

THE  
TWO WITNESSES:

THEIR CAUSE, NUMBER, CHARACTER, FURNITURE AND  
SPECIAL WORK.

BY

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Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.—Is. 43; 12.  
And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb,  
and by the work of their testimony.—Rev. 12; 11.  
And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them,  
and judgment was given unto them.—Chapter 20; 4.

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CINCINNATI:  
TIMES STEAM PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.  
1859.

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PREFACE.

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More than *twenty years ago*, the matter handled in the following sheets was before the General Synod of the R.P. Church (Old Light), in the form of petition. The petitioners were such who, with intelligence and affection, embraced the principles and cherished the memory of the martyrs of Jesus, who suffered unto bonds, imprisonment, and death in Scotland. The petitioners sincerely believed *then*, and they believe *now*, that "Reformation Principles Exhibited," was and is, a subversion of their fathers' testimony—utterly inconsistent with the Testimony and Terms of Communion adopted after the persecution in Scotland.

It was hoped that the discrepancy would be perceived, or at least that the attention of honest Covenanters would be drawn to the subject, by [some brief articles](#) which appeared in the pages of the *Covenanter* and *Reformed Presbyterian* magazines some two years ago. But no—it is still easier to revive the memory than the principles and examples of the martyrs, Matt. 23:30, 34. That our witnessing and martyred fathers of the "Second Reformation" were identified with the great "cloud of witnesses," Heb. 12:1, in principle, conduct, and suffering, was firmly believed by themselves—they were engaged in "the cause of God;" and as they were the representatives of their covenanted seed, so they did embrace us, their degenerate posterity in their "Solemn League and Covenant." They bound us to unity in principle—and more—to *uniformity in practice!* They made known God's law *and testimony* to their children, in obedience to his command, Ps. 78:5.

Every writer who appears before the public naturally feels a measure of solicitude, relative to the entertainment which his production will receive by the community at large; but the chief concern of Christ's servant will be, to have the approbation of his Master and that of his fellow servants.

The reader of the following sheets, (or the reviewer—if any shall deem it worthy of notice,) is requested, for his own sake, not to confound in his thoughts the visible with the invisible church, divine with human testimony or authority,—saving faith with terms of communion. Long experience and observation suggest this caution.

The whole is committed to the patronage of the "Faithful and True," as a feeble help to support the "faith and patience of his saints."

DAVID STEELE

SPARTA, ILLINOIS, January, 1859.

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## THE TWO WITNESSES.

*I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy.—REV. 11; 3.*

THESE words of Christ contain a promise, which contemplates a select number of Christians, designated by him to the performance of peculiar work. The peculiarity

of their work is indicated by the term "prophecy;" for, whereas we commonly attach the idea of *giving testimony* to our conception of a witness as his appropriate function, it is otherwise expressed here. These witnesses do indeed testify, but there are other functions proper and peculiar to them.

Their title, *witnesses*, suggests a case in law, and as in all judicial trials, so it is here—a cause at issue, involving law, parties, facts, judge, witnesses, *etc.* Indeed, the promise in the text itself supposes parties in opposition, contending earnestly about matters of vital interest to them respectively. The cause, in short, is that of *truth* and *righteousness*, law and facts, doctrine and practice.

The speaker in the text is the same who, in the first verse, commanded John to "arise and measure the temple," *etc.* By referring to the tenth chapter, first and fifth verses, the reader will perceive that the person styled "angel," is none other than the Angel of the Covenant—the divine Mediator—who sets his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, as rightful Lord of both—whom the eternal Father hath appointed Heir of all things, Heb. 1:2. This work of *measuring*, enjoined upon the apostle John, could not be completed by his personal ministry, because he was not suffered to continue by reason of death; and the special work, consisting of ministering and authoritatively distinguishing between the clean and the unclean during the whole period of opposition by Antichrist; John's successors—the witnesses—are therefore empowered by the Lord Christ to carry forward the same work, and bring it to a triumphant consummation. {6}

It is worthy of remark further, that the word *power*, as used in the text, is *supplemental*, there being no term answerable to it in the original, which reads thus: "I will give unto my two witnesses that they may prophesy." The word *power* is as suitable as any other to supply the ellipsis; but it is here a term of very extensive import, comprehending all furniture for the special and arduous services allotted to the witnesses.

In prosecuting our inquiries, the following arrangement is adopted for greater clearness: consider, I. the cause at issue; II. the number of the witnesses; III. their character; IV. their furniture; V. their work.

I. The cause at issue is divine truth, all the precious doctrines of the Bible,<sup>1</sup> together with their faithful application; and,

*First*,—These witnesses have it in charge to assert and declare that Jehovah, and he only, is God. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me; therefore ye are my witnesses that I am God, Isa. 43:10,12; also, that God alone, the

author of man's being and social nature, has an incontestable right to teach and govern the human family. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, Deut. 4:2. But it may be asked, What have the witnesses to do with the rights of God put forth in the Old Testament? Answer: These witnesses cannot maintain their position against Antichristian opposition, unless they fall back on Old Testament authority. The whole outline of their testimony, as given in the book of Revelation, demonstrates their familiarity with, and reliance upon, the authority of the Old Testament, especially *prophecy*, since their business is to prophesy. As their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, so it is built on the foundation not merely of apostles, but also of prophets, Eph. 2:20. The faith of God's elect, and an acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness go together, Titus 1:1.

*Second*,—It is the province of these witnesses to assert the claims and enforce the obligations of Jehovah's law upon their fellow creatures, as individuals, in the family, the church, and the civil commonwealth, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to him:—and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters," Rev. 14:7. But it pertains to the functions of these witnesses to testify against "all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." "Cry aloud, spare not; show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins," Isa. 58:1. They are to state the cause of controversy, and render it intelligible to all concerned; and this is indeed {7} their most difficult task. Owing to the fact that "all the world" are in opposition to them and to their cause, the very attempt to state *that cause* has often furnished the adversaries with occasion to "contradict and blaspheme." Still they may not, at any hazard, shun to declare all the counsel of God. The cause, in brief, resolves itself into this: Whether Christ or Belial shall rule? whether righteousness and unrighteousness be indifferent? whether he that believeth hath part with an infidel? These few specifications, with their necessary connections, cover the whole ground of controversy.

