

## Our Contributors.

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

### Shall Redemption Work Cease at the Return of Christ?

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The Rev. Dr. Goodspeed, of Toronto, teaches time and again, in his recent book, the "Messiah's Second Advent," that it shall be a matter of pleasure to find able men, like the Professor, turning to this great subject. Many men say little about it. The book, when reviewed from a Scripture standpoint is wrong, in my judgment, in most of fundamental positions; and yet I am glad that he has spoken out. Discussion is far better than stagnation. This is now a truth for the times.

But is the Dr. right when he teaches that the Return of the Lord will end the Rescue Work of heaven among men? The Dr. asserts the point so often that there is no possibility of misunderstanding what he really holds. When the Lord Jesus comes back to earth, there shall be no more conversions, no more regenerations, no more translations from the kingdom of darkness, to that of light. So Dr. Goodspeed holds. Postmillennial men generally are with him.

Premillennialists on the other hand hold about the opposite of this. They believe that at the second coming of Christ the work of saving men shall be pushed forward as never before.

The object of this short note is to call attention to these two points of belief, and to ask Christian people to turn to the investigation of the matter with deep earnestness of soul. It is a matter of concern to all whether the appearing of the Lord puts an end to the work of saving or carries it on to the ends of the earth.

Let me quote one passage bearing on the subject, and only one. It is found in Acts 15: 14-18. It reads: "Brethren, hearken unto me; Symeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophet; as it is written, after these things I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world." From the Revised Version.

In the above passage there are four points of truth logically connected:

1 The work of grace "taking out a people for his name" during the present dispensation.

2 After these things the Lord will return.

3 He will set up the tabernacle of David. Tabernacle means house or throne.

4 The purpose of His return that the world may be saved.

The Postmillennial brethren have considerable difficulty with this passage. They hold that "setting up the tabernacle of David" is to be taken as meaning saving men. There is no other place in the Bible where setting up this tabernacle means mission work. Not one; yet they say it has got to mean that here.

In the 16th verse it is said, "I will return." It is the Lord that here speaks. This pro-

phesy has to be got into shape. It must be made to be some other coming of the Lord than the personal appearing. It must be made to be the fall of Jerusalem, or the conversion of Constantine, or something of the kind; for the plain reason that after this coming, the work of saving goes on. Dr. Goodspeed sails around this 16th verse very quietly, as with muffled oars. How do Postmillennial Brethren get these words, "I will return" to mean anything else than the real second coming? Answer, by spiritualizing them. How do they get the "setting up of the tabernacle of David" to mean conversions? By spiritualizing. Many things can be done by spiritualizing. But are they either expedient or lawful.

Another trouble with Postmillennialism is that it makes verse 17 say the same thing as is said in verse 14, and has no place for the intervening statement of the Lord's Return. They have not the key to the passage. That passage teaches that the rescue work of the Lord goes on after He comes back to earth. Thank God for the hope. If His coming is to cut off all hope, how can John pray "Come Lord Jesus"! It is said of Nelson that, one time, when a battle was going on, some one called his attention to a flag of retreat that had been hoisted by one of his officers. He put his glass to his eye and said, I do not see it. He had a blind eye. He said, hoist mine for closer fight, and he routed the enemy. The captain of our salvation is coming back to this earth for closer fight. He will then cast the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet into the lake of fire. Then a nation shall be born in a day. I, for one, believe the Premillennial men right when they hold that the Lord will keep on saving penitent men after He comes back. May He soon appear.

### The Ideal Human Form.\*

BY JOSEPH HAMILTON, WILSON, N. Y.

We shall see by and by, in some detail, something of the immense superiority of the spiritual body over the natural body, and of the enlarged capacities and functions that will be ours when this mortal puts on immortality.

At the same time I am strongly of opinion that the form and figure of the human body will not be lost in the more refined and ethereal spiritual body. I have the idea that this human form is the ideally perfect form, and that, under improved conditions and manifestations, it will continue so forever. What is more, I think it highly probable that this same human form of ours is not only the ideal form for our race, but that it is the ideal form for all races, and for all worlds. This may be deemed a mere speculation; but I think there are some considerations that will show it to be not an improbability.

In the first place, we know that the spiritual body is not a new creation. It is a development of the natural body. It will possess most, if not all, of the functions and powers that we now possess; hence its form may need to be a counterpart mainly of the form we have now. The powers which we shall possess involve the possession of cor-

responding organs. We are not supposing that such organs are so definitely constructed and located in the spiritual body as they are in this fleshly one; still, in some way they must be possessed, and the fact gives us the idea that the new body may be in the main of the same pattern as the old. Of course, I believe the pattern is not followed literally; there may be modifications, or additions, or improvements, while the original form is essentially retained.

Then, in corroboration of this view, we have the fact that when angels appeared in this world they appeared as men. Sometimes they did not wholly lay aside their native glory, as in the case of that angel whose "countenance was like lightning"; at other times they seemed so entirely human that they were mistaken for the time for men, as in the case of the angels who were entertained by Lot. But however they might vary in external appearance, they always had the human form. I think that there is no exception to this rule in all the recorded cases in the Scriptures.

Now, why did angels take this human form? I know the idea has prevailed that they voluntarily took this form in order to come into closer contact with men. But I suspect this to be the smaller half of the whole truth. May they not have taken the human form because that is really their own form, and the form which they must take when they are translated into fleshly bodies at all? I have the idea that the essential relation which exists between natural and spiritual bodies makes it necessary for angels to take the human form when they wish to come into fleshly conditions. This human form may be theirs, as well as ours. They are men, probably, as we are, but of a different order. In that case, the human form is the ideal form for them as well as for us.

In the next place, let it be noticed that in all the records which we have of visions of superior beings, such superior beings had the human form. It is true, we have variety in detail, and some wonderful additions to the human form, as we know it; yet in every case the human form was the dominant, prevailing form, notwithstanding all other glorious adjuncts and additions. This is a significant fact, and it may be more appreciated if we cite a few specific cases.

Take Isaiah's vision of the seraphim. "Each one," says Isaiah, "had six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." These wings were a glorious addition to the appearance of those living creatures; but it is very clear from the account that their form was distinctly human.

The living creatures which John saw in vision were strikingly like to those of Isaiah, in that each one of them had six wings. They seem, however, to have had more variety of forms, and yet the human form is unmistakably there. If these living creatures represent a higher order than ordinary angels, still the human seems to be the ideal type.

Ezekiel's vision is the most mysterious of all; and he seems to labor hard to show us what was really impossible to describe. In his attempted description of the living creatures, he gives us a most confusing, yet most inspiring conglomeration of a whirlwind, and a cloud, and lamps and burnished brass, and a firmament, and a terrible crystal, and a flash of lightning, and the noise of waters, and the voice of a host, and a sapphire stone and amber, and faces, and eyes, and rings, and wheels, and wings, and coals of fire. Yet, it is remarkable that all this confusion and mystery of display did not disguise or

\*A condensed chapter from the author's new book, "Our Own and Other Worlds."