my respondent make reply. Though he *asserted* that the Scriptures were "misinterpreted" and "misapplied," he did not *show* that they were, nor did he attempt to. And though he claimed that they were irrelevant, he did not show us that they were so, or why. Instead of meeting these Scriptures, my respondent tried to classify me under some "theory," and to fight that supposed theory on general principles. He even went so far as to propound some such theory.

My brother does not credit me with being a simple Christian who looks to God's word, and it alone, for his faith. He would identify me with some "theory" (using the word as both of us have been using it, in the sense of a human doctrinal system), and then meet me in the capacity of an adherent and exponent of said "theory." I have repeatedly denied that I am committed to, or have subscribed to, or am beholden to, any theory, and I have quoted from my writings to show that I have stood so all [385] these years. My respondent takes up one expression from one of my quotations, where I disavowed belonging to "a sect of premillennialists," and says he did not accuse me of that; but he fails to notice that in the same breath I had also "*disavowed all connection and complicity with any system of doctrine called 'premillennialism.'*" My respondent has also forgotten what I quoted and reiterated from my book, "The Kingdom of God" (page 11), where I stated my platform in these words:

The present writer deems it desirable at the outset of this study to remove any misapprehension as to his own position. *He stands committed to no human theory (not even to his own in so far as he may hold any)*; nor does he advocate or countenance "speculation." His one and only desire is to get all that God says on every topic. . . . It may also be in order to add that the present writer rejects *in toto* the doctrinal systems and theories of Adventism and Russellism; and that his study of the word of God has led him to no clash with the teaching held by his brethren in the church of Christ, in any matter of fundamentals, or any point of obedience, or any congregational practice, or in anything that should affect our fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ. He believes that Jesus is King now, crowned with glory and honor, enthroned on the right hand of the Father. He believes in the full efficiency of the gospel unto its God-designed end, as the power of God unto salvation.

Despite these repudiations, my respondent lines me up with a "theory." He outlines it, enumerates its elements, and asks me to disavow any item I do not believe in. To do so would be a tacit acknowledgment that I *had* accepted such a "theory"--in part, if not as a whole. I can only say again that I stand committed to nothing but God's word. Why should I have to state my belief in terms of denial of, or consent with, the various items of somebody's theory? I am surely within my rights if I respectfully decline to notice my respondent's sample theory. I neither avow nor disavow any item of it, but repudiate the whole of it and rest my case on the word of God. A Christian is not to be judged by human [386] theories. There may be things in the creeds of Christendom with which he finds himself in accord; but he is not on that account chargeable with having adopted any of those creeds, wholly or in part, for he repudiates them all and rests his faith upon the word of God alone. Thus do I stand, and this is our inalienable right as Christians.

But my refusal to consider my respondent's theory is not due to any desire to hold anything secret. My teaching is all open and accessible. In secret have I taught nothing. My brother has it all before him. I have given no just grounds for dark surmises. Most, if not all, of what I believe on these disputed points has been brought out, or else at least been touched upon in this present discussion. But first and last and always I desire to say that I stand for nothing else and nothing more or less than what God says.

I note that among the pioneers of the Restoration Movement there was great interest and mutual tolerance in the matter of prophetic teaching. Some of the utterances and teachings of faithful brethren, Barclay, Milligan, Scott, and others, go further than anything this writer has felt to be warranted by the Scriptures--as, for example, when Barclay (than whom Campbell never commended any one more highly) teaches boldly the divinely ordered rebuilding of the temple in Israel's restoration, and reestablishment of the Mosaic ritual in a modified form--a thing which I have never taught at any time (Barclay, "City of the Great King," final chapter); or Walter Scott, teaching that the transfiguration is a miniature foreview of "the kingdom in power," when Christ will reign over the world with his saints ("The Great Demonstration," pages 246-248)--I have never spoken so dogmatically on such a point; or Milligan setting dates, and more things of like nature. Yet those brethren did not condemn, stigmatize, ostracize, one another. Sufficient for them that they all in common believed in the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and received the Bible as [387] God's inerrant word, and were of one mind regarding present obedience and Christian life and worship. I trust we have not so far drifted from that spirit that prevailed among

us in those days that we cannot hear, weigh, and consider what we may find the Bible to teach on such matters, without strife or alienation.

In regard to the charge that I contended for such teachings as that the temple service is to be reinstated, the Aaronic priesthood restored, animal sacrifices and the whole Mosaic ritual to be resumed, which I asked my respondent to prove or to retract, he says he did not mean it for a charge, but that he can prove it. He then proceeds to quote from *Word and Work*, 1917, where I was speaking of what the unbelieving and disobedient Israel would do when they would get back in their land and get control. Now, in quoting me, Brother Boles omitted the very part of that quotation that would have shown that. I will now give his quotation as he gave it, and then the whole quotation with the part he omitted in italics. His quotation is this:

It is to be noted that this prophecy sees Israel back in their land in the end time. Their temple is rebuilt; their sacrifices again resumed. . . . Once returned, they will, of course, at once rebuild their temple and resume the temple service.

