

SYLLABUS OF LESSONS  
ON THE  
BOOK OF REVELATION.

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ANALYSIS OF THE REVELATION.

Introduction and Vision of Christ. I.

1. Epistles to the Seven Churches, II, III.

2. Seven Seal opened, IV—VIII, 1.

(1.) Vision of God seated on his throne surrounded by worshippers. In his hand a sealed scroll, which is taken by the Lamb to open, (IV, V.)

(2.) Opening of the Six Seals. (VI.)

(3.) Sealing of the 144,000, as symbol of protection from the impending judgments. The glorified sufferers. (VII.)

(4.) Seventh Seal opened. (VIII, 1.)

3. Seven Trumpets sounded, VIII, 2—XI.

(1.) Four trumpets followed by various judgments—fifth by the locusts—sixth by an army on terrible horses. (VIII, 2—IX.)

(2.) The angel standing on sea and land. John eating the little scroll and measuring the temple. The two witnesses and the seventh trumpet. (X, XI.)

4. Three enemies, viz: dragon and two beasts, XII—XIV, 5.

(1.) Woman clothed with the sun, bearing a child, watched by a great red dragon, but both preserved from him. (XII.)

(2.) Beast with seven heads and ten horns—beast with two horns. (XIII.)

(3.) The Lamb and his 144,000. (XIV, 1—5.)

5. Seven bowls poured out, XIV, 6—XVI.

(1.) Introductory—intimations of approaching judgments. (XIV, 6—end.)

(2.) Song of Moses and of the Lamb. (XV.)

(3.) The seven bowls. (XVI.)

6. The harlot Babylon and her destruction, XVII—XIX, 10.

7. Christ's victories and reign, XIX, 11—XX.

(1.) Triumph over the beast, and the other beast, or false prophet. (XIX, 11—end.)

(2.) Satan bound, first resurrection and thousand years. Satan loosed, battle and last judgment. (XX.)

8. The new creation and new Jerusalem, XXI—XXII, 5.

Concluding warnings, invitations, and prophecies. (6—end.)

#### BOOKS ON THE REVELATION.

Elliott, *Horae Apocalipticae*, 4th ed. 1851, 4 vols. 8vo. (\$20.) Very copious and complete, full account of history of interpretation, able, earnest and devout, but not cautious, and not always fair to opponents. This the great work now. There is also a 5th edition.

Archdeacon Lee, in the Bible Comm. on the New Testament, vol. IV (to be had separately), Scribner 1882, gives a full introduction and ample notes, which are intelligent, conservative and quite valuable. Comp. Lee's excellent work on Inspiration.

Stuart on the Apocalypse, 2 vols. 8vo., out of print. Considerable ability, interesting as presenting Preterist (Neronian) view, but not reliable in interpretation.

Cowles on Revelation, New York, Appleton, 1871, small volume, able and readable, much the same view as Stuart, but more vigorous as well as briefer.

Alford, very good for exegesis of particular passages.

Barnes, useful in explaining particular passages.

Lord on the Apocalypse, acute, well written and suggestive, very profitable to read it. 2nd edition best. Synchronous Historical view.

Ryland, Lectures on Revelation, follows Lord.

Cumming, various works on Revelation, follows Elliott, more readable, popular style, but not satisfactory to a student.

Hengstenberg on Revelation, translated, 2 vols. 8vo., worth having, but often fanciful and uncertain.

Ebrard, do. (Also his art. in Herzog.)

Bengel, acute remarks, but some of his theories wild.

Glasgow, Comm. on Apocalypse, Edinburgh, 1872. \$6. Irish Presbyterian—elaborate, but fanciful and opinionated. Synchronous and continuous theories mingled.

Vaughan, Lectures on the Revelation of St. John. New York, Macmillan. \$3. Chiefly devotional and practical, and quite good. Prefers synchronous theory. (Dr. Vaughan is one of the favorite preachers in the Church of England now, and good at expository discourses.)

Andrew Fuller's Works, vol. 3, p. 201—307—historical scheme—condensed, clear, sober and cautious, well worth studying.

Ramsay on Revelation, Richmond, Presbyterian Board of Publication. 1874.

Fairbairn on Prophecy gives a considerable portion of the volume to Revelation. Synchronous theory, very suggestive.

Lange on Revelation, translated 1874, not very valuable, but well to have it.

Godet, in his *New Test. Studies*, gives a valuable essay on this book. *Amer. Comm. on Rev.*, by J. A. Smith, editor of the *Standard*, and Prof. J. R. Boise. Synchronous theory. Judicious and decidedly helpful.