II. Consider the *number* of these witnesses; they are *two*, as this is the smallest number that can establish truth, Deut. 17:6; 19:15. The Lawgiver himself, addressing the Jews, says: "It is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true," John 8:17. Not that we are to receive the testimony of every two men. The experience of all men is that "a false witness will utter lies;" and it is sometimes found that two may "agree together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord," Acts 5:9. But on the supposition that the witnesses are competent and credible; then it is the decision of Christ, endorsed by the common sentiment of mankind, that "we receive the witness of such men," 1 John 5:9. And although "the witness of God is greater" than that of any number of men; still, human witnesses do not need to be inspired to render their testimony credible; for then, as the reader will perceive, the testimony

is that of God, and of course ceases to be human testimony. This point is of the greatest moment, since not one word uttered by these two witnesses is inspired in the proper and formal sense of inspiration! This is too great an honor to confer upon the very chiefest of our covenanted confessors or martyrs. It savors too much of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

*Second*,—These witnesses are only *two*, to indicate that they are comparatively few—just so many as our sovereign Lord deemed sufficient to defend and propagate the "truth as it is in Jesus" and to exemplify its power in actual life. Forsaken by the multitude of the disciples, like their divine Master, they are left to face the enemy as best they may. Those who are occupied in worshiping the beast, or the beast and his image, or the dragon who gave power to both, cannot sympathize with the witnesses—not understanding, not desiring to understand their singular position.

When our Lord was on earth, he addressed his disciples as a "little flock," compared with the multitude of *professors*. Just so it is in reference to these; "*out of* each of the twelve tribes of Israel were sealed twelve thousand;" assuredly but a fractional part of each, and {8} so "of all the tribes of Israel," Rev. 7:5-8. For John says, "after this I beheld, and lo! a great multitude which no man could number." And again, in the 14th chapter we find these sealed ones standing with the Lamb upon the Mount Zion, and employed in singing a new song which no man could learn, but those only who were redeemed from the *earth*—the antichristian organization, *verses* 1,3. The *sealing* of these has an evident allusion to a similar transaction of old: "Go through the midst of the city—through the midst of Jerusalem—and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all abominations that be done in the midst thereof," Ezek. 9:4. The object is the same—for distinction and preservation. Doubtless there is also an allusion to the ordinance of Christian baptism, which, by divine institution, is a *sign* to distinguish, and a *seal* to secure each member of God's covenant society. They are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world, John 17:16. Also, they are to be kept from the evil that is in the world, vs. 15. This distinction is to be noticed; that, whereas all Christians in general are baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. 28:19; these in particular, have the Father's name only in their foreheads, Rev. 14:1; intimating, perhaps, that these two witnesses in a way peculiar to themselves, "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Phil. 2:11.

*Third*.—They are only *two*, that God may display his sovereignty and may have the glory of their achievements. The ranks of Gideon must be reduced to three hundred—let the thousands of Israel who are fearful and afraid return and

depart—the people are too many to give the enemy into their hands, Judges 7:2-6. God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence, 1 Cor. 1:27-29. Those who follow the Lamb in this special service, are called and chosen and faithful; endowed by their Leader with a heroic spirit, they rank amongst the "first three," Rev. 17:14. Thus, having suffered with him, they are destined to be glorified together; yes, on their part, he is glorified, 1 Pet 4:14—their honor is reciprocal.

*Fourth.*—They are but *two*, that they may confront numerically in open court, before the world, in the presence of the universe, the twofold opposition to truth and righteousness, in which the grand adversary has embodied and entrenched himself, Rev. 13:1-11. Because the beast of the *sea* and the beast of the *earth*, are in unholy alliance {9} to resist the authority and vacate the claims of the Lord and his Anointed, it is reasonable as it is scriptural, that the two witnesses should defend the divine right of a scriptural magistracy and a gospel ministry; that by these, moral government and social order might be secured.

III. The character of the witnesses is to be considered:—

*First*, this is partly indicated by the description of their work, they shall *prophesy*. Now it is not the usual function of a witness to prophesy. But as these witnesses are numerically described from prophetic foreseen opposition: so, their character is delineated by a retrospective comparison with distinguished servants of Christ, who testified for truth and righteousness, and against error and impiety under a former economy. In a word, they are like Moses and Elijah. In their commission, endowments, and work, they bear a resemblance to these eminent men. In these respects the analogy is clear, although we should not assert their identity, Rev. 11:5-6. Compare 1 Kings 17:1, Ex. 7:17, *etc.* These two prophets, Moses and Elijah, appeared on the mount of transfiguration as witnesses of the Father's testimony to the eternal Sonship and mediatory office of Jesus Christ, Matt. 17:3. On earth also, there were at the same time competent "eye-witnesses of his majesty," 2 Pet. 2:16. While on earth Moses and Elijah had a *very bad character*,—especially were their presence and testimony construed as "hurtful to kings and provinces." They were counted as the "offscourings of the earth;"—they were not deemed "fit to live"—"malefactors," identified with their suffering Master. Nevertheless, "by faith they obtained a good report," were admitted to the "honor that cometh from God only," because they "sought not honor from men." Jesus said unto them on the "holy mount, come up hither." Now was realized by Moses the object of his earnest

desire,—"I beseech thee, show me thy glory," Ex. 3:18; now was enjoyed to his unspeakable satisfaction, a full view of the promised land which he so pathetically besought of the Lord while on this side of Jordan. "I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon," Deut. 3:25. Correspondent to this is the honorable character and position of the two witnesses of our time. "They stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion," Rev. 11:1, "they are without fault before the throne of God," *verse* 5, and this is the best attestation of their character.