This would leave the impression that I taught that *converted* Israel would do all this *by God's approval and direction*. What I really said was this:

It is to be noted that this prophecy sees Israel back in their land in the end time. Their temple is rebuilt; their sacrifices resumed. *It is not said that all this is by God's direction; but simply that this will be the state of affairs just before the great tribulation. The likelihood of such things is not so slim in these days as it seemed even a few years ago. Every one who reads the papers knows how keenly the Jews are now watching their chance to return to Palestine; and that thing may easily come to pass in a short time.* Once returned, they will, of course, [388] at once rebuild their temple and resume the temple service. (*Word and Work*, 1917, page 354.)

The portion Brother Boles quoted is in common letters, and the part he left out I have put in italics. And that omitted portion, of course, absolves me from his charge.

How my respondent misapprehended my words like that passes my comprehension, especially since in my first proposition this same extract came up, and I fully explained my meaning to him then. Here is what I said at that time:

I note here my respondent's insistence that I explain whether the Jews are "to be gathered in some rendezvous before their conversion, or are they to be gathered after their conversion? Are they all to be converted at the same time?" etc. But what has that to do with our point? I contend only that the Scriptures teach that they will be restored, and that, in order to that restoration, they must first be converted and *will be*. *Regathering* in itself is not necessarily *restoration*. The Jews are regathering to their land now to a very marked extent; yet they are not restored nor being restored. "Have you not taught," Brother Boles asked me outright, "that the present movement among the Jews to go back to Palestine, known as the 'Zionist Movement,' is a fulfillment of the prophecies which you have quoted in this discussion?" I happen to have taught the exact opposite of that, as Brother Boles may see by turning to my words in *Word and Work*, volume of 1926, page 229: "It should be clearly understood that no one claims that the present returning of the

Jews to Palestine fulfills the restoration promises made to Israel in the Old Testament prophecies."

Again, and once more, I said this:

Brother Boles, referring to *Word and Work*, 1917, page 387, says: "This shows that Brother Boll believes, or did believe in 1917, that after the Jews are restored to Palestine they will rebuild the temple and resume the worship." My respondent seems to assume that the mere regathering, such as we are witnessing now, is the same thing as their "restoration." They may go back, indeed they are going, and to a greater extent, no doubt, will go back, in unbelief. But that is *not* the restoration. The latter involves their conversion, regeneration, possession of their own land by way of divine gift, and all the [389] promised glory and blessedness. An examination of the connection from which he quotes me will show that I was speaking unbelieving, not of converted and restored, Israel. In the preceding article on the same theme (*Word and Work*, 1917, page 354) the point is more fully set forth. (*Gospel Advocate*, page 508.)

It has seemed to me several times as though my respondent had endeavored to prove me guilty of some serious heresies and thus to place the writer in bad light before the brethren. Such a disposition would be contrary to the spirit of brotherly love and justice, and I gladly accept his disavowal of such intentions. But even if I had been guilty of actual, not merely supposed, doubtful utterances, brotherly love would, it seems, want to put the best construction on them, not the worst, and would gladly accept a fair explanation and disclaimer.

Incidentally, I would like for the reader to note that the quotations given above refute the oft-repeated statement, which my respondent has put in my mouth, that "Brother Boll first has Israel converted and then as a righteous nation restored to their land," always using the word "restored" in the sense of "regathered." Of course, I never said such a thing, but specifically pointed out that mere regathering is not restoration, and that great numbers of them would go back to their land *in unbelief*, there to fall under the fires of the "great tribulation."

#### THE REBUTTAL.

My respondent makes a rebuttal argument against the imminency of Christ's return. He says in effect that if Christ's coming is imminent, all the things predicted as preceding it would have to be imminent also. Thus, for example, the rise of the "man of sin" and the reviving of Rome, the rise of the last great world power, the conversion of Israel, and the like, must come first; and if the coming of Christ is imminent, so must all these things be. This objection arises from the failure to recognize what is [390] involved in the coming of Christ. In *Word and Work*, 1923, pages 169, 170, I gave the following explanation of this:

The prophecies connected with the second coming of Christ are many and various. If, as is commonly thought, the coming of Christ is just a single act--a descent from heaven, followed (as some think) by the immediate wind-up of all things--it is not possible to reconcile or to account for all the different Scripture statements concerning it. There is the whole line of teaching on the *imminency* of the Lord's coming--that is, the possibility of his coming at *any time*--and we are charged to watch and be ready continually. The *practical* power of the doctrine lies largely in

this, and this point must be guarded and preserved above all. But again we read of certain events that must first transpire--a tribulation, for example, such as had never been and would never be again, which would *immediately* be followed by heavenly signs and the coming of Christ in glory. ([Matt. 24:21, 29](#), etc.) Then there is the national conversion and restoration of Israel, of which there was not the remotest prospect (but rather the contrary) in Paul's day, but which Paul confidently predicted ([Rom. 11:15-32](#)) while yet holding up the coming of Christ as the object of the Christian's constant expectation. Now it is clear that we are to look for the Lord's returning continually; but it is also clear that certain things shall transpire and certain conditions prevail when he does come, of which there is little or no sign at present. It is furthermore evident that no man can earnestly and intelligently expect the Lord's coming from day to day, when he knows that Christ cannot come till this or that far-reaching thing has happened. At one time he says, "At an hour you think not the Son of man cometh," and shows how quickly and unexpectedly it will happen, even while men are eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage; at another time it seems that the world is in a state of fearful expectation, being aroused by terrifying prodigies and portents in earth and sky and sea. These things are irreconcilable on the hypothesis that the coming of the Lord is to be a single, simple event. Some, indeed, take the passages that teach the imminency of his coming and "explain away" the rest, and some show from the Scriptures that the Lord cannot come for a long while [391] yet, and explain away all warnings to the contrary. But shall we not take *all* God has told us on the subject?