Milligan, *Lectures on Revelation*, *International Revision Comm. on Revelation*, and volume *Expositor's Bible*, acute and stimulating.

Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age*, strongly premillenarian.

B. B. Warfield, valuable Art. on Revelation in *Presbyterian Review*, April, 1884.

Prof. Smith, Art. in *Bibl. Sac.*, April, 1888, ably maintaining later date, reign of Domitian.

Düsterdieck, comm., translated, (continuation of Meyer,) learned and useful if wisely employed.

David Brown, the Structure of the Apocalypse, stimulating and suggestive.

We have not mentioned the older works, some of them very learned and able, chiefly in Latin (full lists and estimates in Elliott); nor works in German only. (Ewald, DeWette, &c.) Nor the ephemeral works in England and this country, *Armageddon*, &c., &c., whose name is legion.

Recommend especially:

(English) Smith, Milligan's comm., Lee, Vaughan; also Elliott.

(Greek) Lee, Alford, Smith, Düsterdieck, Vaughan; also Elliott.

#### RESEMBLANCE TO OLD TESTAMENT.

Among the first things that strike one in this book is the resemblance of the imagery to that of the Old Testament prophets, particularly to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah. A few examples:

I, 13 ff. Description of Christ's glorious appearance, compare Dan. 10:5, 6 and 7:9; Ezek. 1:7 and 43:2.

IV. Throne, with rainbow. Ezek. 1:26, 28.

4. Twenty-four elders—like heads of David's courses.

6—8. Four animals. Ezek. 1:10; 10:14; Isa. 6:2.

V. Scroll written within and without. Ezek. 2:29; Zech. 5:1—3.

VI, 14. As a scroll rolled together. Isa. 34:4.

VII, 3. Sealing. Ezek. 9:4.

17. Wipe away tears. Isa. 25:8.

X, 5, 6. Angel swearing. Dan. 12:7.

9—11. Eating the scroll. Ezek. 3:1—3.

XI, 1. Measuring reed. Ezek. 40:3; Zech. 2:1.

3, 4. Two witnesses, two olive-trees, two candlesticks. Zech. 4:2, 11, 14.

XII, 7. Michael. Dan. 10:13, 21.

XIII, 12. Beast. Dan. 7:2—8.

XIV, 20. Wine-press. Isa. 63:3.

XV, 3. Song of Moses and the Lamb.

- XVII, XVIII. Babylon. Almost all from the Old Testament.  
 XIX, 17. Invitation to the birds. Ezek. 39:17—20.  
 XX, 8. Gog and Magog. Ezek. 38:2; 3:19.  
 12. The books in the judgment. Dan. 7:10; 12:1; Psa. 69:28.  
 XX, 1. New heavens and earth. Isa. 65:17—19; 66:22.  
 10 ff. New Jerusalem. Ezek. 48:30 ff.  
 XXII, 1, 2. River out of the throne and the tree of Life. Ezek. 47:1, 12; Zech. 14:8.  
 Very many others. Yet no *quotations* from the Old Testament at all. Westcott and Hort give a list of nearly 400 references or allusions to the Old Test.

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## Authorship and Date.

Now almost universally admitted to have been written by the apostle John. As to the date, opinions are much divided. All rationalists and some orthodox writers—Bishop Lightfoot (on Gal.), Westcott (on John, Int.), Schaff, hold that it was written in or soon after the reign of Nero, say A. D. 68. The general opinion refers it to reign of Domitian, say A. D. 95; see Lee and Godet.

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## Interpretation of the Revelation.

### A. STATEMENT OF THE THEORIES OF INTERPRETATION.

Ch. IV and V are introductory to the visions.

Ch. VI ff present predictions.

Immense multitude of theories now usually divided into three great classes (see Tregelles in Horne, Davidson, Angus' Hand Book, Annotated Par. Bible, Alford, and especially Elliott). But three other classes should be added:

1. Preterist theories. That all fulfilled in the past.
  - (1.) Neronian—that written in time of Nero, and all fulfilled in two or three years—most Germans, Renan, Stuart, Cowles.
  - (2.) Domitianic—that written in time of Domitian, and fulfilled in three or four centuries—Bossuet, and most Romanist writers now.
2. Historical theories—that fulfillment going on throughout history, past and future.
  - (1.) Synchronous—make the three series of seven parallel.—Lord, Vaughan, Fairbairn. Some include also the seven churches, as in part Vitringa, Elliott, IV, p. 485.
  - (2.) Continuous—make the three series of seven successive.—Elliott (closely followed by Cumming), Barnes, most English and American writers now.

