

June 2

I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 1 Cor. 2:2

OUR observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this gospel" to engross time and attention

(1Cor 2:1-6 KJV) "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. (2) For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (3) And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. (4) And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: (5) That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (6) Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:"

THE FAITHFUL SEEK GOD'S GLORY, NOT THEIR OWN

R2190 "Great learning in the philosophies often proving a snare, a temptation to preach these and to make a show among men... Let us all copy the Lord and his greatly used and thus approved servant, Paul, until the expression of our every word and act will be "None of self and all of Thee."

(Joh 7:16-18 KJV) "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. (17) If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. (18) He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

(1Th 2:4-6 KJV) "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. (5) For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: (6) Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ."

TRUE FAITH DOES NOT STAND IN THE WISDOM OF MEN, BUT IN THE POWER OF THE SCRIPTURES

R2800 "*Luke 24:13-35...*"*Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way!"...*

We here see the proper course of the teacher illustrated by the great Teacher himself. As he went to the Scriptures and brought forth from them evidences of divine foreknowledge and prediction respecting the things that were transpiring before their eyes, so we, if we attempt to teach others, should not be content with offering our views, our opinions, our conjectures, but should search the Scriptures and be able, from that source to give to every man a reason for the hopes that are within us--that his hopes, as well as ours, may be built up, not upon the theories of men, but upon the inspired teachings of God's Word. Higher

leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the gospel, leaving all other subjects, however interesting, to others now, and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. Those who for any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry

critics, Evolutionists, etc., never follow the method which our Lord Jesus here emphasized as the proper one: on the contrary, denying any special inspiration of Moses and the prophets, they ignore them, and offer instead, as of superior value, their own conjectures. Let us not only ignore such teachers as blind guides, attempting to mislead the Lord's flock, but let us also, to whatever extent we have opportunity to teach others, see that we follow not in their footsteps, but in those of our dear Redeemer. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word there is *no light* in them." (Isa. 8:20) And those who follow such teachers as have "no light" are sure to get further and further into darkness."

May 20 Manna "*A peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:14...*

It is peculiar in that it has a decided faith and acts in harmony with its faith, and with zeal. It is peculiar in that it is self-sacrificing and knows no will but the will of its King. It is peculiar in that it knows the Truth and is able to give a reason for the hope within while others merely speculate and wonder and doubt."

E167 "Let us not accept the doubts and speculations of good people who are dead, or of good people who are living, nor yet our own. Let us remember the Apostle's declaration that the Word of the Lord is given with the intention-- "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:17)"

(Jn 8:31-32 KJV) "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; (32) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

R5508 "THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP... Since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed"...

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for Truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do....

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth," be "established in the Present Truth" [the Truth due], and "be rooted and grounded in the Truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to... "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict."

of the true and only gospel, we have invariably observed, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of our high calling." Z '95-116 R1811:5

R2453 "How firm a foundation we now have for faith, hope and love! What a contrast to our former vague hopes, dim faith or credulity, and cold love--three-fourths fear!

But as we claim that what we present is not *our own*, not *new*, but "The Old Theology"--so old that it had been lost sight of for centuries--we must disclaim any credit even for the finding and re-arrangement of the jewels of truth. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." The writer wholly disclaims superior ability or qualification for the reorganization of the truth in its present solidarity. As the time had come for the bringing together of the scattered thoughts of past centuries in the marvelous inventions of our day,--so the time had come for the bringing together of the fragmentary hopes and promises of God's Word scattered through Christendom. To deny that the Lord has simply "poured out" this harvest time blessing of "present truth" in his own due time and in his own way, would be as wrong as to claim it as of our own invention. "Poured out" exactly expresses the truth on this point too, for he neither "burned the midnight oil," nor racked his brain, nor otherwise forged the chain of truth with heavy sledge blows of human reason on the anvil of knowledge. On the contrary, it came gradually, silently, as comes the morning dawn: the only effort necessary was to keep *awake* and face in the right direction. And the greatest aid in so doing was the effort put forth to awaken others of the "household of faith" and point them to the light and in turn to urge upon them the necessity for serving also, if they would overcome the lethargic "spirit of the world," and be ready to go in to the marriage of the Lamb."

(1 Pet 4:10-11 KJV) "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (11) If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

(Titus 1:9 KJV) "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

R1475 "It is an increasingly popular idea among religious journalists that such a journal should be a medium merely for the expression of all shades of human opinion upon all matters of divine revelation, and that each individual should abstract from them all what he conceives to be true, and reject the rest. But this is precisely what the readers, and often the editors, too, of such journals are unable to do, and the general confusion is only increased unto greater blindness and denser darkness, and thus the purpose of the adversary is accomplished.

There is a deep responsibility to God which every man assumes, whether he realizes it or not, when he becomes a public teacher. "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall *teach* men so, he shall be called the *least* in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever *shall do* and *teach* them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." -- *Matt. 5:19*.

No table is fit for the household of faith to be summoned to that has not been spread by careful hands, fully submitted and obedient to the great Head of the house, whose directions are found in his Word."