The simple solution of the matter is that in the second coming, as in the first coming, there are certain separate stages and phases. He *came* when he was born in Bethlehem. He *came* when he was baptized of John. ([Acts 13:24](#).) He *came* at his "triumphal entry." ([John 12:15](#).) He *came* at the cross, as John declares. ([1 John 5:6](#).) He *came* again from the dead at his resurrection. Yet these were not many comings, but the various features of the one coming. So it is with his second coming. He comes to take up his saints. ([John 14:3](#); [1 Thess. 4:16, 17](#).) But he also comes *with* his saints to be admired in them. ([Col. 3:4](#); [1 Thess. 3:13](#); [2 Thess. 1:10](#).) These two things cannot possibly occur at one and the same time. Here, then, are *two distinct features* of his coming, at least; and even that may not exhaust the matter yet. It is for this cause, no doubt, that the Holy Spirit chose a word ("parousia") which means not only *arrival* (though it certainly means that), but also "*presence*," as though it were meant to cover a *period of time*. The second coming of the Lord is not a single, simple appearance, therefore, but is composite in character. Unless that fact is recognized, it is impossible to understand the various Bible statements concerning it. . . .

The important point in all of this is not that we should be able to construct a theory that accounts for every Scripture statement on this great theme, but that we may not be hindered by our preconceptions from accepting simply *all* that God says about it. On the one hand, we shall not cease for any alleged reason to heed the admonition of Christ and the apostles to watch ceaselessly and look earnestly for our returning Lord; nor, on the other hand, will we be hindered by any theory from believing that all the great future events which shall come to pass on the earth shall find their uncramped fulfillment, even as God has said.

A number of similar arguments in the first negative were passed over--such as that Jerusalem had to be destroyed, the "man of sin" had to arise, the falling away had to come first, the gospel



had to be preached, the church perfected, before Christ should come, and that, therefore, the coming was not imminent. But the *Scripture evidence* shows that the Christians *were* looking for [392] Christ's coming intently and constantly, and were *taught* to do so. To them (as to us) his coming was imminent. None of the things above mentioned would, so far as they could know, necessitate any certain and protracted delay. For aught they knew, the coming of Christ was always to be expected. It was only the unfaithful servant who (whatever his pretext) said, "My Lord delayeth his coming." But we to-day have more reason than any generation that ever lived to look earnestly for our returning Lord. *If we lose this one foremost practical lesson, we have lost the chief benefit of the whole doctrine.*

#### CONCLUSION.

Having now arrived at the end of my part of this debate, I wish to thank the Gospel Advocate for the space so freely and generously granted to this discussion. I also desire to express my appreciation of the very excellent and careful work of the proof readers and printers. I am very specially gratified at the courtesy and fine feeling of the Gospel Advocate management, which prevented the appearance of any comments on the debate while the same was in progress. It would perhaps tend to promote Christian unity, love, and fellowship if all future discussion of any matters concerning the questions raised in this debate, in the Gospel Advocate, or in any of the other journals in the brotherhood, could be without reference to either of the disputants.

The avowed purpose of this debate was, not to mark lines and partisan distinctions, but to set the questions under dispute in fuller, clearer light, so that the readers may weigh and judge for themselves; thus to remove any blind prejudice and antagonism and misconceptions concerning the issues that may have existed, and to foster good will and brotherliness among all who stand and ought to stand together upon the simple New Testament foundation of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." [393]

To my honored respondent, Brother H. Leo Boles, I wish to express my gratitude for all kind and brotherly utterance in the course of the discussion, of which I marked a number. And if in any matter I failed, in his judgment, to do him justice, or transgressed upon his patience (as may too easily happen in debate), I beg his forgiveness, and thank him for his forbearance and for every courtesy and kindness he has shown me. A public discussion is a severe test, and only by the grace of God can a man hold fast the "Golden Rule" and the law of love and come out without the smell of fire on his garments. I wish to express my kindest personal feelings toward my respondent and toward all the brethren of the Gospel Advocate.

I wish to thank the reader who has patiently and thoughtfully followed the arguments and has weighed them in the light of God's word. May the Lord lead us all into the fullness of light and understanding.

But my heart's desire and prayer to God is that all differences among God's people on these and all other matters may be overcome in the love and fear of God, and through that brotherly love and fellowship which we have together in Christ while we "walk in the light, as he is in the light." [394]



## H. LEO BOLES' THIRD NEGATIVE.

We now come to the close of this interesting and long, but I hope instructive, discussion. It falls to the lot of the negative to write the final words, and I approach the close of the discussion as I did the beginning, with prayer that the Lord may bless both the affirmant and respondent and that truth may triumph over error.

Brother Boll and I hold many things in common--enough to fellowship each other as brethren in the Lord. We both believe that our Lord will return again, that we do not know when he will come, and that we should ever be ready for his coming. We both believe that his coming will be a blessing to all who love his appearing, and that it will be a condemnation to the wicked. We both believe that the Bible is the word of God, and that it is the complete revelation of God to man.