3. Futurist theory—that all yet to be fulfilled in the future.
4. Theory of successive fulfilment. Arnold, Alexander, see Elliott IV, p. 564. Examined in Elliott IV, p. 620. Our Lord certainly seems to describe himself as 'coming' at the destruction of Jerusalem. Similar to this theory is what Lee calls the Spiritual System, (Bib. Comm., p. 491).
5. Theory of miscellaneous or sporadic fulfilment.
6. Theory that all is merely spiritual. Davidson, III, 627 ff.

## B. HISTORY OF THE THEORIES.

Sketch the history of interpretation of the book. (Elliott's history fullest—brief in Smith's Dictionary, Herzog, &c.,—also in Stuart.) Three great periods.

I. In first three centuries before Constantine the Christians were persecuted by authorities at Rome; they therefore regarded Rome as their great enemy, the beast, the harlot, the antichrist, &c., and looked with longing for the coming of Christ to reign 1000 years with his people. Some regarded this reign as involving only spiritual enjoyments. But others took a grossly sensual view—Chiliasm, like "The Gates Ajar," and much worse—a tendency strengthened by Montanism, and this led to violent opposition, so that some in the third century began to attack the book as too much encouraging Chiliasm. (See Neander I, p. 649 ff. Herzog, "Chiliasmus.")

II. After Constantine (say A. D. 325), views changed. Rome was now reckoned the friend and supporter of Christianity. Became common to hold that Christ's reign of 1000 years began with Constantine. He (C.) was the man-child of Chap. 12, born of the woman, the church. So there had already begun before the resurrection, a secular reign of Christ for 1000 years. Consequences of this change: (1.) Thus the longing for Christ's coming died out among men. (2.) So, too, arose the historical theory of interpretation—part already past, the 1000 years having begun, remainder yet to come. Successive interpreters make the book a waxen nose (Ebrard in Herzog). Every interpreter of each successive age would find in the book the events up to his time. This not wrong, if cautiously done. But the constant tendency was, as it has been ever since, to make these events cover nearly the whole ground of the book, so as to infer that the end was near. For this tendency two reasons. (1.) We are taught to look for Christ's coming. (2.) Only the men whose imaginations were inflamed by the thought that the book showed Christ's coming to be certainly near, set themselves to write expositions of the book. We easily see the error thus committed by men who lived, say six or nine centuries ago, in assuming that the events up to their time covered nearly the whole ground—and there is here a warning.

III. The Reformers of the 16th century (Luther, Calvin, &c.,) gained two new points. (1.) It was already more than 1000 years since Con-

stantine. (2.) They began to see in the harlot Babylon the Papacy. Then comparing Daniel and 2 Thess., they identified the harlot Babylon with Antichrist. That the Papacy is Antichrist was asserted by Luther, Calvin, Knox, and in 1703 was declared by Turretin to be the firm belief of all Reformers and Protestants. This position has obviously great plausibility. In the first period the Christians had understood the Babylon of Chap. 17 to be Rome, especially in 17:9. So the Protestants were but reviving the interpretation of the early Fathers, only not Pagan, but Papal Rome.

To escape from the Protestant position, two Spanish Jesuits, late in the 16th century, devised each a new theory. Ribera of Salamanca, in A. D. 1585 (about 3 centuries ago), presented the Futurist scheme; and a little later, Alcasar of Seville, the Preterist scheme (Elliott IV, 465—9.) Of course, each has since been a good deal modified.

It is curious to trace the history of the principal works that followed. In England *Mede* in 1632 published a powerful exposition on the *historical* scheme. The second beast is the Papacy, the first three vials are Jno. Huss, Luther, Queen Elizabeth, &c. But *Hammond* in 1656 (time of Cromwell, when Churchmen were hardly treated by the Puritans, and so less hostile to Rome) adopted the *Preterist* scheme of Alcasar. In France, Jurieu, a Protestant exiled by revocation of the Edict of Nantes, published in 1685 an exposition mainly based on *Mede*; and this was answered five years after by the celebrated *Bosuet*, taking the preterist view, so as to guard the Papacy from the charge of being the harlot Babylon and Antichrist. His view has ever since been the favorite among Romanists.

In the 18th century the most famous works are those of *Vitringa* (in Holland) and Sir Isaac Newton, both on the *historical* theory. Late in the century began the great series of *Preterist* expositions in Germany, continuing to the present day.

