

Manner of the Second Advent.

spiritual body is the very same body that was crucified and laid away in Joseph's tomb: they expect, when they see the Lord in glory, to identify him by the scars he received on Calvary. This is a great mistake, which a very little consideration should make manifest—Firstly, It would prove that his resurrection body is not glorious or perfect, but scarred and disfigured: Secondly, It would prove that we do know what a spirit body is, notwithstanding the Apostle's statement to the contrary: Thirdly, It would prove that our redemption price was taken back; for Jesus said, "My flesh I will give for the life of the world." It was his flesh, his life *as a man*, his humanity, that was sacrificed for our redemption. And when he was raised to life again by the power of the Father, it was not to human existence; because that was sacrificed as our purchase price. And if that price had been taken back, we would still be under the condemnation of death, and without hope.

We have no more reason to suppose that our Lord's spirit body since his resurrection is a human body than we have for supposing that his spirit body prior to his first advent was human, or that other spirit beings have human bodies; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones; and, says the Apostle Peter, our Lord was "put to death in the flesh but made alive in spirit."

Our Lord's human body was, however, supernaturally removed from the tomb; because had it remained there it would have been an insurmountable obstacle to the faith of the disciples, who were not yet instructed in spiritual things—for "the spirit was not yet given." (John 7:39) We know nothing about what became of it, except that it did not decay or corrupt. (Acts 2:27,31) Whether it was dissolved into gases or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows;—nor is

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such knowledge necessary. That God did miraculously hide the body of Moses, we are assured (Deut. 34:6; Jude 9); and that as a *memorial* God did miraculously preserve from corruption the manna in the golden bowl, which was placed in the Ark under the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle, and that it was a symbol of our Lord's flesh, the bread from heaven, we also know. (Exod. 16:20,33; Heb. 9:4; John 6:51-58) Hence it will not surprise us if, in the Kingdom, God shall show to the world the body of flesh, crucified for all in giving the ransom on their behalf—not permitted to corrupt, but preserved as an everlasting testimony of infinite love and perfect obedience.

It is at least possible that John 19:37 and Zech. 12:10 may have such a fulfilment. Those who cried, "Crucify him!" may yet, as witnesses, identify the very body pierced by the spear and torn by the nails and thorns.

To regard our Lord's glorious body as a body of flesh would not in the least account for his peculiar and sudden appearings during those forty days prior to his ascension. How could he so suddenly appear and then vanish? How was it that he kept himself almost constantly invisible during those forty days? And why was it that his appearance each time was so changed as not to be recognized as the same one seen on any former occasion, or as the one so well known and loved by all, before his crucifixion, only a few days previous?

It will not do merely to say that these were miracles, for then some use or necessity for the miracles should be named. If his body after his resurrection were flesh and bones, and the same body that was crucified, with all the features and scars, *why* did he perform miracles which not only did not establish that fact, but which were likely, we see, to teach the opposite?—that he himself was no longer human—flesh and bones—but a spirit being who could go and come as the wind, so that none could tell

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their presence and dissolved it when he disappeared. To prove to them that he was a real body of flesh and bones he said to them: "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have". (Luke 24:39) This was not a spirit body, but a body of flesh. The body with which he ascended on high and which he has in heaven is a glorious body which no man can look upon and live except by the miraculous power of Jehovah. The apostle Paul states: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God". (1 Corinthians 15:50, 51) In addition to this, St. John says: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is".—1 John 3:2.

²⁹²St. Paul was given a miraculous view of the Lord in glory. As he was journeying to Damascus suddenly there shone about him a light from heaven. He did not see the body of Jesus but only the light from his glorious body. He heard a voice saying unto him: "I am Jesus". So brilliant was this light that for three days he was blind; and the Lord performed a miracle by removing his blindness. "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith and arose, and was baptized." (Acts 9:1-19) The apostle Paul afterward relating this incident said: "And last of all he [Jesus] was seen of me also, as one born out of due time". (1 Corinthians 15:8) Here we have a little glimpse of what the glorious body of the Lord is. These facts show that the bodies in which Jesus appeared after his resurrection were not the body that was crucified nor his glorious spiritual body, but bodies created expressly for the purpose of appearing unto his disciples. **Our Lord's human body, the one crucified, was removed from the tomb by the power of God. Had it remained there it would have been an**

obstacle in the way of the faith of his disciples, who were not yet instructed in spiritual things. They were not thus instructed until the giving of the holy spirit at Pentecost. The Scriptures do not reveal what became of that body, except that it did not decay or corrupt. (Acts 2:27,31) We can only surmise that the Lord may have preserved it somewhere to exhibit to the people in the Millennial age. The Scriptures tell us that God miraculously hid the body of Moses (Deuteronomy 34:6; Jude 9); and Jehovah could just as easily have preserved and hid away the body of Jesus. Jesus being resurrected a divine being, the express image of the Father, we are sure that no man could look upon him and live. (Exodus 33:20) Christ Jesus the Lord in heaven is a glorious being, the fairest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and no human eye has ever seen him since glorified, except the vision miraculously given to St. Paul.