The affirmative thinks that the negative has not answered his arguments and Scripture proof texts, and quotes what Alexander Campbell said to Mr. Rice and applies to the negative in this discussion. I think of nothing more apt as a reply to Brother Boll than to give Mr. Rice's response to A. Campbell. He said:

I had not the most distant expectation, when I agreed to conduct this discussion, that I should please my friend, either as an affirmant or as a respondent. If I had expected to please him, I should not have become his opponent. . . . He informs the audience that I never directly answer his arguments. It is necessary that he should give them this information, or they, in their simplicity, will not discern it. He must repeat the declaration that I have not answered him, every time he rises to speak, or the audience will be sure to believe the contrary! Indeed, I very much question whether his assertions will prevent them from believing that his arguments have been fully exposed. ("Campbell-Rice Debate," page 462.)

The reader is to be the judge whether the respondent has answered the arguments of the affirmant in the present discussion. The repeated declarations of the affirmant [395] that his arguments have not been answered does not change the situation, neither would a repeated declaration on the part of the respondent affect the situation. The reader must be the judge as to whether the affirmant has proved his proposition.

The negative has no "position" to explain. The negative holds to no theory concerning the "millennium;" the negative is not a "millennialist" or a "premillennialist," neither is he a "post-millennialist." Hence, the negative has nothing to explain to the affirmative in regard to these things. The Bible does not teach anything about any of these "positions" or "theories," and the negative feels that it is best to let them alone. Christians can live faithful to God, believing everything that God teaches and practicing everything that he requires of his children, and die and go home to heaven without being either a "millennialist," a "premillennialist," or a "postmillennialist."

[Rev. 20:1-10](#) is the only Scripture in the New Testament or the Bible that mentions "the thousand years." Premillennialists 'base their theory for the millennium upon this Scripture. It is strange that Brother Boll has not quoted this Scripture during the entire discussion. He has

referred to it a few times and has told us that the term "thousand years" is used six times in this Scripture, but for some cause he has failed to quote the only Scripture in the Bible that gives premillennialists any basis for their theory. May we not wonder why Brother Boll has not quoted it? There are expressions in this Scripture which cannot be taken literally, and Brother Boll knows this. It contains such figures and symbols as, "the abyss," "sealed it over," "thrones," "saw the souls," "the beast," "his image," "a thousand years," "the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand," "first resurrection," "second death," "loosed out of his prison," "the four corners of the earth," "Gog and Magog," "the camp of the saints," "beloved city," "fire came [396] down out of heaven," "lake of fire and brimstone," and "the false prophet." Now, if Brother Boll takes one of these terms literally, he is forced to take all the other terms literally; or if one of them is to be taken figuratively or symbolically, the others must be taken that way. Premillennialists take "a thousand years" literally, but refuse to give the other terms equal significance. Brother Boll has chosen the easy way and has not quoted the Scripture. He has used only one term in it, and has given this term a literal meaning.

The negative does not deny the Scripture teaching that "Satan is the god of this age, and the prince of this present world;" neither does the negative deny that the spirit of Satan "energizes and actuates all the sons of disobedience;" nor does the negative deny the fact that Jesus "died to deliver us out of this present evil age;" neither does the negative deny that God's people should "not be conformed to this world," nor that the Lord's people should keep themselves "unspotted from the world," nor that the friendship of the world is "enmity against God." The negative believes all the above statements, and the Scriptures which Brother Boll quoted on these points are correctly applied; but *what has all of this to do with proving that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent?* The "misapplication" and "misinterpretation" are made when these Scriptures are so interwoven as to make them teach that "the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." They have absolutely nothing to do with proving the affirmative's proposition. [Luke 19:12-14](#) says nothing about Christ's coming being premillennial or imminent, and it is a misapplication of this Scripture to make it teach anything on that point.

There are many points of analogy between Christ during his personal ministry and the church, or his body; but the one claimed by the affirmative is not taught in the Bible. An analogy should not be pressed too far. The [397] affirmative did not give any Scripture to prove that his analogy was true. Christ lived among men, suffered, was rejected, and was crucified; but the church is not to be crucified, but it is to be triumphant in its work and mission, just as Christ was finally triumphant in being raised from the dead. The church is not a failure because some reject it. Neither was Christ's mission a failure because he was rejected and crucified.

There will be wicked people on the earth when Christ comes, as Brother Boll declares. The negative does not deny this. The Scriptures ([Matt. 24](#); [Luke 17:26-30](#); [2 Thess. 2](#); [Rev. 6:15-17](#)) all teach that there will be wicked people upon the earth when Christ comes, but these Scriptures say absolutely nothing about the coming of Christ being premillennial and imminent. When Brother Boll interprets and applies them to his proposition and makes them mean that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent, he misinterprets and misapplies these Scriptures.