Among historical expositors (including nearly all Protestants out of Germany) the French Revolution introduced a new idea, viz: that popular revolution and infidelity, one or both, are among the things predicted by the beast and the vials. It was found to be just 1260 years from Justinian's edict, recognizing the Pope's supremacy, to the French Revolution. The French Revolution still plays an important part in most treatises on the historical scheme.

Early in this century the Futurist theory was urged by some Romanists and some Church of England writers.

## C. EXAMINATION OF THE THEORIES.

### I. PRETERIST THEORIES.

1. Neronian Preterists hold that the book was written in the reign of Nero (who died A. D. 68), or in that of Galba, just after; that all the predictions refer to the overthrow of Judaism by the destruction of

Jerusalem in A. D. 70 (see Chap. 11:8), and the fall of Heathenism as represented by the death of Nero and the interruption of his persecutions. A favorite passage with them is 17:9, 10, where the 6th head, beginning with Julius Caesar, would be Nero, and the 7th which was to follow, "must remain a little time," viz: Galba, who reigned a few months. That is certainly one of the most exact correspondences ever yet found in the interpretation of the book. (Düsterdieck, Cowles, p. 38). They say that Rome is called a harlot because idolatrous. They dwell much on the expression "the time is at hand," 1:3; 22:6, 10, &c. They insist that we must not expect to find a separate event corresponding to every detail of the imagery. Stuart compares Psalm 18, in which David's deliverance from Saul is described by high wrought and multiplied images.

#### *Objections.*

(1.) It depends on the theory of the early (Neronian) date, which is contrary to the very strong evidence of the early Christians and conflicts with the striking appropriateness of the book to be the last book of the New Testament. (Compare Bernard.) Still a good many orthodox writers now contend for early date, on general grounds, as Lightfoot (on Gal.), Westcott on John (Bib. Comm., vol. ii, p. lxxxvi), Schaff, Ch. Hist. (ed. 2), Vol. I, p. 834. The opinion that it was written in the time of Nero is first found in the Syriac translation of Revelation, made in the 6th century (Warfield, p. 232).

(2.) The fulfillment being so long past, it ought by this time to have become quite plain; but it is not so.

(3.) It is impossible to work out the details, referring Chap. 6—11 to overthrow of Judaism, and Chap. 12—22 or 12—19 to death of Nero and end of the persecutions he introduced. And Psa. 18 is by no means a parallel case.

(4.) In the favorite text, 17:9—11, what of the 8th head (in verse 11)? Compare 13:3. Stuart makes it refer to a popular belief that Nero was not really dead, or would come to life again—a strange interpretation, surely. Cowles rejects this, but has nothing to substitute.

(5.) Predictions as to future rest and glory are belittled by being restricted to earthly conditions, and to 3 or 4 years. Stuart tried to remove this objection by making Chap. 20—22 refer to future triumphs of Christianity. But thus a great leap in the interpretation with no corresponding gap in the prediction. And then what of 7:9 ff., and many similar passages?

(6.) Analogy of Old Testament prophecies is against it. Daniel, most closely connected with Revelation, predicts (according to the common view) as far as the coming of Christ, and probably much farther. So with most of the prophets. But here only 3 or 4 years at farthest.

Yet this the opinion of most Germans now, including Ewald, Düsterdieck, DeWette (though not of Hengstenberg and Ebrard). Also of

Stuart, who commonly followed the Germans; and of Renan, in his book "L'Antechrist." Recent, brief and clear exposition on this theory in Cowles. The Germans like it, because it reduces the prophetic element to a minimum; Cowles, because it takes away everything mystical, makes all simple and clear.

## 2. Domitianic Preterists.

This view began with the Spanish Jesuits about 3 centuries ago, and was put in better form nearly 2 centuries ago by Bossuet, who was not only a most eloquent preacher, but a most skilful controversialist (Variations of Protestantism.)

They hold that the Apocalypse predicted the triumphs of Christianity over Judaism and Paganism, in the first three or four centuries. As to Jews, only their later calamities predicted, for the book was written twenty-five years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It might include the second destruction in time of Barcochba. But the destruction by Titus was the great calamity to the Jews and Judaism, of which the subsequent events were but subordinate consequences. Thus the Domitianic scheme gains over the Neronian as to Rome and Paganism, but loses as to Jerusalem and Judaism.