(1Tim 5:22 Phillips) "Never be in a hurry to ordain a man, or you may be making yourself responsible for his sins."

R4446 "Truth tests the character, and God desires that it should do so."

(Eze 33:6 KJV) "If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand."

(Acts 20:26-30 KJV) "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. (27) For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. (28) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God... Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

R5044 "THIS ONE THING I DO"

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."--1 Cor. 2:2...

The Apostle warns us to "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but counsels, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"; "*Teach no other doctrine*, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith." 2Tim 2:16,15; 1Tim 1:3,4

HOW NARROW THIS WAY!

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so narrow that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait [difficult] is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto [the] life, and few there be that *find it*!" (Matt. 7:14.) It is so narrow that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's Plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans, projects and questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Are you endeavoring from day to day to vindicate the Divine character and to make known God's righteous ways? Are you diligently studying to make yourself thoroughly familiar with the Truth, so that you may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of your influence? Are you indeed a workman that need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)? Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord, saying truthfully to Him:

"Take myself--I will to be

Ever, only, all for Thee"?...

This is what the Apostle Paul did. Hear him in his zeal for this *one thing* to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. [I *riveted* your attention on this one thing! I kept this one thing continually before you.]... And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power [of the Truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."--1 Cor. 2:1-5.

St. Paul was an outspoken, uncompromising teacher. When he *knew* that he had the Truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it is *false doctrine*. He also taught believers that it was not only their privilege, but their duty to be *established* in the faith, to know on the evidence of God's Word, *why* they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired a reason for the hope that was in them.

Let it be so with us also. Each consecrated believer should ask himself, "How carefully have I studied that which I recognize as Divine Truth? How fully capable am I of handling the Sword of the Spirit?" Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; and that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer--a "Thus saith the Lord"--for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the Divine Plan, quote the Divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the Divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the Truth...

In all the history of the Church there has never been a time in which the great Adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan.

But really to frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible. God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for His name"; and such a company is assuredly being gathered. Yet whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take *thy* crown. (Rev. 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than

this "Gospel of the Kingdom" to engross time and attention, leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all subjects outside of this, however interesting they may be, to those who prefer to devote time to them now; and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. We have invariably observed that those who, for any avoidable cause, have turned aside from the true and only Gospel, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the "prize" of our "high calling."...

"This *one thing* I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

R3726 "Our Lord's discourses were along the lines of divine revelation--the Law and the Prophets, and the fulfilment of these. This is clearly indicated by his declaration, "I speak not from myself; but the Father which sent me he hath given me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." (John 12:49.) Again he said, "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me."--John 7:16.

We pause here to remark that the teachings of all the Lord's representatives should be along this same line--not human speculations and philosophies, but the Word of God-- "He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word." (Jer. 23:28.)"

R1532 "Our Lord prayed for his disciples, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The knowledge of the truth is the sanctifying power, the peace-and-joy-imparting power, and is the precious evidence of divine grace or favor. Those who expect to be sanctified without this divinely provided agency and who expect to enjoy abiding peace without it, make a great mistake... They may for a time, upon a very slight knowledge of the truth, build up beautiful castles of wood, hay and stubble, with here and there a precious stone of truth, and for a time be filled with even ecstatic joy over them; but soon such flimsy structures must fall, and the transient joy end in bitter disappointment--in a loss of both joy and peace and, measurably at least, of the realization of the divine favor.

But such disappointments are never realized by those whose peace has its fountain in the perennial springs of God's eternal truth; for, the Apostle says, he "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." But this knowledge of God is not only an intellectual knowledge of his great and loving plan: it includes also a personal acquaintance with God, a heart to heart communion and fellowship with him--an established sympathy of love and common interest and co-operation. Such a knowledge or acquaintance with God is gained through the study of his precious word with reverence and diligence, through the personal application of the principles of that word in every day life and through secret prayer and communion with God."

A SMALL tract entitled "Bible Astronomy" was recently sent to us by some of our readers, with the request that we help them to see whether or not the theories it aims to support are a part of the gospel, as its author and circulators evidently believe. As the special mission of ZION'S WATCH TOWER is "the edifying of the body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry," and as the question, What constitutes the gospel? is a most important one, we take pleasure in reviewing it here from a Bible standpoint; and from that standpoint only, for two reasons,--(1) because only from the Bible standpoint can we determine whether the theories proposed are a part of the *gospel*; and (2) because the editor of the TOWER is not an astronomer, and if the subject were to be discussed from a scientific standpoint we should want the most accurate information, from the most advanced astronomers of our day, and from all other reliable sources.