[1 Cor. 15:24-28](#). This Scripture leaves no room for a millennium. It does not matter whether the "then" means "simultaneousness" or "next in order." When Christ comes, Paul says, "then

cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God" ([verse 24](#)); and Christ will not come to deliver up the kingdom to God "till he hath put all his enemies under his feet" ([verse 25](#)). This teaches that Christ must continue his present reign until he has "abolished all rule and authority and power;" and it further teaches that when Christ comes, that will "be the end." This leaves no room for the millennium to come between the present reign of Christ and the end. So it matters not whether "then" means "simultaneousness" or "next in order," when Christ comes he will deliver the kingdom to God, and that will be the end. So there is no millennium intervening between the coming of Christ and the end. [398]

#### THE COMING OF CHRIST IMMINENT.

The affirmative names in numerical order four points, and only four, which he has made in attempting to prove the imminency of Christ's coming. His points are: (1) "The coming of Christ is absolutely certain;" (2) "The time of Christ's coming is not revealed, therefore uncertain." He says that these "two points, taken together, constitute the imminency of Christ's coming; the latter two corroborate the fact." The argument was made in the second negative, and is repeated here, that if this reasoning is logical, then it proves that the resurrection and judgment are imminent. Let us try this kind of reasoning. (1) The resurrection "is absolutely certain;" (2) the time of the resurrection "is not revealed, therefore uncertain." Hence, if these two points prove that the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then they prove that the resurrection is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. The same reasoning may prove that the judgment is imminent,--that is, liable to happen at any moment. For the judgment "is absolutely certain;" and the time of the judgment "is not revealed, therefore uncertain." Hence, the judgment is "imminent"--that is, liable to occur at any time. Now, may we inquire why Brother Boll has singled out "the coming of Christ" and affirmed that it is imminent, and not also affirmed that the resurrection and the judgment are imminent? In the affirmative's second article he said: "The coming of Christ is imminent, because it is certain; but the time is unknown, and we are charged to watch and pray always, and to be ready, for we know not when our Lord cometh." So we see that the same kind of reasoning proves the imminency of the resurrection and the judgment.

No one denies the certainty of Christ's coming; neither does any one deny that the Lord's people should watch. All the Scriptures which Brother Boll quoted and all to which he referred as teaching the certainty of [399] Christ's coming and the watchfulness of his people are to the point and correctly interpreted and applied; but what has the certainty of Christ's coming and the watchfulness of his people to do with proving the proposition that "the Scriptures teach the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent?" When Brother Boll uses these Scriptures, which merely teach the certainty of Christ's coming and the watchfulness of the Lord's people, and tries to make them teach that the coming of Christ is "premillennial and imminent," then he "misinterprets" and "misapplies" these Scriptures.

#### THE PREMILLENNIAL THEORY.

I now have on my desk more than two dozen volumes of works written by premillennialists giving their theory of the millennium. They all make the millennium one part of the great scheme of the theory. The principal points or outline of this theory are: The kingdom of God will come

in its fullness only at the coming of Christ; the gospel holds in restraint evil; the world continues to grow worse and worse, and will do so until Christ comes; the coming of Christ is imminent; "the rapture" is the time while Christ and his saints are together up in the air; "the great tribulation" takes place on earth while Christ and his saints are in the air; the "millennium" is the thousand years while Christ is seated on David's throne and Satan is bound; after the thousand years Satan is turned loose again for a season and then finally destroyed. Brother Boll has a part of this theory in a diagram in his book, "The Second Coming," page 31. Brother Boll's diagram is similar to the diagram given by W. E. Blackstone in his book, "Jesus Is Coming," page 48. Brother Boll has discussed nearly every point in this theory in Word and Work during the last ten years.

The millennium is a part of the theory. It is one of the chief items of the theory, and is designated in the diagram both of Brother Boll and Blackstone, showing its [400] relation to the other parts of the theory. It is this chief point or item of the theory, called the "millennium," that the negative denies. The negative does not deny that there is coming a time of bliss and happiness for the Lord's people, but this joy and happiness for the Lord's people is in heaven with "the spirits of just men made perfect," and not upon earth just for a thousand years. When Brother Boll affirms that the coming of Christ is premillennial, he means that the Scriptures teach that Christ will come before that period of a thousand years which is marked off in the diagram and called in the theory the "millennium." The negative is denying that the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ will be before that specific period and time which this theory calls the "millennium." So the issue of the proposition is clear.

The negative has tried to get Brother Boll to disavow either all or any part of the above theory which he does not believe and teach. He has failed to do so. He has been urged and, entreated to disavow any part of it which he does not believe. The peculiar situation in the brotherhood and the disturbed relation which exists in the brotherhood over these questions make it imperative that Brother Boll disavow either in part or in toto the premillennial theory. The accusations against him that he believes and teaches the theory, and Brother Boll's claim that he has been misunderstood and misinterpreted, make it very imperative that he express himself clearly on these questions. I regret sincerely that he has not seen fit to do so. He has done himself an injustice in not taking advantage of the present opportunity to clear up some of these things.

#### THE CHARGE.

This is irrelevant matter, so far as the discussion of the present proposition is concerned. However, I am glad to have Brother Boll's explanation of his language. I confess that his language seems to me to teach that Israel [401] is to be restored to Palestine, and there rebuild the temple, resume the worship, and be reigned over by Christ on David's throne. In giving an interpretation of "Daniel's prediction," he says: "It is to be noted that this prophecy sees Israel back in their land in the end time. Their temple is rebuilt; the sacrifices again resumed." Again, he says: "Once returned, they will, of course, at once rebuild their temple and resume the temple service. But whether sooner or later, this is what they certainly will do *sometime*, for God has foretold it so." (Word and Work, 1917, page 354.) Again, in the same volume, page 387, in "summing up" the points which he had made, he gives in numerical order his first point, that "Israel is back in their land just before the Lord's glorious coming: the temple is rebuilt, its

service resumed." I am glad for Brother Boll to give his explanation of what he means by this language, and I leave it to the judgment of the reader to make his own interpretation of it.