*Second*,—They are truthful,—"children that will not lie," Isa. 63:8. Thus they are distinguished from all the children of the wicked one, who speak with a double heart and flattering lips, Ps. 12:2, from all modern Cretians, false prophets, who shun to declare all the counsel of God, keeping back what might be profitable to their fellow {10} men, for fear of the Jews, or as having men's persons in admiration because of advantage, Acts 20:20, *etc.*, Jude 16. Knowing that their Lord "desireth truth in the inward parts," Psalm 51:6, they [the witnesses] habitually "speak the truth in their heart," 15:2. Yes, rather than prevaricate, as they are often counseled to do, 2 Chron. 18:12; when others are "lying against the Lord—speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood," Isa. 59:13; they will seal their testimony with their blood,—not loving their lives unto the death, Rev. 12:11. "It is the cause that makes the martyr."

*Third*,—These witnesses are intelligent. This is a feature of character which their opponents reluctantly admit. They may be "unlearned and ignorant men" in the account of "as many as are of the kindred of the high priest," Acts 4:6,13; yet they are not in the habit of "speaking evil of the things that they understand not." Keeping by the fundamental principles of God's unity and sovereignty, these witnesses display in their *progressive* testimony, grandeur of conception, depth of research, accuracy of discrimination, and adaptation to surrounding circumstances, unequaled by the wise men of this world. True, they are represented—viewed—treated, as bigoted, rigid, unsociable, intractable, intolerant, and what not?—men of "*one idea*," incapable of appreciating liberal sentiments, or comprehending enlarged views of social order, *etc.* And even when they die to confirm the truth of their testimony, malice pursues their very memory, saying,—"they died as fools!" But *wisdom* is justified of her children. They "have an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things:" yes, "he that is spiritual judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man," 1 John 2:20, 1 Cor. 2:15. It is the decision of the only infallible Judge, that these witnesses, and they alone are truly entitled to the appellation—"men of understanding," Dan. 11:35. "He that judgeth them is the Lord," and we are sure that his judgment is according to truth.

#### IV. The qualifications of these witnesses come next under notice.

He who calls them, qualifies them:—*I will give power unto my two witnesses.* This promise secures to them:—

*First*,—A right to act for Christ in the capacity of witnesses. It is in fact an ordaining or commissioning of them to their special work of bearing testimony for him and his cause, and against the persons and influence of all opposers. This right is analogous and equivalent in law, to that with which Christ invested the apostles when he said,—“Go into all the world—and, lo, I am with you alway,” or, as he afterwards said, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is { 11 } come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and unto the uttermost part of the earth,” Acts 1:8. All might be supposed to agree in their estimate of rights as precious, however they differ as to their origin or the manner of their exercise; and moreover, it is supposed that rights possessed are designed for exercise. But the exercise of this right to “prophecy” exposes its possessors to such labor and peril that they need peculiar furniture. And this is guaranteed in the promise, which is one of the most signal in the Bible, for

*Second*,—In exercising their right of prophesying, these witnesses have the promise of the Holy Ghost! Be not alarmed candid reader, there is no intention here to plead for any addition to our Bible, or any *new rule* of faith or practice: but these witnesses are, nevertheless, to be “men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,” otherwise they would be utterly incompetent to the work assigned. Accordingly, having Abel’s, Moses’, Elijah’s, Stephen’s work allotted them; they have the same resources secured in the promise. “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.” “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you,” Luke 21:15, Matt. 10:18-20.

*Third*,—As they are invested with a right, and endowed with ability to execute their commission as witnesses; so they have the best possible guarantee for the protection of their persons, reputation, and substance. In the fullness of self-sufficiency, and with the connivance or approbation of the kings of the earth, false prophets may be permitted to smite them on the cheek, as Zedekiah did Micaiah, but this indignity will be abundantly redressed, 2 Chron. 18:23-24. Obadiah will be provided, if need be, to hide them by fifties in a cave, 1 Kings 18:13; not one hair of their heads shall perish. They shall be either hid from the scourge of the tongue, or their judgment



shall be brought forth to the light, and their righteousness as the noon-day. If they be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are they; yea, they are blessed when men revile them—and say all manner of evil against them falsely for Christ's sake.

They may be subjected to the spoiling of their goods, but they know in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. All their losses for the cause of Christ, shall be remunerated with interest. There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's {12} sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting, Luke 18:29-30.

*Fourth*,—As in exercising their just rights they are often liable to the charge of infringing the rights of others, it is requisite that they be possessed of fortitude. This also is provided. He that made man's mouth has engaged to be with their mouth, Ex. 4:11,15—so that they shall open their mouth boldly, speaking forth the words of truth and soberness, Acts 26:25. And as they are required sometimes to "look angry men in the face,"<sup>3</sup> so they have the promise of requisite qualifications:—"Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads: as an adamant, harder than a flint, have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks," Ezek. 3:8-9. They are not ashamed of the testimony of Christ, nor of those who are his prisoners, for they are prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. This is indeed the most needful and also the most conspicuous part of their furniture. To be wise as serpents—full of eyes before and behind, and within, Rev. 4:6,8—is indispensable; but the first prerequisite is that they possess the property of the lion—*verse 7*,—which is the strongest among beasts, and *turneth not away for any*. In a word, the power with which they are endowed is power from above—out of the heavenly sanctuary. They are not sent a-warfare at their own charges. Christ is himself the faithful and true witness, and knows from experience what furniture these witnesses need—Heb. 2:14,18,—and has accordingly provided, that they always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work, 2 Cor. 9:8.

V. The special work allotted to these witnesses from eternity, Rev. 20:15, and to the accomplishing of which they are specially called in time is, to *prophecy*.