In the details, Bossuet utterly fails (Elliott IV, p. 550 ff.). His particular interpretations are not only often wanting in plausibility, but they often contradict one another, and involve great confusion and arbitrariness. Thus the destruction of the Apocalyptic Babylon is with him only the partial destruction of Pagan Rome by the Northern Barbarians. But it was Christianized Rome, and not Pagan Rome that was sacked by the Goths. And then Babylon was to be afterwards the seat of unclean beasts and demons—whereas Rome after the sacking by the Barbarians continued to be the seat of professed Christianity. Such facts seem fatal to Bossuet's scheme. Moreover the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years (1260 days) so prominent, are not explained. But any one who wishes to meet the Romanists on the interpretation of Revelation, must make himself well acquainted with the Domitianic Preterist scheme, of which Bossuet is said to be still the principal exponent.

## II. FUTURIST THEORIES.

These hold that all, at least after Chap. 1—3, refers to Christ's second advent and events immediately preceding it. Some say even the Epistles to the seven churches. Israel is the literal Israel.

The Apocalyptic beast or Antichrist under his last head, is held to be a personal, infidel opposer of Christianity, who will rule over the Saints  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years (no year-day), till destroyed by Christ's coming.

These writers then agree with the Preterists in rejecting year-day and holding to only literal Israel, but opposed as to time of fulfilment.

This Futurist theory was devised, as the Preterist was, three centuries ago (by Spanish Jesuit Ribera), to set aside the Protestant historical interpretation. It is of late a good deal advocated in the church of Eng-

land, for several reasons. (1.) Dissatisfaction with the common Protestant interpretations and with the Preterist scheme, and just cutting the knot. (2.) Opposition to year-day theory, which was little heard of before Wyclif. (3.) Supposed accordance with the early Patristic view—really, not a little different. Chief advocate Dr. S. R. Maitland—also some of the celebrated Oxford tracts. (Elliott IV, 524, 526.) I know of no American work advocating it, and but one German Protestant work, that of Fuller, 1875.

This theory cannot be proved, nor entirely disproved. The analogy of the Old Testament prophecies is against it. It seems inconsistent with statements such as “the things which must shortly come to pass,” &c., but this might be explained. It seems less appropriate to console John’s first readers—but James said, “Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” To take the Apocalyptic Israel as the literal Israel involves the literal restoration of the Jews, &c. (which is very doubtful), and also various practical difficulties in the interpretation. And then certain predictions do strikingly accord with events that have already occurred, so as to make it very probable that some of the predictions have been, at least in part, fulfilled.

One thing they urge is certainly true, viz: that the book is really a prophecy of the second coming of Christ and the events that will precede it—not of coming events in general, ending with the second coming. This is important. For Christians the great event of the future is Christ’s second coming, and other things derive their chief importance from their relation to it. And so we are still in the same attitude as regards this book that the first readers occupied, still looking for the great coming event, though some of the preliminary events have no doubt already occurred.

### III. HISTORICAL THEORIES.

1. Synchronous. This holds that the three series of sevens are parallel. Some writers include the seven churches also, as Vitringa (Elliott IV, 485.) This synchronous scheme is adopted by very many English writers; e. g. Vaughan, Fairbairn. It has able representatives in Lord and Smith. They do not suppose that the three series correspond at every step, as for example, that the fourth seal, the fourth trumpet and the fourth vial mean exactly the same event; but that each series begins near the time of John, and each extends to the second coming of Christ. In favor of this theory:

(1.) Analogy of many Old Testament prophecies, particularly Pharaoh’s dream (two sevens too), and Daniel’s prophecies.

(2.) The imagery of the later seals and later trumpets seems naturally to suggest the time of the end; e. g. 6:12—17, particularly verse 17, and 7:9—17; again, 10:6 (sixth trumpet) and 11:15.

(3.) Difficulty of fixing certainly the fulfillment of the seals and trumpets upon the other theory. Upon the continuous theory, these, at

any rate the seals, are long past, and it ought to be possible to settle their interpretation, but the various schemes are still uncertain. (This holds against Elliott's seals as truly as against Bossuet's scheme of the whole.) Upon synchronous theory, much easier to suppose that the first of each series, while still obscure, will become plain hereafter, in connection with the second coming.

Each of these three arguments has no small weight.

#### *Objections.*

(1.) It seems to us less natural than the continuous theory; it appears to make of the book a jumble.

(2.) In 8:1 the trumpets seem to grow out of the seals—seventh seal has no fulfilment indicated, save in the trumpets. Still, there is the silence in heaven—and it may be said that the matter ends with only that, because other and parallel series were to follow.

Thus the synchronous seems to have very good ground as against the continuous theory.

2. Continuous. Elliott (closely followed by Cumming), Barnes, and most English and American writers now.

This seems to us more natural. Events beginning soon, and extending to the second coming. If the preterist and the futurist theories are not established, we seem shut up to the historical, and the continuous is in itself the natural way to take the successive theories, if there is nothing to the contrary.