#### WHAT BROTHER BOLL HAS FAILED TO DO.

#### THE COMING OF CHRIST PREMILLENNIAL.

The affirmative has had a very heavy burden to carry in discussing this proposition. He has a double proposition. Its two parts are: The coming of Christ is premillennial, and the coming of Christ is imminent. These parts are not interdependent; they are not even closely related. The coming of Christ could be premillennial and not be imminent; again, the coming of Christ could be imminent and not be premillennial. The proof of the affirmative on the premillennial point does not help establish the imminency of the coming of Christ. So the parts of his proposition are independent of each other, and the proof of the parts must be independent of each other.

The affirmative has failed to give a single Scripture that directly or indirectly teaches that the coming of [402] Christ is premillennial. Our many patient, intelligent readers cannot now turn to a single Scripture which teaches this phase of Brother Boll's proposition. After discussing the proposition in three long articles, not a Scripture has been found that the reader can rely upon as teaching clearly and definitely that the coming of Christ is premillennial. The reason Brother Boll has not found the Scripture is simple and evident--*there is no such Scripture*. The reader may be sure that if there were such a Scripture, Brother Boll would have found it, because he has been studying this question for more than fifteen years; and if he could not find a plain, definite Scripture that teaches that the coming of Christ is premillennial in fifteen years, we may know that it is not in the Bible, and especially when he has been searching for every word and sentence in the Bible which could be used as proof of his proposition. The Scripture is not in the Bible, and therefore the Scriptures do not teach his proposition.

The affirmative has attempted to prove that the coming of Christ is premillennial--that is, he has attempted to prove that the Scriptures teach that Christ is to come before that period which the premillennialists call the "millennium." It has been pointed out to him that he could not prove that the coming of Christ is to be before the millennium, unless he could prove that the Scriptures teach such a period of time as the premillennialists fit into their schemes and call the "millennium." The affirmative has failed to find any Scripture which teaches any such period of time as they call the "millennium." And since the Scriptures do not teach that there is to be such a period as this theory calls the "millennium," then the Scriptures do not teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial, or that his coming is before the millennium.

All premillennialists have their diagrams and programs for the coming of Christ. In their program they have the following periods of time: (1) The "rapture," (2) the [403] "tribulation," (3) the "revelation," and the "millennium." These are all technical terms in their peculiar parlance. It will be seen that the "millennium" is only one period of time in their grand program of affairs at the "end time." Now the Scriptures do not teach this humanly devised scheme into which they have fit a period of time of a thousand years called the "millennium," and therefore the Scriptures do not teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial. The affirmative has failed to meet this argument.



The affirmative assumed that the Scriptures teach that there will be such a period of time as this theory calls the "millennium." He based his arguments on "this assumption" and "proceeded upon that assumption." He has failed to prove that "assumption," and therefore his arguments on the premillennial phase of his proposition rest upon this huge assumption. It was not necessary to attempt to prove that Christ will come again; the negative teaches this. All the Scriptures proving that Christ will come again and that his people should be watching for his return are believed and accepted and taught by the negative. His burden was to prove that the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial, and this he has failed to do.

In the third affirmative Brother Boll attempts to break the force of these arguments by saying that "there are certain separate stages and phases" of Christ's second coming. He says that Christ "came when he was born in Bethlehem;" he "came when he was baptized;" and he "came at his triumphant entry and on the cross." Such interpretations are not supported by the Scripture. Christ came to earth only one time in his first advent, and he will come only once when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father. Such a patchwork of Scripture references does not break the force of the arguments advanced by the negative, neither do they find support in the Bible. I may say here that this course is generally [404] followed by premillennialists in attempting to answer the Scriptural objections which are made against their theory. They reply: "O, there are several comings of Christ." But they give no Scripture as proof of their reply.

The Scriptures quoted by the affirmative which teach that Satan is "the prince of this world" and that God's people should keep themselves "unspotted from the world" are accepted by the negative, for God's Book so teaches; but this does not prove that the coming of Christ is premillennial. The contention that the world is growing worse and will continue to grow worse until Christ comes discounts the Bible and its influence in the world. It makes the church a failure and the work of the Holy Spirit and all agencies for righteousness failures. The affirmative has failed to meet these arguments.

#### THE COMING OF CHRIST IMMINENT.

This second member of the proposition is not dependent upon the first member. The imminency of the coming of Christ has nothing to do with the other member of the proposition as to whether his coming is premillennial or not.

The affirmative has defined the word "imminent" to mean "liable to happen at any moment," or liable to occur at any time. The affirmative has failed to find the words "premillennial" and "imminent" in the Bible; he has failed to find even a synonym for these words; and therefore he has failed to find the ideas in the Scripture.

The affirmative has failed to meet the argument based on this definite proposition: *If the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then everything the Bible teaches which must occur before Christ comes is also imminent, liable to occur at any moment.* He has failed to meet this argument. The Bible clearly teaches, and Brother Boll has repeatedly admitted, that some things were to occur before Christ would come. These things which must occur before Christ comes [405] contradict the affirmative's definition of the term "imminent" and render impossible the proof of this part of his proposition as interpreted by him.