These distinguished persons are called prophets, Rev. 11:10, and since the exercise of their appropriate functions is styled *prophesying*, such phraseology suggests something peculiar in the method of their testimony-bearing. This may be conceived to consist in their persons and work, the two-fold function of testifying and giving judgment. It is competent to prophets to condemn in a judicial way, all heretical principles and heretical teachers, as well as in a ministerial and official

way. Hence they exhibit a judicial testimony for divine truth and order, as also against all error and ungodliness, 1 Cor. 5:12, Rev. 2:2, Acts 15:6. It is their special business to bind up the testimony and seal the law, Isa. 8:16—to bring principle and practice to the test of this law and testimony, *verse 20, {13}* and to transmit the same to the generation following, Ps. 78:5-7. Thus of their work in general, but more particularly.

*First*,—They are to testify of or concerning Christ, and this in respect of his person and mediatory office. They believe and declare that Jesus is the Christ, and then, that he is the Son of God; that he has a Father who sustains to him the *necessary* relation of paternity. Moreover, that the son sustains to the Father the *voluntary* relation of a Servant, Acts 8:37, Isa. 42:1. This Servant is anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows, Ps. 45:7. His Father has made him his First-born, higher than the kings of the earth; invested him with all the rights and authority pertaining to primogeniture, Psalm 89:27—given all things into his hand, John 13:3, to be the Head of the church, and Head over all things to the church, Eph. 1:22; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, Col. 1:19—a fullness of grace, John 1:14, a fullness of authority, all power in heaven and upon earth, Matt. 28:18, that all men (and angels, Heb. 1:6) should honor the Son even as they honor the Father, John 5:23, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father, Phil. 2:11. These witnesses are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth, Zech. 4:14, to vindicate the cause and assert the claims of the divine Redeemer, Rev. 11:4. As the two olive trees, they are the depositories or receptacles of the golden oil, which supplies the two golden candlesticks, which by their light discover the heavenly origin of social organization amidst the smoke which envelopes the locusts of the earth, Rev. 9:2-3. They point to the inscription on the vesture, and on the thigh of the exalted Mediator—King of kings and Lord of lords—Prince of the kings of the earth, Rev. 19:16; 1:5.

*Second*,—It is their province to make all men see, that as the Lord Christ derived this universal dominion from his Father, in voluntary and economical standing and relationship, so the Father is engaged to sustain him in its exercise over friends and foes; for the Lord said unto their Lord,—*Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*, Psalm 110:1. *I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him*, 89:23; *for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*, 1 Cor. 15:25. Moreover, as the Lord Jesus has a right of universal sovereignty by express delegation from his Father, so he possesses inherent ability to execute the trust committed. This inherent ability results from his personal equality and essential unity with the Father in the eternal Godhead. The mediatorial dominion is predicated upon the essential divinity of Jesus Christ, according to the Father's own explicit testimony: *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, Psalm

45:6, Heb. 1:8. Christ {14} glorified not himself to be made an high priest (and so not a king), but he that said unto him, *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee*, Psalm 2:7, Heb 5:5. Yes, the government is on the shoulder of one who is the mighty God, Isa. 9:6, the Almighty, Rev. 1:8, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth Babylon, Rev. 18:8. What is said of Nebuchadnezzar, *whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive*, is true of the Lord Christ, for he is mighty both to save and to destroy, Isa. 63:1-4.

*Third*,—These witnesses are called and commissioned to testify especially against Antichrist—a false christ, and therefore an opposing christ. But Christ is to be considered either personally or mystically; either abstractly in his personal rights and prerogatives, or in the concrete, in the rights and immunities of his church. There is a prejudice, too prevalent, against *Christians testifying against Christians!* This, we are often told, is contrary to the law of charity. We have not so learned Christ. They are not all Israel which are of Israel. Much of the business of these two prophets is to oppose prophets—to prophesy against the shepherds, Ezek. 34:2. Moses with his miracles must confront the magicians with their enchantments, Ex. 8:19. Elijah must confront the prophets of Baal, 1 Kings 18:25. Paul must counteract false apostles, 2 Cor. 11:13. In short, the direct object of these witnesses' testimony is apostate Christendom: those who depart from the faith, 1 Tim. 4:1, who have gone out from the fellowship and renounced the doctrines of the apostolic church, 1 John 2:19. Their special work is to testify against error and its propagators and abettors, together with ungodliness, the natural fruit of error, rather than against pagans. All the heathen nations of the earth do not constitute the Antichrist—are no part of Antichrist, formally considered, or as portrayed doctrinally or symbolically in prophetic Scripture. Antichrist feigns himself to be Christ, and so under a mask gains multitudes of followers. If the community be flooded with counterfeits, the genuine currency will be depreciated. Antichrist is that counterfeit. The dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, is the prime and original instigator of all hostilities against the Lord and his Anointed—the dragon fought, and his angels, Rev. 12:7. The special designation, *old serpent* conducts us in retrospection, to the transaction in the garden of Eden. In Cain, that seed of the serpent—*who was of that wicked one*, and slew his brother—we may contemplate modern Antichrist as if *in embryo*. In process of time, the mystery of iniquity, often exhibited to prophetic eye, began more sensibly to work. The Lord God of the holy prophets gave, from time to time, such intimations of his secret purpose; of the rise, reign, and ruin of this enemy of all {15} righteousness; that they inquired and searched what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify; when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ mystical from this subtle and cruel enemy, and the glory that should follow his certain and fearful overthrow. Yes—Sodom, Moses, Egypt, Elijah, Jerusalem; the temple—shut by wicked, and opened by reforming

kings; the furniture of the temple, the priesthood, garments, ministry, *etc.*, are all laid under contribution to symbolize and make known to men the working and counterworking of this mighty agency in our rebellious world. We are not, therefore, to think it strange when, in the New Testament, we find the disciples of our Lord making Antichrist a topic of frequent and familiar conversation, as well as of epistolary correspondence.