### TWO GREAT DIFFICULTIES

apply to both of the historical theories, but one of them especially to the continuous theory.

(1.) Lack of clear fulfilment of the early predictions. If the continuous theory be correct, then the seals were fulfilled long ago, and should now be clear.

Thus Elliott makes the sixth seal refer to the time of Constantine, the others of course preceding. These, then, ought to be clear. Well, as to the four horsemen of the first four seals, Elliott makes a fair showing for taking the horses as denoting the Roman Empire, the horse being sacred to Mars from the time of Romulus (tradition), I, 117 f.

The first seal is the period of preparation which followed the reign of Domitian, beginning a year or so after these visions and reaching to the early years of Commodus, say three-fourths of a century.

The second seal represents the civil wars which followed, 6:4.

The third seal is quite imperfectly made out. Alexander Severus, oppressive taxation (black horse denoting consequent distress)—rider with balance represents Rome proconsuls, &c. To prevent these the Senate sometimes fixed the price of food (proof from Cicero !). Oil and wine. All Emperors had given the Roman populace grain—at this period oil also given by several Emperors; and of a later Emperor (Aurelian) we

are told that he determined to give the people wine—don't know that he did (Elliott, I, 165). Does not this look like trifling?

The fourth seal the great famine, pestilence, &c., in the third quarter of the third century. Fits very well.

The fifth seal the persecutions under Diocletian, about A.D. 300. Fits well. "How long" (6:10) referred to the fact that many grievous persecutions occurred before this. The Christian martyrs, before this time already, were beginning to expect and to declare that their blood would be avenged (Elliott, I, 210)—of course they did.

The sixth seal—primary vision (6:12-17) destruction of the Pagan power in the Empire, by Constantine. This does not come up to the strong language. Did the pagans universally (every bondman and free-man, verse 17) believe that the day of the Lamb's wrath had then come? It was not a day of general wailing and woe, for Constantine did not forbid pagan worship; he tolerated and protected it.

Second vision, Chap. 7, the twelve tribes of Israel mean the mass of professing Christians under and after Constantine, (when multitudes joined the Christians, most of them without true piety) and the 144,000 the elect of grace at that time. There is thought to be special reference to Augustine, who so clearly brought out the doctrine of election and the certain salvation of the elect, as prefigured by the vision of the palm-bearers.

Thus the interpretation of the sixth seal seems quite a failure, and this is the main point in the series. The third also fails, and the others, though more plausible, are in no case certain. No infidel could be converted by the fulfilment of this series of seals, as given by Elliott, and his is generally regarded as the best interpretation of them on the continuous scheme. And Elliott expresses willingness to have his whole theory tested by the six seals, III, 267.

(2.) The other great difficulty about both historical schemes is, that they seem to require the year-day theory.

Year-day theory first mentioned A. D. 1190 (see Elliott, Cowles' Appendix and Lee). Applied to the 1260 days (11:3 and 12:6); the 42 months (11:2 and 13:5); the time, times, and half a time= $3\frac{1}{2}$  years (12:14)—this last in Dan. 7:25; 12:7. Besides some (e. g. Elliott) so understand the 5 months (9:10), the hour and day and month and year (9:15), and the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days (11:9, 11).

The principle is denied by Preterists and Futurists, including Romanists, Rationalists, and some orthodox writers, and also by most of those who hold to successive fulfilments, or to the purely spiritual theory.

1. Passages chiefly relied on to establish the year-day theory are three, Dan. 9:24-7; Ezek. 4:4-6; Numb. 14:33-4.

In Daniel, Gabriel tells him it shall be "seventy weeks" until Messiah.

Ezek. 4:4-6, 390 days and 40 days, "I have appointed thee each day for a year."

Numb. 14:34—"each day for a year."

This is all the Scriptural proof—a few other passages adduced by some, but clear that they furnish no proof. Correspondence between Jewish Sabbath, Sabbatical year and year of Jubilee. Further argued that results as to the Papacy show that the principle is true.

Bush urges that in attacking year-day we attack the Protestant Reformation, which built itself largely on the application of Revelation to the Papacy. If true, this would settle nothing, for the Reformers made many grave mistakes. But it is not true, for Luther and other Reformers of his time knew nothing of the year-day theory at all.

2. Objections to the year-day theory.

Observe that it is improbable in itself, and requires clear proof from Scripture.