The Scriptures teach *now* just what they taught when they were written; and if they did not teach that Christ would come before certain events happened *then*, they do not teach *now* that he would *come* before certain things happened. But if "imminent" means "liable to happen at any moment," then the Scriptures did not teach *then* that the coming of Christ was "imminent," liable to happen at any moment; and if they did not teach it *then*, they do not teach it *now*.

The reader is unable to point to the chapter and verse in the Bible which teaches that Christ's coming is "imminent" in the sense which Brother Boll uses that term. No reader can put his finger on the book, chapter, and verse which clearly and definitely, without doubt, teaches that the coming of Christ is imminent, liable to happen at any moment. We may be sure that if there were such a Scripture, Brother Boll would have quoted it, and put it in large capital letters so that every one could see that he had found a Scripture which taught his proposition. He has not found it, for the simple fact that it is not in the Bible; and if it is not in the Bible, the Scriptures do not teach that the coming of Christ is imminent.

Now, if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then all that must come before Christ comes or that immediately follows the coming of Christ are also imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. If the coming of Christ is just before the millennium, or if the millennium immediately follows the coming of Christ, then the millennium is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. This is the logical conclusion of Brother Boll's proposition, if it be true. Brother Boll has failed to meet this argument. He has been asked why he does not affirm that the millennium is imminent. He has failed to answer. [406]

Again, the affirmative has taught that "a national conversion and restoration of Israel" will take place before Christ returns. In his quotation from *Word and Work*, 1923, as given in his third affirmative, he speaks of "the national conversion and restoration of Israel." If Israel is to be nationally converted and restored to Palestine *before Christ comes*, and if the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--*then the national conversion and restoration of Israel to Palestine are also imminent*--that is, liable to happen at any moment. This argument is germane to the proposition, logical in its construction, and unanswerable in its force. The affirmative has failed to meet it.

Jesus, in giving the commission, taught his disciples that they should go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." He had said of the woman who used the precious ointment upon his body: "Whosoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." ([Mark 14:9](#).) This shows that Jesus intended that the gospel should be preached "throughout the whole world;" and since he knew that it would take some time for his disciples to do this, he did not teach that his second coming was imminent--that is, liable to occur at any moment. Such a construction of the teaching of Jesus makes him contradict the commission to preach the gospel to the whole creation. The affirmative has failed to meet this argument.

After the ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit was to come to earth. The apostles were to wait in Jerusalem "until ye be clothed with power from on high." ([Luke 24:49](#).) Jesus would not come until the Holy Spirit came. It was some days before the Holy Spirit came. The affirmative has referred to what Jesus taught concerning his second return. Jesus did not teach that he would

come before the Holy Spirit came. The teaching of Jesus meant then just what it means now; and if [407] Jesus did not mean then that he would come before the Holy Spirit was sent to earth, then his teaching does not mean now that he would come before the Holy Spirit came. This breaks the force of the affirmative's argument on the imminency of the teaching of Christ as interpreted by the affirmative. In carrying out the commission and in the work of the Holy Spirit, God had the great scheme of redemption to develop, he had the complete will of Jehovah to reveal to man, and he had his wonderful plan of salvation to execute. In this great scheme and revealed will and executed plan God put the element of time. This element of time for the development and execution of the will and plan of God forever precludes the meaning of the term "imminent" as given by Brother Boll. Brother Boll's meaning of the term "imminent"--liable to happen at any time--would cut short the great scheme of redemption and plan of salvation which God purposed to develop. The affirmative has not met the force of this argument.

Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, says: "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." ([1 Cor. 13:10.](#)) Again, in writing to the church at Ephesus, he says that certain things had been placed in the church "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, . . . unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." ([Eph. 4:11-13.](#)) There was an imperfection, or an imperfect condition of the church and an incomplete revelation of God's will, up to a certain time. God intended that the church attain its perfection, and he also intended from the first to give a complete revelation of his will. He knew it would take some time for the church to attain unto that state, and he knew it would take some time to unfold his will to the church. Now, if the coming of Christ were imminent--that is, liable to happen at any time--and if it should have happened before the state of perfection or complete revelation, then it would have cut short God's plan and [408] purpose. Brother Boll's definition of his term and interpretation of his proposition thus contradict the Scripture. Brother Boll has not met this argument.

Again, Paul taught in [2 Thess. 2:1-12](#) that there were some precursors to the coming of Christ. He says concerning the coming of the Lord: "Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Paul plainly states that Christ will not come until at least these two things occur--(1) "the falling away" and (2) "the man of sin be revealed." Since the Scriptures teach *now* just what they taught *then*, and they taught *then* that the coming of Christ was not imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then they do not teach now that the coming of Christ is imminent. Brother Boll has failed to meet this argument.

Again, the argument was made that the Scriptures teach that the judgment is to take place at the coming of Christ. (See [Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 14:9-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1.](#)) The Scriptures teach that all are to be judged by the gospel and are to be judged at the same time. ([Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 2:16; Rev. 20:11-15.](#)) There is no room for the millennium to come between the coming of Christ and the judgment. If the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any time--and the judgment is to be at the coming of Christ, then the judgment is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. The affirmative has failed to meet this argument.