Nullifidians [*men of no faith*], skeptics, Gallios, heresiarchs and others—all that are drunk with the winecup of the mother of harlots, are ready with their advice here,—that we meddle not with things too high for us—things utterly inscrutable,—things which are so equivocal and uncertain, that many wise men have utterly failed to unfold them: that in fact, by the very attempt to explain the prophetic symbols, the *folly* of their reputed wisdom has been demonstrated. Two satisfactory reasons can be assigned for this failure,—They were intoxicated by Babylon's wine, and were never in the wilderness—the only position from which John himself could see clearly, Rev. 12:6,14, and *chapter* 17:3. The wilderness is the *only place* of certain vision!

As it respects the Antichrist, the Spirit speaketh *expressly*, not in dark speeches such as the delphic or sibylline oracles. Nebuchadnezzar's image,—Daniel's four beasts, are symbols generally well understood, at least as to the import of their great outlines. But when interpreters attempt to analyze the *fourth* beast of Daniel and the *two* beasts of John, there is great discrepancy of views. Newton, Faber, Scott, Smith, and others of less note among divines, are at issue with each other in many things, and all are unsafe guides in ascertaining the identity of the Antichrist of Scripture. Durham, McCleod and others, who have viewed the scenery from a standpoint in the wilderness, are safer guides to follow, although none in this should be implicitly followed.

As these witnesses have it in special charge to prophesy against Antichrist during many generations, so we should expect them to be cotemporary with Antichrist. And we find this to be the case. The saints are to be given into the hand of the little horn until a time and times and the dividing of time, Dan. 7:25—that is, during the thousand two hundred and three score days of prophesying by the witnesses, Rev. 11:3. For a time—a year of 360 literal days—times, two years or 720 days, and half a time—the half of 360, which is 180—all added together will be exactly 1260. {16} That the witnesses and Antichrist cotemporate—exist at the same time in this world, and continue precisely for the same period of time, is proved from the fact that they are parties at issue,—the Lord Christ having called and commissioned these witnesses for this express purpose and no other. Their lives and their testimony are finished together. Rev. 11:7, 12:11.

In confronting Anti-christian heresy and misrule—falsehood and tyranny, the witnesses must be able to define and identify the enemy. This they are enabled to do by following the Lamb, keeping close to the Captain of their salvation; learning daily—and from age to age, from the faithful and true Witness—maintaining communion with him in witness bearing. "Then shall they know, if they follow on to know the Lord." And as the fathers make known the truth to their children, so these witnesses, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and history with prophesy, are enabled to understand the signs of the times from one generation to another. Thus race praises God's works unto race, and shows his mighty works—the former generation transmitting their achievements to that which follows. Testing principle and practice by the law and the testimony as commanded, Isa. 8:20, and going forth by the footsteps of the flock as directed, Song 1:8; these witnesses make progress in applying their testimony to organized society. Whilst enthusiasts and visionaries are busied in reconstructing society and shouting *progress*; these servants of the Most High God are the lights of the world—the only true reformers—the only real authors of progress. Often have they been tempted with offers of promotion and liberty by those who were themselves the servants of corruption, 2 Pet. 2:19; and some of them have at times fallen, to try, and to purge, and to make them white, Dan. 11:35; but in the end they will accomplish their mission and finish their testimony.

Intimately and experimentally acquainted with the doctrines of God's word, and with the moral order which its divine Author has established in the world; these witnesses prophesy by searching soberly and habitually into that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth—the sure word of prophesy: and comparing spiritual things with spiritual; and in the light of both, interpreting the doings of the Lord in providential procedure. They believe that all prophecy of Scripture is an extract from the book of God's decree, Rev. 5:1, and that providence is the exact counterpart of both. It is from these sources that they gather the elements which constitute the Antichrist.

*First*,—From their assigned position in the wilderness these witnesses descry the rising of Antichrist with certainty, yet, without surprise. They were timely apprized of this event. In apostolic times there were spirits of Antichrist, 1 John 4:4—many antichrists, *chapter 2:18*. Paul had told the Thessalonians, while he was yet with them, of the future coming of this enemy, 2 Thess. 2:5, and of the cause of his temporary delay, {17} *verse 7*. Peter had forewarned the disciples of the same when he said,—*there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, etc.*, 2 Pet. 2:1. No wonder that John says, *Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come*, 1 John 2:18; or

that he gives the very essence of his diabolical character in the graphic description. *He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son*, verse 22. That Mr. Faber should fancy this enemy developed in the French Revolution, the infidelity or atheism openly avowed in the enemy's camp, is not at all surprising. The expositor belonged not to the witnessing company—was not in the wilderness, but in the enemy's camp. It is perfectly natural that even a good man, so circumstanced, should fail to distinguish between *theoretical* and *practical* atheism. The assumption of Faber is, that the apostle John describes a theoretical or avowed atheist—one who denies the doctrine of the Trinity. This assumption is not true, as may afterwards appear. The Antichrist delineated in Scripture avows his belief in a Trinity of divine persons as openly as Mr. Faber. The author forgot that there were professing Christians in apostolic times who professed that they knew God, but in works denied him. He did not know, or he had forgotten, that Antichrist is not composed of open and avowed enemies to Christ, as were the French atheists, but of professed disciples of Christ for,—

*Second*,—These two witnesses have always testified—not formally against pagans or infidels as such; but—against *apostate Christians*, as composing an organized and complex system of opposition to the Lord and his Anointed. And just here, the witnesses have detected the secret of Antichrist's successful enterprise among the human family.