In Dan. 9:24-27, it is literally '70 sevens' or '70 hebdomads,' and may mean '70 sevens' of years, just as well as '70 sevens' of days. Gesenius quotes from a late Latin writer the phrase 'hebdomas annorum,' 'a seven of years.' Some Rabbinical writers use the Hebrew term in this way, a seven of years. Elliott says this proves nothing as to Scripture, but certainly as to Daniel at least, it proves such a sense possible.

Daniel had been considering Jeremiah's prediction that the captivity would last 70 years, and thought they must be nearly ended (Dan. 9:2). Then he prayed long for God's forgiving mercy to Israel, and Gabriel appeared saying that it would be '70 sevens' till Messiah.

As the prophecy he had been studying told of 70 years, so here he would naturally understand 70 sevens of years, seven times as long. Compare "till 7 times? Yea, till 70 times seven." Grant then that by Old Testament usage 70 sevens would more naturally mean 70 weeks, it does not certainly mean that, the other being not only possible, but under the circumstances natural.

In Ezek. 4:4-6 the day is appointed as a symbol of a year; but the Lord does not there say day and mean year.

In Numbers 14 there is a correspondence between the appointed punishment of the nation and the time spent by the spies, 'each day for a year.' Now if God had said, "Ye shall wander 40 days," and it had turned out 40 years, this would then be a case in point.

These passages show that such might have been the meaning, that such a prophetic relation could have been established, but they do not at all prove that it was done. If the question be asked, what right have you to understand that 1260 days signify 1260 years?—do these passages prove the right? At most they only furnish a perhaps.

But then remember how many dates are given elsewhere in prophecy and never with the year-day meaning. The prophecy which Daniel himself was studying, the prophecy of Jeremiah as to 70 years, was correctly taken by him as literal. Suppose he had taken it as year-day, then it would have meant 25,200 years. So too with Daniel's time, times, and the dividing of a time (7:25 and 12:7), said to mean not merely

3½ years but (1260 days and so) 1260 years; compare Dan. 4:17, 23, 25, 32, where four times over it is predicted that Nebuchadnezzar's insanity would last until 7 'times' should have passed over him. Here a time is evidently a year—nobody would understand the 7 times to be 2520 years. And we are bound therefore so to understand the 3½ times of Daniel till the contrary be proved. This phrase in Daniel and Revelation sounds mysterious and seems to prove something, but Daniel's own usage shows what he means by it. In like manner in Revelation, if we apply the year-day theory to the 3½ years, we should also apply it to the 1000 years of Christ's reign, making it 360,000 years, which nobody does, except Mr. Lord, Glasgow, and a German writer Driessen, A. D. 1717.

Thus then the year-day theory is possible, but not proven, with a strong probability against it from the very usage of Daniel and Revelation.

Now as to the results of the year-day theory.

Take Elliott's interpretation. The 1260 years begins with the decree of Justinian, recognizing the Pope's supremacy, in A. D. 529—533. Add 1260, and we get 1789-93, French Revolution. Then, we are told, the Papacy was overthrown. But afterwards Phocas issued a decree confirming the Pope's supremacy, in 604-8, and this with 1260 gives 1864-8. So a few years ago it was urged that at that epoch, say 1867, Christ would come and completely destroy the Papacy. To this effect numerous works of Cumming.

In 1872 Dr. Cumming, following Elliott, published another volume, comparing events of 1870 with the vials in Chap. 16, and triumphantly claiming that here was a plain fulfilment, &c.

And what right have we to count the 1260 years from two distinct decrees, 75 years apart? Elliott says Jeremiah's 70 years of the captivity have to be counted both from B. C. 606 to decree of Cyrus, and from B. C. 588 (destruction of Jerusalem) to decree of Darius, about B. C. 518 or 520. This is not at all certain; and if it were, we could not with any certainty infer the same thing here.

So the results prove nothing conclusive. Mr. Lord is very chary of fixing the beginning of the 1260 years.

The year-day theory may perhaps be true—no better can be said for it.

The Historical Scheme in general does not stand or fall with the year-day theory; but all the now current historical interpretations are based on it.

#### THE MILLENNIUM. REV. 20.

A thousand years would be natural as a round number for a long period. Plato's Republic supposes men to return to life at the end of every thousand years, and the Talmud variously connects a period of a thousand years with King Messiah (Lee, p. 809).

#### DIFFERENT THEORIES.

1. The 1000 years after the Christian era, or after the triumph of Christianity over Pagan Rome in the time of Constantine, (some say

Charlemagne about A. D. 800.) Towards the end of the 10th century, there was a widespread opinion that the end of the world was approaching. Many charters of that time begin with the words: "As the world is now drawing to a close."

In the beginning of the 14th century, 1000 years after Constantine, the Turks came into prominence (thought to be Gog and Magog).