²⁹³The purpose of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus when understood is further proof that he was raised divine. As we have seen, the ransom must be provided by a perfect human being going into death. This ransom-price, namely, the value of a perfect human life, must be presented in heaven itself as a sin-offering on behalf of mankind. Unless this was done, the ransom would be of no avail and there would be no purchase of the human race from death and its results. The apostle Paul plainly states that Christ Jesus has entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Hebrews 9:24) He is now a great high priest who passed into the heavens, becoming the high priest on behalf of those who come to God through him during the gospel age. (Hebrews 4:14-16) On the typical atonement day, as we have seen, God caused Israel through the priesthood to make a picture of the sin-

THE STRONG CABLE OF CHRONOLOGY

THE world has had many systems of chronology. Among these were the systems of Nabonassar, Macedon, Alexander, Tyre, Rome, the Jews, Creation, Diocletian, Christ, Armenia, Persia, the Hindu, and the Chinese, each counting from some national event and covering certain eras. These systems may be likened to chains or to strings of beads, each date being a link or unit in the whole. The relations existing between the dates have been that each date has been so many years after the preceding and so many years before the succeeding dates. An error in any one of these units upsets either all previous dates or all or some of the later ones.

Much reliance is still placed by historical writers upon some of these systems. The chronology of the Assyrian nations has been founded upon comparisons of events with the so-called Canon of Ptolemy, which was a string of dates which the Greek historian arranged centuries after the events, and which has been found full of inaccuracies. The Greeks every four years celebrated athletic games called Olympiads, the succession and number of which were quite faithfully preserved; and events in Greek history were recorded as taking place in such and such an Olympiad, often with the year in the Olympiad—first, second, third, or fourth—in which instances the date of an event, if correctly recorded in the ancient histories, can be relied upon to a considerable extent.

OTHER SYSTEMS ARE CHAINS, NOT CABLES

Every chronology which consists of a mere string of dates is to be relied upon only as each successive date is correct. No known secular chronology has the entire system firmly knit together by connecting-links between dates which are not successive. Every chronology would be immensely strengthened if it were possible to say concerning each of the chief dates that it was, for example, 1,000 years after another event, 500 years after another, 200 years before another, and so on. Each such line of evidence would tend to establish the more firmly the correctness of the chief dates, and through them the intermediate ones. But such proofs of truth are lacking in the secular chronologies, and especially in periods of antiquity. All secular chronologies are mere guesses when they attempt to set dates for much more than a few hundred years before Christ.

The chronology of present truth is, to begin with, a string of dates, like other chronologies. That is to say, the dates are each known to be so many years before and after the succeeding and preceding dates, each step being proved by the most reliable evidence in existence. But if this were all the proof of the trustworthiness of the chronology, it could not truthfully be claimed to be more reliable than are the secular chronologies. Thus far, it is a chain, and no stronger than its weakest link.

There exist, however, well established relationships among the dates of present-truth chronology. These

internal connections of the dates impart a much greater strength than can be found in other chronologies. Some of them are of so remarkable a character as clearly to indicate that this chronology is not of man, but of God. Being of divine origin and divinely corroborated, present-truth chronology stands in a class by itself, absolutely and unqualifiedly correct.

INCONTESTABLY ESTABLISHED

When a date is indicated by several lines of evidence it is strongly established. The scientific law of probabilities imparts a united strength to the strands of the cable of chronology far greater than the sum of the individual lines of evidence. This is a law which is implicitly relied upon in important affairs: viz., that when a thing is indicated in only one way it may be by chance; if it is indicated in two ways, it is almost certain to be true; and if in more than two ways, it is usually impossible that it is by chance, or that it is not true; and the addition of more proofs removes it entirely from the realm of chance into that of proven certainty.

This principle is applied daily in the weightiest matters in courts of law. The testimony of a single witness may be considered doubtful, but that of only two or three witnesses incontestably establishes the truth. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."—2 Corinthians 13: 1.

In the chronology of present truth there are so many inter-relationships among the dates that it is not a mere string of dates, not a chain, but a cable of strands firmly knit together—a divinely unified system, with most of the dates having such remarkable relations with others as to stamp the system as not of human origin.

The automobile and the law of gravitation are two remarkable things. The one was invented by man; the other was discovered by man. Man invents man-made things, but discovers divinely-created principles. Present-truth chronology is not an invention; it is a discovery. The various discoveries unite into a scientific system of chronology akin to the systems of science in physics, chemistry, radiology, and astronomy.