In modern language the prefix *anti*, conveys the idea of opposition; as in the term *anti-slavery*, but in Scripture the radical idea is *substitution*, as the learned will readily see in the Greek form of the word *ransom*, and many others. Such is the force and significance of the dissyllable *anti*, when in composition with Christ—one in the place of Christ. 2 Thess. 2:4. On this idea of substitution, the Holy Spirit is pointed and diffuse in Scripture, that none might be deceived but such as are willingly ignorant, 2 Pet. 3:5, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, 2 Cor. 11:3; so the coming of this enemy is after *the working of Satan, with all signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*, 2 Thess. 2:9-10. *Many false prophets are gone out into the world—this is a deceiver and an Antichrist*, 2 John 7. The combination is ostensibly on the side and in the interest of Christ, and the elements of which Antichrist is composed were obviously professing Christians. *They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they {18} would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us*, 1 John 2:19. Here is the apostasy, and so the witnesses are fully borne out in asserting that Antichrist is a great *Christian apostasy!* To trace the origin and development, in the organization and modifications of this enemy of all righteousness, is the special work of Christ's witnesses. The origin is doubtless of

equal date with the fall of man; but the visible manifestation is to be found after the apostolic age; for:—

*Third*,—Paul, Peter, and John are explicit as to this point: *In the latter times some shall depart from the faith*, 1 Timothy 4:1. *The mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way*, 2 Thess. 2:7. *And through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandise of you*, 2 Pet. 2:3. *Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come*, 1 John 2:18. *The ten kings—have received no kingdom as yet*, Rev. 17:12. Paul, as is supposed, wrote the second epistle to the Thessalonians in the year 54, and Antichrist was then future; John wrote his first epistle in the year 90, and the Revelation in 96, and *as yet*, that enemy was not fully organized. It is alleged, by the best divines, that the year 606 was the epoch at which this long predicted enemy of Christ, and scourge of the world, was first developed, when Phocas, the Roman Emperor, proclaimed Boniface bishop of Rome, head of the universal church.<sup>4</sup> Assuming the proximate correctness of this date, the witnesses could not, for many centuries back, be wrong, in directing their testimony against that combination; for, in that transaction and alliance, they saw the prestige of all similar acts of spiritual fornication between the *woman* and the kings of the earth.

*Fourth*,—Besides the many minor and mixed associations, as lesser Antichrists—monkeries, nunneries, freemasonry, and such like coalitions and fellowships, all of which prepare and furnish the elements which constitute the Antichrist: the formal combination—the great confederacy is to be found in the junction and intercourse of the apostate church and state. These, combined and cooperating, are the party with which the witnesses have to deal. The deception practiced upon human credulity by the grand adversary, who rules in the hearts of individuals, is successfully carried on by imitating the divine ordinances and institutions as nearly as his diabolical ingenuity can invent. By acquainting themselves with the person of the Mediator, his offices, dominion and ordinances, revealed in the Holy Scriptures; and ascertaining from the same source, that the devil would counterfeit these; the witnesses of Christ are thus qualified to distinguish between the rights of Christ and the impious claims of Antichrist.

The Spirit of God—the Spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, Rev. 19:10, describes the elementary and component parts of Antichrist as *bestial*. Idolatrous, tyrannical, and therefore *immoral* powers, are {19} exhibited in vision to Daniel, by the symbols of beasts arising in succession, Dan. 7:3-8. With the *fourth* and last of these *only* are the witnesses immediately at issue in our time. In prophesying against this monster, which cannot be likened to any animal that God ever made, consists their special and arduous work. In the second chapter of Daniel

the same power is symbolized as composing part of the image presented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, *verses 40-43*. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the *earth*—not having their origin from heaven, *chapter 7:17*. But the fourth beast shall be the fourth *kingdom* (dynasty) upon earth, *verse 23*; and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, *verse 24*. These horns are all connected with, or grow, as it were, out of *one head*. The head symbolizes imperial power, the horns signify so many civil sovereignties—all tributary to the empire—parts of one whole, *Esth. 1:1*.

Besides these ten horns on one head, Daniel saw another little horn coming up among them, *chapter 7:8*—*after* them, *verse 24*—whose look was more stout than his fellows, *verse 20*. Thus, the ten horns are the *fellows* of the little horn—all grow upon the one head of the one beast. As will farther appear in progress, these ten horns represent civil power, and the little horn ecclesiastical power. The saints—the witnesses—are given into the hand of the little horn—subjected to cruel despotism. All the ten horns concur in this donation. The agency of the little horn, apostate church, is described: *He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws*, *verse 25*. This he is enabled to accomplish and authorized to do by the combined civil powers—the ten horns. They are, therefore, all in one interest, in unanimous conspiracy against the saints of God, and so against the God of the saints. These make war with the Lamb. They will not have this man to reign over them. They deny—they resist the authority of—the Father and the Son: *for whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father*, *1 John 2:23*. This is on the scriptural and rational principle of representation. Will not a nation, if able, sustain its ambassador? Certainly—Christ says, *He that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me*; and of course the contrary is equally true: he that rejects the Son, rejects the Father also—that is, *denieth the Father and the Son*, *John 15:23*.

*Fifth*,—Although the witnesses derive much light and encouragement from the Old Testament, they being built upon the twofold foundation of apostles and prophets; their minds are greatly cleared, and their hearts much encouraged in their protracted work, from the great plainness of speech employed by the Spirit of inspiration in the New Testament.