Brother Boll taught in *Word and Work*, 1917, page 354, that "the willful king" would sum up all world power before the coming of Christ. He said that "in the end time a mighty king shall have all but universal dominion." If this "willful king" is to come before Christ comes, and the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then the coming of this "willful king" is also imminent--that is, liable to happen at any [409] moment. The affirmative has failed to meet this objection to his proposition.

Again, Brother Boll taught in *Word and Work*, 1917, page 390, that "Rome comes back"--that is, the Roman Empire, he says, is to be reestablished before Christ comes. If the coming of Christ is imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment--then the reestablishment of old pagan Rome is also imminent--that is, liable to happen at any moment. In fact, the reestablishment of the old Roman Empire is *more* imminent than the coming of Christ, since the Roman Empire is to be reestablished before Christ comes. The affirmative has failed to meet this argument.

The negative may not be a fair judge, but it is the humble judgment entertained by the negative that the affirmative has made a complete failure in attempting to prove that "the Scriptures teach that the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent." The affirmative claimed that this was the most important proposition of all that we have discussed; that "the vital and practical center of the Bible's prophetic teaching" was summed up in this proposition. We must conclude that if this be true, if this proposition is the most important of them all, and since the affirmative has made such a signal failure in proving this, the most important proposition of them all, then the Scriptures do not teach any of the propositions which he has affirmed. Where is the book, chapter, and verse that teaches that "the coming of Christ is premillennial and imminent?" *There is no such Scripture in the Bible.*

#### CONCLUSION.

We have now concluded the discussion. I wish to join Brother Boll in thanking the Gospel Advocate for the very liberal space that it has given to this discussion. The Advocate invited the discussion in the interest of the truth, unity, and peace of the church. Its high regard for honor and strong desire to be just and fair to all who [410] might oppose the fundamental and vital teachings of the Bible as advocated by the Advocate caused it to invite Brother Boll to discuss fully, frankly, and freely all that he might believe that the Bible teaches on these questions which have in many sections disturbed the churches. I am glad that Brother Boll accepted the invitation and has had full, free, and unlimited space in the columns of the Advocate to express himself as his deep conviction and good judgment guided him.

No victory over Brother Boll has been sought. I have not consciously, as an affirmant or respondent, desired any victory over Brother Boll; neither do I think that he, either as an affirmant or respondent, desired any victory over me. We have not sought for victory the one over the other. We both have desired only the triumph of truth over error. We have prayed throughout the discussion that only the truth of God on these subjects may be taught. I have pressed some points, many points, very hard in the discussion. This was done, not to confuse or embarrass Brother Boll, but that the truth might appear in its boldness and simplicity. Both of us have tried to maintain Christian courtesy and dignity toward each other. We have felt keenly our

responsibilities to God and to the patient readers and have tried to discharge our duties as servants of the Most High.

I reciprocate the fraternal expression and high regard which Brother Boll has for me. I have had many discussions and many kinds of opponents, but I have never had a more courteous and brotherly opponent than Brother R. H. Boll. My high regard for him has been increased because of the discussion. I believe him to be sincere, pious, and a cultured, Christian gentleman. I entertain the kindest personal feelings toward him. We differ, as the reader knows; but our differences and a discussion of them do not keep me from esteeming him very highly as a brother in Christ Jesus. [411]

I join him in thanking the prayerful, patient readers for following the discussion of each proposition to its close. The discussion has been long, and possibly tedious to some; but I trust that much good has been done by the discussion, and that all have been led into a fuller knowledge of the truth of God and into a closer walk with him.

We both yearn for the peace and unity of the body of Christ, and have kept constantly before us the fact that one purpose of this discussion was to help bring about a better understanding between brethren and heal sores and breaches that may have occurred at any time or place. May our brethren continue the study of these questions until all are at a unit on them, until there be "one faith"--as there is but "one Lord" and one God and Father of all.

May the Lord abundantly bless "the Israel of God," "the seed of Abraham," "the household of faith," and help us all to "love his appearing" by maintaining good works and keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." [412]

## About the authors

**H. Leo Boles** - Henry Leo Boles was born near Gainesboro, Tennessee, on February 22, 1876. He was baptized into Christ in 1895 by W.T. Kidwell. He entered Burritt College in 1898, transferring to the Nashville Bible School in 1903 (Now David Lipscomb University). He taught philosophy and mathematics for seven year, and served as president of the School from 1913 to 1920 and from 1923 to 1932. During his presidency he was unexcelled as a teacher of the Bible, and it is estimated that fifteen hundred young preachers received instruction in his classes, as well as hundreds of other students. He wrote for the GOSPEL ADVOCATE for almost forty years as contributor, staff writer, and editor. His commentaries on Matthew, Acts, and Luke are widely regarded as the best on their subject. A large part of his life was spent in Christian education. He passed from this life on February 7, 1946.

**Robert Henry Boll** (June 7, 1875 – April 13, 1956) was a German-born American preacher in the Churches of Christ. Boll is most known for advancing a premillennialist eschatology within the Churches of Christ, in articles written during his editorship of the front page of the *Gospel Advocate* from 1909 to 1915 and after 1915 in *Word and Work*, leading to a dispute which was a significant source of division within the Churches of Christ in the 1930s. Boll was one of the most influential advocates for the premillennial point of view.