Astronomy is an abstruse science, and one which has commanded some of the ablest minds in all ages; and those engaged in it to any purpose have usually devoted to it the best energies of their lives. Its development has been a very gradual one, through much painstaking study and research, and through many centuries, and it has had its apostles in almost every nation. While much of interest attaches to the discoveries and deductions of those early days, comparatively little progress was made until, in more recent times, the invention and numerous improvements of the telescope brought the starry heavens into closer range of observation, and the advancements in mathematical sciences rendered many astronomical calculations possible which previously could not be obtained. These, together with the accumulated discoveries, deductions and suggestions of all past time, have undoubtedly greatly advanced the science, and placed it on a footing which not only commends its teachings to human reason, but as well honors the great Creator of all things, whose wonderful work in the material universe is seen to be commensurate with his great "plan of the ages" revealed in the Scriptures. The seal of divinity seems to be stamped upon both. Nor should it be a matter of surprise that, while God has been disclosing the wonders of his grace to his people, he has also been paving the way, through scientific research and modern invention, for a more correct idea of his no less wonderful creation.

While it is true that gross error with reference to spiritual things has marked the presumably advance steps of the great ecclesiastics and their followers, we are not to presume that the same is probably true in science, art and mechanics. On the contrary, quite the reverse is true; and for manifest reasons. It is because spiritual things are spiritually discerned and cannot be received by the natural man, and because "with *the heart* (as well as with the head) man believeth unto righteousness," that the efforts to probe spiritual things with the natural mind and the uncircumcised heart are so fruitful only in errors and absurdities. But the great truths of nature are not so learned. Nature yields her secrets to the mind of the natural man, who, with candor and simplicity, by diligent and persistent research, inquires for them. Therefore progress in science and discovery, and development in art are to be expected as the results of diligent and earnest study on the part of the natural man who has the intellectual ability and the favorable opportunities for such occupation. To deny such progress in the world is only to deny the evidence of our senses. Who has not noted the real, practical and beneficial advancement along all the lines of human attainment,--law, medicine, architecture, mechanics, etc., etc. And all this advancement, let us bear in mind, is part of God's plan in this day of his preparation for the setting up of his Kingdom.

The tract before us presents a number of scriptures in support of a theory which regards the earth as occupying a most important place in the material creation, and the sun, moon and stars merely as inferior accessories, the only object in whose creation was to minister to the earth, which is supposed to be a plane floating upon the water;--which in turn must be supported by something tangible, and that in turn by something else, *ad infinitum*.

The theory, in the main, is a very ancient one, antedating all modern discovery and invention. It, however, has no claim to the name "Bible Astronomy," for it did not have its rise in Moses or the Jews, but was promulgated by the Egyptian astronomer, Ptolemy, who flourished at Alexandria about A.D. 130, but whose system has long since given place to that now universally accepted by all the learned scientists, known as the Copernican system, because the revolution was due chiefly to the labors of Copernicus.

The theory to which the writer of this tract has given the dignified name, Bible Astronomy, is more generally known as "the flat

earth theory." What we now propose to show is that the scriptures cited to prove that the earth is what it terms a circular plane, and not a globe, do not prove it. When we shall have done this, the subject will still be open for discussion from the scientific standpoint, to the extent of present scientific development, by those who have the time and talent to devote to it; but it will be seen to be entirely separate from the "gospel of the Kingdom," which all of the saints are called to preach, and to which they have consecrated their all of time and energy. ⁽¹⁾Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this gospel" to engross time and attention leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the gospel, leaving all other subjects, however interesting, to others now, and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. Those who for any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only gospel we have invariably observed are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of our high calling." The Apostle Paul's decision on this point is worthy of the adoption of all the saints; viz., "I determined not to know [talk of or discuss] anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2.) Many questions, indeed, might be asked, even by those very ignorant of the subject in general, which we could not answer, not being astronomers; but let no baits of curiosity allure us from the narrow way. We *sacrifice* these pleasures of the pursuit of scientific knowledge to the great ends for which, as new creatures in Christ, we are striving. By and by it will be our delightful privilege to know all things, and to enjoy ourselves to the full in beholding the glory of the Lord, when we shall be like him, and see him as he is, and know as we are known.

Those who think that the Bible teaches that the earth is flat, except for its mountains and valleys (a circular plane), do not claim that any texts of Scripture describe the earth's shape in these terms; but they draw the inference that such is its shape from eight classes of texts, which we will indicate and examine. From them they gather (1) that the sky or firmament is substantial, firm, not ethereal, and a water reservoir; (2) that the firmament or sky is a substantial vault, supporting the throne of God and indeed all heaven; (3) that the terms, "up," "down," "sunrise" and "sunset," frequently used in the Bible, are proofs that the earth is the center of the universe; (4) that the account in Genesis teaches that the sun and stars were created merely for ornaments and conveniences to the earth; (5) that the Bible phrase, "waters under the earth," and similar expressions, teach that the earth rests upon the sea; (6) that the expression, "pillars of the earth," indicates a solid foundation; (7) that the record that on one occasion the sun and moon stood still proves that the earth is not a globe; and (8) that the earth is so founded as to be immovable. (9) We will examine a text which they singularly overlook.

Let us now consider these proof texts:--

(1) THE SKY SUBSTANTIAL AND A WATER RESERVOIR

Those scriptures which speak of a *firmament* above the earth they construe to mean something substantial, or *firm* -- not ethereal-- as follows:--

"God made the *firmament*, and divided the waters ...which were above the firmament."--Gen. 1:7.