The matter of chronology becomes worthy of the close attention of able minds, because it supplies the data for a genuine philosophy of history. There is a science of history taught by able and highly educated professors in great universities, but in a vague and confused manner; for it is the attempt to reduce to order the utter confusion which demon control has made of human affairs in this present evil world. If such men find the extremely obscure philosophy which they teach, and concerning which they write in textbooks, worthy of a lifetime of study, how much more worthy of attention is the definite, clear-cut and truly scientific philosophy of history discernible in the chronological system of divine truth.

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creature and not to the Creator. If Brother Russell were on the earth today he would express no sympathy whatsoever with those who foolishly say: "We stand in the basic features of the truth as expounded by Brother Russell." He loved the Lord and would give honor to whom honor is due. The work of the church from 1875 to 1918 was the work of 'preparing the way before the Lord', and when that work was done the Messenger of the covenant came straightway to the temple. (Mal. 3:1-3) Thereafter there was and is a change of work and teaching of the people of God, but no man is responsible therefor or is entitled to any credit therefor.

²³ Who on earth understood prior to 1918 that Zion is God's organization and gives birth to the kingdom and to her children? The fact that no one on earth did so understand prior to the Lord's coming to his temple is proof that it was not God's due time for them to understand. Who understood prior thereto about Satan's organization, the battle in heaven, and the casting of Satan out of heaven? Manifestly no one could understand these things until the temple of God was open. (Rev. 11:19) Only those who by the grace of God have been taken into the temple do now understand. These do not understand by reason of knowledge or wisdom that comes to them from any man, but they are taught of God, who teaches them the truth by and through the Head of the temple class, Christ Jesus. Why then should those today who really believe they are servants of God hesitate for one moment in determining the question concerning who gives them the doctrine of truth? Jehovah God is the great Teacher of his children. To be sure, the publication of these truths is put forth by imperfect men, and for this reason they are not absolutely perfect in form; but they are put forth in such form as reflects God's truth that he teaches his children.

²⁴ Those who are of the temple class have the spirit of God in the measure that came to Elisha, and they do the work which Elisha foreshadowed. Jehovah now gives his children a special revelation of his Word, because it is a time of stress and his children specially need this additional help. Jehovah manifests himself to his people and gives to that class that really love him his full assurance that they are in the right way. It is "in that day", which is the day or period of time after the opening of the temple, that Jehovah specially manifests himself to his children. His people are first made to have an understanding of the meaning of his name Jehovah, and then they are given an understanding that it is Jehovah that speaks to them. To the children of Zion, that is to say, his sons by his woman, he makes known the meaning of his name, and teaches them. To them he says: "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know IN *that day* THAT I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I." (Isa. 52:6, 7) *To-day the children of Zion need no extraneous proof*

that the spiritual food and understanding of the prophecies they have comes from God. They know that no man or men could provide such food. No man or men on earth attempt to lay claim that any of these truths proceed from man. God has spread his table bountifully for his people, and the children of his woman feed thereat. To these children of Zion he says: "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Isa. 42:9) The context of this last scripture definitely locates God's anointed ones as the ones to whom he thus speaks.

²⁵ Jesus told of a time coming when there would be complete unity in Zion, and that the faithful ones would know it; and his very language fixes that time from and after his coming to the temple of Jehovah. He said: "AT *that day* ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:20) To have this full assurance one must be a member of Zion; and therefore there exists a confidential relationship between God and those of his organization, and these are taught of God in that day. We are now in that day to which these words of Jesus apply. "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23) Thus the close confidential relationship is shown between Jehovah, Christ Jesus, and all who are of the temple. The Lord Jehovah is in Zion as his place of habitation. (Ps. 74:2; 132:13) Only the children of Zion, the members of the temple, are there; and such are the ones that are taught and who have a deep appreciation of the things God teaches them from his Word.

²⁶ The church could not come to maturity until the coming of the Lord Jesus to the temple and the building up of Zion. What food the consecrated had and fed upon prior thereto consisted of the first principles or fundamental truths. Those who refuse to progress beyond that the apostle likens unto babes that feed upon milk. What God has given to his people since the coming of the Lord to his temple is strong meat. Those who have refused to accept these truths given by the Lord since that time are therefore unskilful, to say the least of it. "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:13, 14) The strong meat has not come by reason of the wisdom of man, but has come only to God's people because they are children of God and his woman who is Zion; and these are taught of Jehovah.

²⁷ During the Elijah period of the church God gave his people an understanding of some of the deep things of his Word, such as are taught in *Tabernacle Shadows*. These truths were fundamental, to be sure;