Here they find Daniel's fourth beast delineated in all his prominent parts and distinctive features, by symbols varied and intelligible. Daniel had the same interesting object presented, either in whole or in part, through {20} the medium of four successive symbols, or rather groups of symbols. In the second, seventh, eighth and eleventh chapters of his prophecy, he sees Antichrist subsisting in his elementary principles, under the symbols of an image, four beasts, a ram and he



goat, *etc.* John was favored with a view of the same object, represented by a much greater variety of symbols. As preparatory to the view about to be presented of Antichrist fully revealed, he was placed in a desert isle (Patmos), and favored with an exhibition of economic relations and official work of the adorable Trinity, *chapters* 4th and 5th. In the 11th chapter he is directed, *verse* 1, to take the dimensions of divinely organized society, in anticipation of the rise, and in order to oppose the reign of Antichrist. Standing upon the sand of the sea, he sees a beast rise up out of the sea, Rev. 13:1—exactly the source whence Daniel saw the four beasts arise, Dan. 7:3. But, whereas Daniel's beasts had but *one* head each, John's beast, of the sea, has *seven* heads. The beasts agree as to the number of horns—*ten*. This beast had previously appeared to John, differing in origin—he ascended out of the bottomless pit, Rev. 11:7, and having another name—a great red dragon, *chapter* 12:3. The dragon had seven heads and ten horns; but he had crowns upon his *heads*; whereas, the beast of the sea had crowns upon his *horns*. The dragon represents the Roman empire in its *pagan* or heathen state; the beast, having received his power and his throne and great authority from the dragon, and placed the crowns upon the *horns*, represents the same empire in its Christian (that is antichristian) and divided state. Now, although there is a transfer of power from the dragon to the beast, and of the crowns from the heads to the horns—*all the horns adhere to the one head*. Prophetic announcements of future events are oftentimes obscure. This is the intention of the Spirit of inspiration. Were it otherwise, the agents employed in the execution of the divine purpose could not be free, 1 Cor. 2:7-8. And this is also true of the prime agent, the devil, for if holy angels need supernatural revelation to direct them in the discharge of their ministry, Ps. 97:7, Heb. 1:6, it is reasonable to suppose that the old serpent is not wiser than they. True, both Satan and wicked men who are his instruments, Eph. 2:2, often sin against light—persevering in iniquity, knowing that iniquity will be their ruin. In such cases malice triumphs over conscience. The economy of man's redemption is progressively revealed to intelligent creatures—angels and men, good and evil, Eph. 3:10, Matt. 8:29. It is from a knowledge of the economical and official relations in the adorable Trinity, that the devil is able to deceive men by his counterfeits. Thus we find that enemy prompting Herod to murder the infant Jesus, Matt. 2:16;—tempting the Savior, *chapter* 4:1-10;—and openly heading the rebellion against Michael, our Prince, Dan. 10:21, Rev. 12:7. All men are either on the side of the dragon or of Christ. Immediately after the exhibition of {21} the four beasts to Daniel in vision—the four universal monarchies—he is favored with a discovery of the headship and universal dominion of the exalted Mediator, Dan. 7:13-14. The dominion then, of the Lord Christ, and the dominion of the god of this world, divide the population of Christendom, and these are contrary the one to the other. Christ is by the appointment of the Father, King of Zion, and Prince of the kings of the earth, Ps. 2:6, Rev. 1:5, Eph. 1:22. By the corruption of the church and state, and by

seducing both from allegiance to the Lord's Anointed, the prince of this world, has succeeded in marshaling them against their rightful Sovereign. This combination of the crown and the mitre—the civil and ecclesiastical departments of apostate Christendom—has been foresignified by divinely selected and appropriate symbols. They are both bestial—the lion, the bear, the leopard, are the animals by which the Antichristian civil powers are represented to signify their bloody cruelty against the saints of God. The same is true of their faithful and constant ally, which, as shown to Daniel, was a little horn; but, as represented to John, was a *beast*. For, although this *second* beast of the *earth* had the aspect of a lamb, it had two horns and spake as a *dragon*, Rev. 13:11. Daniel was peculiarly solicitous to know the truth (real meaning of the symbol) of the fourth beast; and more eager, if possible, to ascertain the mystical import of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth, that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows, *chapter* 7:19,20. He obtained such information as was satisfactory to himself, and needful in his time, but the witnesses having to confront this combination of idolatry, falsehood, and despotism, have been favored with a much clearer exhibition of the complex system.

This second beast, being the masterpiece of the devil, and having united in his composition the incongruous natures of a *lamb* and a *dragon*, may be expected to assume and present diverse aspects. Accordingly we find him sometimes affecting divinity—to be the vicegerent of the Lamb of God, 2 Thess. 2:4. Again he personates a prophet, Rev. 19:20; anon he assumes the aspect of a *woman!* *chapter* 17:3. All these phases are resorted to for the purpose of eluding detection. Still in alliance with the ten-horned beast, Christ's witnesses have been enabled to discover his deception.

*Sixth,*—For centuries past, the two witnesses have considered the book of Revelation in connection with Daniel, as essential to their faith. In opposition to the discouragements thrown out by well-meaning divines against attempts to expound these prophecies, some have "searched diligently" into their meaning. Against the scoffing and ridicule of infidels, the witnesses continue to believe and regard it as fully sustaining its *emphatic name*—REVELATION; and, encouraged by the benediction of its divine Author, they continue to interpret and apply this part of the word of God, as a singular means of directing their testimony, both doctrinal and practical. {22}

Looking into the history of Christendom, and comparing the constitutions and administrations of nations, empires, and churches, with prophetic symbols and their inspired interpretation, the witnesses have all along identified, with more or less precision, the apocalyptic Antichrist. The civil and imperial beast of Daniel, having *one* head, appears to John with *seven* heads, Rev. 13:1. The little or *eleventh* horn of

Daniel's beast is John's beast of the earth, *chapter* 13:11. The seven heads signify seven mountains; and, also, seven kings (or forms of imperial government,) *chapter* 17:9-10. Again, the ten horns represent ten kings (or civil sovereignties), *verse* 12—all concentrated in one imperial despotism, *verse* 13. All these conspire against Christ—not personal; no—they are all professedly his servants, his vicegerents, reigning by divine right! Analyze the mind of Saul of Tarsus going to Damascus, and compare it with the law of Christ, and the mind of these sovereigns will be understood. They make war with the Lamb in the members of his mystical body, *verse* 14, Dan. 7:25. To this they are instigated by the two-horned beast of the earth, Rev. 13:12, who causeth them that dwell on the *earth* to worship the first beast; and it is because those who *dwell in heaven* (abide by the ordinances of Christ) refuse to give God's glory to creatures, that *both* beasts assail them.