"The windows [margin, 'flood-gates'] of heaven were opened" (Gen. 7:11), so that the waters from above the firmament poured forth at the time of the flood.

Reply.--The idea of firmness comes to the English translation from the Latin, and not from the original Hebrew. The Hebrew word from which "firmament" is translated is *raqui*, which does not contain the thought of *firmness*. Its true signification is *expanse*.--See *Young's Analytical Concordance*.

The *air*, a gaseous substance, composed chiefly of oxygen and nitrogen, envelops the earth to a distance of about fifty miles from its surface. The above texts tell us that God separated the cloudy vapors from the waters upon the earth, thus creating the *expanse* ("firmament") or aerial heavens. (See "the fowl of *heaven*," that "fly in the midst of *heaven*," many times referred to in the Scriptures.) The word *expanse* ("firmament") or heavens is also given a wider application at times and made to embrace the infinitude of space. It has been suggested, and apparently with good evidence, that before the deluge the volume of water above the firmament or aerial heavens was much greater than now, and that the waters below the fir-

⁽¹⁾ Jun. 2 Manna, 1Cor. 2:2

mament were correspondingly less: that the earth at that time probably had a ring of water, similar to the several rings of Saturn. The theory is that precipitation of the waters of that "ring" produced the deluge, and that the increased weight of the waters upon the ocean caused the upheaval of additional mountain ranges, especially in America.

(2) THE SKY A SUBSTANTIAL VAULT

It is claimed that certain texts imply the flatness of the earth by referring to the sky as a *vault* and as a *curtain*, and that God's dwelling, the "*chambers*" where he "*sitteth*," is just beyond the sky curtain, which is spangled with stars and emblazoned with our sun. To prove this, the following texts are cited:--

"He buildeth his *chambers* in the heaven, and hath founded his *vault* upon the earth."--Amos 9:6. *Revised Version*.

"Canst thou with him *spread forth* the sky, which is strong as a molten mirror?"--Job 37:18. *R.V.*

"He that created the heavens and stretched them forth."--Isa. 42:5. *R.V.*

"He that *sitteth* upon the circle of the earth,... that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."--Isa. 40:22.

Then the question is asked, "Do not these verses describe the firmament, not as unlimited space, but as a *firm, solid structure* resting upon foundations?--a lofty dome or vault of marvelous workmanship, stretched out over the *circular plane* of the earth, and enclosing it 'as a tent to dwell in'?"

We think not. The language is highly figurative and poetic, such as abounds in the prophets, as well as in the poetry of Job and the Psalms. It is similar to what can be found in the poetry of to-day, in which such expressions as the *vaulted* sky, the blue *dome* of heaven, the canopy of heaven, etc., are of frequent occurrence and are never misunderstood. And every Hebrew scholar can testify that each of these texts was written in poetic form--as indeed is nearly all that the prophets wrote respecting God and his mighty works. Those who are not Hebrew scholars can, if they doubt it, confirm our statement that these passages are poetic, by a glance at *Young's Bible translation*.

In evidence that such language is in common use by the poets of our day, who apparently do not question the testimony of modern astronomy, we quote as follows, italicizing the corresponding words:--

"This moveless scene, heaven's ebon vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a *canopy* which love has spread
To *curtain* her sleeping world."--*Shelley*.

"Mysterious Night! when the first man but knew
Thee by report, unseen, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely *Frame*--
This glorious *canopy* of Light and Blue?
Yet 'neath a *curtain*," etc.--*J. Blanco White*.

"Thou dost not strive, O Sun, nor dost thou cry
Amid thy *cloud-built streets*."--*Faber*.

"This majestic *roof*, fretted with golden fire."--*Shakespeare*.

"And they were *canopied* by the blue sky."--*Byron*.

"Clouds on clouds, in volumes driven,
Curtain round the *vault* of heaven."--*T. L. Peacock*.

(3) UP, DOWN, SUNRISE, SUNSET

It is claimed that the terms, "under the sun," "under heaven," "up," "down," "sunrise," and "sunset," used frequently in the Bible, are proofs that the earth is the center of the universe, around which heaven and the sun, moon and stars revolve.

We reply that this is an unwarranted claim. It is admitted by all that the sun seems to rise *up* in the East, and to go *down* in the West; and by common consent all, even astronomers and almanac-makers, speak of the matter in such terms.

But, be it noticed, these terms of general usage do not favor the "flat earth" theory. Those who contend that the earth is a *circular plane*, and who bring forward these texts, do not believe that the sun, moon and stars go *up* and *down*: their contention is that they go *around above* the earth in a circle, merely passing for a time out of view, because the earth, they say, is so large, and the sun, moon, etc., are so small. The use of such an argument and the quoting of such scriptures therefore is directly in opposition to their theory.

Similarly, the expression, "four *corners* of the earth," is sometimes used to prove that the earth is not a globe; but, we ask, Would this expression prove that the earth is a *circular plane*? A circle no more has corners than has a globe. The fact is that this expression of the Scriptures is in exact harmony with our modern usage, of speaking of the four "*points*"--North, South, East and West. No sensible

person would look for a "point" or a "corner" in those directions any more than he would look for literal North and South "*poles*." Language is a vehicle for *carrying thoughts*; the thoughts must not be jolted out and the empty vehicle alone have consideration.