This theory was once universal. Now held by the Romanists. Enough for us that during this period Popery and Mohammedanism were almost universal in place of primitive Christianity.

2. Millennium a new Church organization. The Anabaptists of Münster, 1533, made it the new Zion, with community of goods and of wives. Swedenborg made it the new Jerusalem Church, which he founded. The Mormons call themselves Latter-day Saints, and propose to restore nature to Paradisaical innocence, by a sort of Theocracy and polygamy. "The Temple" at Jaffa, &c. (community of goods). Many others.

3. Millennium before second Advent, or postmillennial Advent. According to this view the millennium consists in a general prevalence of Christianity upon earth, before the second coming of Christ—supposed to be prefigured by Old Testament prophets, particularly the latter part of Isaiah. This view is the most common one among us—first mentioned three centuries ago (Elliott, IV, 103 n). It grew out of the first theory, as heretofore explained. The best book in favor of it is probably Brown on the second Advent.

The great argument against it is the passages, "Shall he find faith on the Earth?"—"As in the days of Noah, Lot," &c., Rev. 1:7; Chap. 20, &c. The common view must at least be greatly modified.

4. Millennium after second Advent, or premillennial Advent. Christ will come, first resurrection of the saints only, who will reign with Christ in this world 1000 years—then Satan loosed again, renewed struggle and victory, resurrection of the wicked and last judgment.

This was common among the early Christians, many of them with gross notions we call Chiliasm (contrast Millennarianism—so the words apostle and missionary)—marriage supper and New Jerusalem signifying that every day a sumptuous meal and plenty of gold and precious stones. But not all early Christians were Chiliasts in this sense.

This view is now increasingly popular—its advocates usually called Adventists or Millennarians. Good specimen in Elliott. Lord holds in like manner that it shall follow the Advent, and then carries out the year-day theory consistently by making the 1000 years represent 360,000 years. Throughout this period the holy dead, having had their resurrection, are to reign with Christ on earth—and only after that will come the resurrection of the wicked and the judgment. This follows the text strictly. Glasgow gives the same view as to 360,000. See also "Yesterday, today," &c., for beautiful descriptions of the marriage of the Lamb, Millennium and Many Mansions.

This has in its favor the plain meaning of Rev. 20, and the teachings of our Lord above mentioned, and the utter uncertainty as to when Christ will come, which is not so strictly true according to the third theory. These are strong arguments. See valuable article in Presb. Review, July, 1882.

5. Purely spiritual—1000 years and all—Davidson. Swedenborg (No. 842) says that the phrase 1000 years signifies an indefinite time. In general he says that when 'thousand' stands alone (i. e. not 7 thousand, 12 thousand, &c.), it always denotes an indefinite number; he has been so told from Heaven. In the Heavenly world, to which our Bible answers, they read for 'a thousand' an indefinite number. And they wonder there at the errors upon earth about this matter of the 1000 years.

6. Millennium in modified sense—Fairbairn, Milligan. Fairbairn's view: Millennium before second Advent, but indefinite as to time. Consisting only in greater prevalence of Christianity than ever before, and its introduction constitutes in one sense a coming of Christ—there will be many comings.

Milligan compares Ezek. 39:9-12 to show that seven years, seven months, there signify only *complete* destruction or cleansing, not denoting a particular period of time. So he thinks here—1000 years denoting completeness of Christ's reign—1000 being a favorite number in this book to symbolize what is perfect and glorious in the condition of Christianity, e. g. 9:4 ff.; 21:16. This quite possible.

#### TIME OF BEGINNING.

To some extent discussed independently of the question as to time of second Advent. Early Christians—some said acceptable year of the Lord and A. D. 365—many said at end of 6,000 years, and this according to Septuagint chronology would be about A. D. 500—550 (Elliott I, 370, 371). Very many, as A. D. 1000 approached, thought Christ would come then. (See above). Of late the time is usually inferred from the 1260 years. But the time of Christ's second coming is unknown and unknowable.

Remark upon Glasgow's grave calculations as to whether the earth can hold the population at the end of 1000 years (not to say 360,000) of profound peace, universal industry, and freedom from vices. A new Malthusianism. He holds (1.) that the sea may cease, and the deserts and ice mountains be changed; (2.) that the earth may be enlarged; (3.) that natural inclinations may be so moderated as to restrict the increase of the race.

NOTE. The lectures which accompany these lessons dwell on the moral and spiritual instructions of the book, showing that whatever view may be adopted as to the fulfilment of its predictions, it should be freely used for practical edification.