(4) SUN AND STARS EARTH'S ORNAMENTS AND CONVENIENCES

It is claimed that the statement of Gen. 1:16-18 proves that the sun, moon and stars were made merely for the convenience of the earth and that all reference to other worlds being omitted proves that this is the only world and that the sun, stars, etc., are merely its useful and ornamental appendages. "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven *to give light upon the earth*, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness."

"To him that made great *lights*,...the sun to rule by day,...the moon and stars to rule by night."--Psa. 136:7-9.

"In them [the heavens] hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it."--Psa. 19:4-6, *R.V.*

Reply.--We agree most heartily to the statements of these scriptures. The sun is beautifully and poetically described by David, but he says nothing about the earth being "flat," nor that the *circle* was around a plane, and not around a globe. In fact, he is not giving a lesson in astronomy, but a flash of poesy. There is no more excuse for misunderstanding the poetry of the Psalms than for misunderstanding such poetry as follows:--

"Thou who gazest ever true and tender

On the sun's revolving splendor."--*Shelley*.

"Her two blue windows faintly she upheaveth,

Like the fair sun, when, in his fresh array,
He cheers the morn, and all the earth relieveth."

--*Shakespeare*.

As for the account in Genesis, it is true that the sun and stars were caused to give light to the earth, and were intended so to do; but there is nothing to indicate that they could not lighten other planets, or that in this they entirely fulfilled the ends of their creation. It is true also that the sun does rule the day, and the moon the night, and that they are so set as to mark times and seasons; but there is no intimation that this is the limit of their usefulness. Only that which specially pertains to man and to the earth, his home, is mentioned. God was not attempting to teach astronomy: he was, we believe, leaving such things for mankind to investigate. The fields of science, art, discovery and invention are all open for man's pleasant and profitable exploration, and will and do reward the patient and persistent exercise of his powers, as God intended. This we believe is God's method of dealing: he makes known to man gradually the riches of his grace. Thus, too, it is with spiritual things, as our Lord intimated to his disciples, saying, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." In due time, and in the best manner, the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of the divine creation and plan are being made known.

(5) THE WATERS UNDER THE EARTH

It is also claimed that the earth rests upon the sea, and not the sea upon the earth, notwithstanding the fact that deep-sea soundings have very generally been able to touch the solid earth with measuring lines. It is claimed that this is taught by the following Scriptures,--

"Him that stretched [spread] out the earth *above* the waters."--Psa. 136:6.

"Heaven *above*,...earth *beneath*,...waters *beneath* the earth."--Deut. 5:8.

These passages merely refer to the dry land, *higher* than, or *above*, sea level. The former passage in the *Douay version* is rendered with equal propriety, "established the earth above the waters." To appreciate this passage turn to Gen. 1:9,10, and learn *how* God stretched forth the dry land and established it as dry land--by gathering together the waters into seas, by convulsions of earth casting up mountain ranges and depressing other parts for the gathering of the waters, seas.

The same explanation suits the second passage. The waters are not above, but *below, beneath*, the level of the "dry land," called the earth. (Gen. 1:10.) And if further evidence be desired a reading of the connections of the passage will remove every vestige of doubt as to what waters are meant. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image of any thing in heaven on high, or in earth that is lower, or in the sea that is still lower. Israel was commanded to make no images of God or angels, heavenly beings, nor of men and beasts, earthly creatures next in order, nor of fish or sea monsters, still lower. Can

any one suppose that in thus forbidding image-making and image-worship, the Lord ignored the waters seen, which constitute two-thirds of the earth's surface, and specified waters *underneath the dry land*, which (if there at all) could not be more than one-half the quantity not underneath it, and of whose living creatures men could know nothing? Surely any one can see that the meaning is, the waters under or lower than the level of the earth. "God called the dry land earth."--*Gen. 1:10*.

(6) THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH

"The pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them."--1 Sam. 2:8.

"Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble."--Job 9:6.

The first of these proof-texts is from the prayer of Hannah at the presentation of Samuel to the Lord's service. (*Verses 1-10*.) It is a poem or psalm, and seems to have been inspired and prophetic. Compare its language and sentiment with the poetic-prayer-prophecy of Mary, our Lord's mother.--Luke 1:46-55.

The passage from Job is also poetic, and prophetically refers to the shaking of the coming time of trouble. That Job refers to the shaking of the "pillars" of the present social structure, and Hannah to the establishment of the saints as the "pillars" of the new order of things called the "new heavens and new earth," will be clear to all who read their contexts, *after* noting the significance of the word "pillar" in Scripture usage.--Gal. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12.

(7) SUN AND MOON STOOD STILL

In proof that the earth is not a globe, the account of Joshua 10:12-14 is cited, and also Hab. 3:11,--"The sun and moon stood still in their habitation."

Reply.--In our issue of March 15, '92, following our return from the scene of Joshua's battle and miracle, we offered a suggestion respecting it, to the effect that *daylight* was unusually and miraculously prolonged by the rays of the sun being refracted upon the earth by a special arrangement of clouds for the purpose, so that its light, supplemented by that of the moon, similarly prolonged, practically turned that night into day. In no other view can we find use for the moon. Certainly if the sun shone at noonday brightness, the light of the moon would be useless and would not have been invoked. But, even if the earth was slowed up in her diurnal motion so as to actually lengthen out the day, it would be equally proper, as in speaking of any other *sunset*, to say that the sun "hasted not to go down."

As for the passage from Habakkuk, it is totally different: it is an item in his prophetic poem, which is full of symbols and figures of speech. It undoubtedly refers to a *future* even when "the sun and the moon shall be confounded," when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light," etc. No one can read this chapter from the *third verse onward* without recognizing this. *Young's Literal Translation* renders *verses 10-12* thus,--

"Seen thee--pained are the mountains [kingdoms],

An inundation of waters hath passed over [Isa. 28:15,17],

Given forth hath the deep its voice [Luke 21:25],

High its hands hath it lifted up.

Sun--moon--hath stood--a habitation,

At the light thine arrows go on,

At the brightness the glittering of thy spear.

In indignation Thou dost tread the earth,

In anger Thou dost thresh the nations.

Thou hast gone forth for the salvation of Thy people."

Surely if Joshua's battle, etc., has anything at all to do with the matters here represented, it was only as a type.

(8) EARTH FOUNDED AND IMMOVABLE

It is claimed that the Bible mentions the *foundations* of the earth and *pillars* of the earth in such a way as would preclude the idea that the earth is a globe hanging in space; and in such a way as to prove that it is an immovable structure resting upon strong pillars. In this they seem to forget their other claim that it is *founded* upon the *seas* and rises and sinks with the tides. Pillars would surely be a poor arrangement, architecturally speaking, for resting upon the water. Would not a "flat earth" rest more solidly on the waters without the pillars? Besides, upon what would the pillars rest? and what would support the waters? Then again, if the earth floated in the seas, and rose and sank at "tide times," how would that agree with the text they quote so freely--The earth "is established that it *cannot be moved*?"

Let us look carefully at the texts offered to prove this final point,--that the earth is so firmly founded, and on pillars, that it could not be rolled through space as a globe.

(a) "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations [margin, 'sockets'] thereof fas-

tened?"--Job 38:4,6.

(b) "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth."--Psa. 102:25.

(c) "Who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed forever."--Psa. 104:5.

(d) "The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved."--Psa. 93:1.

(e) "He hath *founded* it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."--Psa. 24:2.

Reply.--The intelligent and thoughtful need only to be reminded that stone foundations are not the only ones, --that *principles*, as well as *things*, can have foundations; as, for instance, "Justice is the foundation of God's throne [government]." Some men lay the foundations of schools and colleges by gifts of money, regardless of where the school buildings may be, if any, and they more truly lay the foundations than do the men who handle stones and tools for foundations for the buildings.

For our interpretation of the text marked (a) see MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., page 312. We believe the reference to be to the Great Pyramid, whose measurements, "lines," passages and general arrangement have made it world-renowned as a sign or symbol, in whose construction God has laid down scientific lessons in astronomy and geometry, as well as relating to his great plan of salvation. Into *what* would our "flat-earth" friends say the socket-stones of their flat earth were made to sink so as to make a *firm foundation*?--into the seas, as per the last text (e) cited?

The next four texts, as we will show, have no reference whatever to the literal earth, but to the symbolic earth,-- society.

As already shown, (*) not only lions, bears, trees, etc., are used as symbols, but so also the earth is a symbol of social order--society, its mountains representing its kingdoms, its heavens representing its highest or religious powers, its rivers representing its purifying truths which come from its heavens, and its seas representing the restless, unrestrainable, discontented and anarchistic classes. In illustration of these symbols see Psalm 46.

With reference to this symbolic earth, society, the Lord's Word shows us that in its present form, it is to be "dissolved," "melted," "moved," "shaken," "turned upside down," "removed as a cottage," that it is to "reel as a drunkard," etc. (Psa. 75:3-10; Isa. 24:1-4,17-20; 2 Pet. 3:10-12.) Not the literal, physical earth, but the symbolic earth--society as at present organized-- will "reel," "melt" and be "dissolved." The Scriptures clearly show that these are figures of speech, descriptive of the awful social trouble now impending--"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1); that the *fire* is symbolic, "the fire of God's jealousy" or anger, and that after the "earth" (society) has been devoured with this fire, the earth with the people on it will still be here, and God will then "turn unto the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."--Zeph. 3:8,9.

But that will be in the "new earth" symbolically, although upon the same earth literally. The "new earth" will be the new organization of society, with its "new heavens" or new religious system;--the Church or government of righteousness for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Under that Kingdom there will be no more *sea*--no longer a restless, law-opposing, anarchistic class, because the former things, the evils of the present social order, will have given place to the perfection of righteous government, long promised in God's Word.

It is this *new earth*, or reconstructed social order, that the Psalmist, in the Scriptures above (c, d, e), declares shall never be moved; while (b) shows that the present order was well founded by the Lord though by the *fall* it became "the present *evil* world" (Gal. 1:4), so that it must give place to "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (Heb. 6:5; 2 Pet. 3:5-7,13), but that the time will come when it must be *changed*, supplanted by the new arrangement of Christ's Kingdom--the new heavens and new earth. Read the connections, and see that this is the case. "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be *changed*." (Heb. 1:10-12.) Turning to 2 Pet. 3:10,11,13, note that the symbolic heavens, as well as the symbolic earth, is to pass away--to give place to a new order, social and religious. Then turn to Heb. 12:26,27 and note the same teaching of the dissolution of present arrangements, and in *verse 28* read about the *unmovable* Kingdom which must be established before that new heavens and earth is established which the Prophet David declares

{*} *See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 316.

"cannot be moved." Then turn to Isa. 34:2-5 and Rev. 6:14-17, and see the symbolic representations of the way in which the change of dispensation will be effected --from "this present evil world," ruled by "the prince of this world," to "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Then read in Rev. 20:1-5 of the blessings of that new "world" or order of things when it shall have come.

After studying the subject thus far, you will readily see the force of the above quotation (e), in which the Lord declares that the new earth will be founded upon the seas and established upon the floods,--i.e., the new earth will be established *where* the sea now is: the class once symbolized by the "sea" shall be no more--"There shall be no more sea."

A careful investigation of the Psalms in which these proof texts (b, c, d, e) are found gives convincing proof, in harmony with our exposition here given, that they are prophecies descriptive of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom.

AN IMPORTANT PASSAGE OVERLOOKED

But the advocates of the flat earth idea seem to overlook the only text of Scripture which *really* has to do with the subject. It is found in that book of the Bible which contains more reference to the stars than any other, mentioning Orion and the Pleiades by their present names, and referring to their "influences"--the Book of Job. The text to which we refer is brief, but full of significance. It reads:

Common Version, Job 26:7,--

"He...hangeeth the earth upon nothing."

Revised Version,--

"Hanging the earth upon [margin, over] nothing."

Leeser's Translation,--

"He suspended the earth on nothing."

Douay (Roman Catholic) Version,--

"He...hangeeth the earth upon nothing."

Young's Translation,--

"Hanging the earth upon nothing."

The harmony of these translations is good evidence as to the correctness of the expression; but if any one is curious further, let him refer, in *Young's Analytical Concordance*, to the various words--"nothing," "earth," and "hangeeth." He will find, for instance, that the same Hebrew word here translated "*hangeeth*" is defined by Prof. Young to signify "To hang up." He will find, also, that the same word is used thirteen times in referring to the hanging of men upon gallows.

So far as the scriptures go, therefore, this one irrefutable, and not otherwise interpretable, text stands *against* the "flat earth" theory; and the texts supposed to favor that view, it has been shown, do not favor it.

"GREAT AND MARVELOUS ARE THY WORKS LORD GOD ALMIGHTY"

While the revelations of divine wisdom and grace concerning the intelligent creation of God command our deepest reverence, no less should his mighty works in the physical creation inspire us with reverence and awe. No doubt the successful pursuit of the knowledge of all God's works and ways will be a part of the delightful employment of men as they progress toward perfection, and come to realize their privilege of eternal life and all the advantages of leisure, facility and opportunity which the future will afford. While such pleasures, we believe, are not the present privilege of the consecrated children of God, whose talents are all engaged for the great harvest work, we note with pleasure the great delight which the learned and able scientists find in probing the wonderful secrets of nature, especially in the domain of Astronomy, and in observing, too, its elevating and ennobling influence upon them. They give to the subject the most painstaking labor, profound thought and careful investigation, and the devotion of their lives.

We are glad that there have been and still are such men: and from the results of their labors we catch a measure of their enthusiasm and inspiration, and would also that they might catch a measure at least of ours, gathered from the "plan of the ages" revealed by the same great Author.

The history of Astronomy dates back to very ancient times. It reached some degree of advancement among the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and later among the Greeks and Romans; but Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, who lived six hundred years before Christ, was the first great teacher of the science. Pythagoras, another Greek astronomer, taught it shortly after. Hipparchus of Egypt, about three centuries before the Christian Era, and Ptolemy, of the same nation, about one hundred and seventy years later, were also justly celebrated teachers.

Prior to the invention of the telescope and the advancement of mathematical science and other advantages of more modern times, the whole subject was involved in great obscurity; and various theo-

ries were propounded and studied to account, if possible, for the motions of the planets and the varied phenomena of the heavens. Judged from very limited knowledge and observation, it was for many centuries believed that our little earth was the chief factor in all God's universe, the center of importance and interest, to which the sun, moon and stars ministered as the sole end of their existence. But the labors of Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler and Sir Isaac Newton, in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries of the Christian era, developed the telescope, discovered the laws of gravitation and of centripetal and centrifugal forces and suggested an order in nature which science and telescopic observation have proven to the satisfaction of all the learned scientists. These fully comport with our highest conceptions of the infinite power and wisdom of our God, beautifully harmonize with his mighty works of grace in the plan of the ages, and show us that our earth, although comparatively an insignificant portion of God's great empire, has been wonderfully cared for by him.

With humbler ideas of earth and humanity, we gain correspondingly enlarged ideas of God and of his mighty works. These discoveries and scientific deductions are, we believe, in keeping with the general purpose of God, to bring men by various paths to a more correct knowledge of himself through his works and ways. That the men whose names we have mentioned were not superficial enthusiasts, but careful, candid and diligent students of nature, is manifest from the laborious methods by which they have arrived at and sought to prove their conclusions.

In the light of scientific research, the sun is seen to be the center of a great system of worlds revolving around him in definite and invariable orbits and with a precision of time that never varies, some singly and some accompanied by revolving satellites, and others with peculiar rings whose substance is not yet clearly discerned, but is presumed to be liquid. In this system of worlds our earth is one of the smaller planets.

Our solar system of planets is also found to be revolving together around some other great center; and far beyond the farthest limits of our system, by the aid of the telescope, other suns and systems are discerned, all presumably revolving with ours around some common center,-- the group *Pleiades*. And the reasonable suggestion has been made that that center may be the heaven of heavens, the highest heaven, the throne of God.

God has established laws so governing the motions of all the heavenly bodies that no clash or discord occurs among them. Each world has its appointed pathway and its regulated time, and the most exact calculations of astronomers find them always true to time and order. How wonderful is our God! Truly in this view "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard; but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words." (Psa. 19:1-4.--Leeser.)^[2] The magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us--of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder. Indeed, to those who have been brought into close fellowship with the Lord through a knowledge of his plan of the ages, all his works should be viewed with a keener sense of appreciation--from the tiniest organism seen through the microscope, to the worlds revealed by the telescope.

With the Psalmist our hearts exclaim, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens;"--for, however grand and glorious are the wonders of creation, they proclaim only the superior grandeur and greatness of their Creator. Do we admire intellectual vigor, nobility of conception and skill in execution, comprehensive scope and minute particularity? We see it there! And while recognizing that even we ourselves are his workmanship--"fearfully and wonderfully made," and not beneath his notice and Fatherly care, we feel humbled as we recognize our Father's majesty, and in our hearts we say with the Psalmist, again, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him [but] a little lower than the angels and

^[2] June 3 Manna, Psa. 19:1-4

hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the [earthly] works of thy hands." (Psa. 8.) High indeed was the honor conferred upon man and the glory of his dominion (lost in Adam, redeemed in Christ) over the earth which God made "not in vain," but for human habitation. And while, as Job tells us, he "hanged the earth upon nothing," but launched it out in the abyss of space subject to those fixed laws which his wisdom established, we rejoice to know that "The Lord hath prepared his throne [power, dominion, control] in the heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all." (Psa. 103:19.) Surely no confusion or mishap can befall the remotest fragment of his vast empire, the Universe. Yea, Lord, we rejoice to realize that,--

"The whole creation is thy charge,
But saints are thy peculiar care."

"HAVE FERVENT CHARITY AMONG YOURSELVES"

In leaving the above subject we desire to impress upon all a few thoughts upon which all of God's people who possess his spirit and are guided by his Word can, we believe, fully agree.

(1) Christian unity is not established upon harmonious views of astronomy. Each has the right to the use of his own intellect upon the subject of astronomy, or any other subject *not* a part of the divine revelation; and we trust that we have clearly shown that astronomy is not a part of that divine revelation.

(2) If, aside from the Bible, a Brother or a Sister reaches a conclusion that another Brother or Sister considers wholly illogical and unreasonable, neither should think or speak of the other as a fool; but each should remember that all present knowledge is more or less

incomplete, and that all of our reasoning faculties are at present imperfect. Now we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, we shall know even as we are known. "Have fervent charity [love] among yourselves." This will enable each to treat kindly what may appear to him most absurd views on non-essential subjects, so that when we know that another holds such views we may avoid, if possible, wounding the feelings of even the very least of the Lord's "little ones."--Matt. 5:22; James 5:9, *margin*.

(3) Remember always that astronomy and such other subjects as are not identified with God's plan, and not taught in his Word, are not of those for which we should *contend*. The Apostle declares that we should "*contend* earnestly for *the faith* once delivered to the saints;" but astronomy is no part of that faith. Neither is it a subject which we should feel it our duty to search or prove: we are to search the Scriptures upon the subjects relating to eternal life, and to prove all suggestions respecting the same by examining and comparing the Scriptures. Astronomy, therefore, is not one of the subjects upon which every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind. On the contrary, a man may be a *saint* and an overcomer, and believe the earth flat, square, round, or any other shape; or he may be all the more likely to run the race to glory successfully while confessing that he does not know positively, and is so intent on following after Christ's example,--feeding the sheep and the lambs upon the bread of eternal life--that he has not the time needful to study and prove and teach any other gospel. The Apostle's resolve is a good one to follow. He says,--"I determined to know [teach] nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."