But as this second beast acts as a prophet, counterfeiting a divine commission to direct and control the human conscience, so he enforces his commands by great wonders, making fire to come down from heaven—miracles which he has power to do in the sight of the beast, *verse* 13-14—that is, signs and lying wonders, 2 Thess. 2:9.

Again, this second beast assumes the aspect of a woman—a mother—a whore—fruitful in harlot daughters, *chapter* 17:1,4; for the purpose of supplanting and so destroying another woman, *chapter* 12:1-3; her legitimate offspring, *verse* 4, and even the remnant of her seed, *verse* 17. To destroy the souls of the witnesses is the direct aim of the dragon, by tempting or forcing them to transfer their plighted allegiance from Christ to himself; and the blandishments or displeasure of this lewd woman and her daughters are employed for this very purpose; and alas! too often with success, *chapter* 14:11, 17:4.

Moreover, there is a concurrent agency among these symbolic enemies of truth and righteousness. Their primary object is to seduce. By heretical principles, cunningly adapted to the carnal mind, they aim at corrupting the morals and debauching the consciences of men, *chapter* 16:13-14; and when they fail to deceive they resort to open violence, *chapter* 13:7.

*Seventh*,—The two witnesses, standing before the God of the earth, look upon the confederated hosts as enemies to Christ and his Father, and only consequentially to them. (1.) All the heads of the civil beast are covered with names of blasphemies, *verse* 1. He claims the prerogatives and demands the homage which are due to God only, *verses* 4,8. (2.) The demands of the second {23} beast are equally peremptory, for he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, *verse* 12, and causeth all to worship the image of the first beast under the penalty of death, *verse* 15. The

image of the beast—the first, or civil beast, is the papacy—the second beast, the apostate church, having invested her visible head with imperial and temporal power—all the power of the first beast, *verse* 12: that is, with all the power of the Son of God as Mediator. Thus the Antichrist is revealed in visible organization. The dragon, the civil beast of the sea, and the false prophet, the ecclesiastical beast of the earth—the woman—all conspiring to dethrone Christ and destroy the foundations of the earth, Psalm 2:2-3; 11:3. (3.) Against these subtle and malicious enemies of Christ the two witnesses give their testimony. This exasperates and torments them; and as power is on the side of the oppressor, these faithful servants of Christ have been often called and enabled to seal their testimony with blood, striving against sin, Rev. 11:7. Nevertheless, following the Lamb, the Faithful and True Witness and the Captain of their salvation; and, in imitation of his example, witnessing both actively and passively; however some of them may fall from time to time in the contest, they do finally overcome by his blood and the word of their testimony. They that are with him are called and chosen and faithful, Rev. 12:11; 17:14.

### APPLICATION.

Having thus treated briefly of the witnesses—the cause in controversy, their number, character, furniture and work; some application of the whole subject to the moral condition of society in our own time, will be reasonably expected. For the mere admission that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*, however orthodox in itself, is essentially defective as a confession of the Christian's faith—much more defective when viewed as a confession of faith by the church organic.<sup>5</sup> The Holy Spirit teaches so, very explicitly when he adds, *and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*, 2 Tim. 3:16.

Much more might be advanced on our present subject in a doctrinal and expository way; but for the present, let the foregoing suffice. Something for further illustration of Scripture symbols may incidentally occur in the following improvement:

1. Since it is the mission of Christ's witnesses to urge his claims upon the individual, the family, the church, and the state; it may be proper to inquire whether individuals favored with a dispensation of the gospel receive Christ's instruction as a prophet, receive his atonement and rely on his intercession as a priest, and submit to his authority as a king? And it is easy to see that multitudes in Christendom refuse to recognize the claims of our Redeemer in all these respects. The infidel, setting his mouth against the heavens, refuses Christ's instruction, and walks on in darkness. Going {24} on frowardly in the way of his heart, and boasting of superior

illumination, derived from the rudiments of the world—especially the supposed infallible teachings of geology, he ventures on the journey of life by the light of the sparks of his own kindling, and with an awful peradventure passes the confines of time into the blackness of darkness forever. The self-righteous either denies the necessity of Christ's sacrifice for the sins of men, or its reality, or views it as general, and so without a definite object, and consequently that it may be vain—that while it is available by mankind universally in the divine intention, the result may possibly be that Messiah may never see (*absit blasphemia!*) one of the travail of his soul! Of course such a one feels no need of Christ's intercession—of the Spirit to help his infirmities. He can, without the mediation of the great High Priest, thank God that he is not as other men are, Luke 18:11. Another, with haughty independence, asks—"Who is the Lord that I should obey him?—I will not have this man to reign." The same description of individual language and conduct applies to families—*Christian* families! Christian churches! Christian states! If this be true of a nominally Christian world, then the cause of the witnesses is both real and weighty, and their testimony is not yet finished.

2. The witnesses are yet living and they must continue like their Lord, till they shall have finished their work; and that will not come to a close till the *devil's two witnesses*—the ten-horned and two-horned beasts—are destroyed, Rev. 19:20. For it is for the express purpose of confronting in open court these enemies of God and of his cause on earth, that they were appointed by Christ, and are numerically *two*. They are set for the defense of the gospel—that gospel which is to establish a kingdom of righteousness and peace upon earth, Is. 32:1. The retainers of Antichrist, whether of his civil or ecclesiastical department, often admonish the witnesses to "preach the gospel and let civil government alone:" that "the magistrate has nothing to do with religion," etc. So persecuted they the prophets which were before them, Ex. 10:28, 1 Kings 18:17, Amos 7:12-13. Through the concurrent and progressive testimony of these two prophets, every word shall be established against the opposing lies of the beast and the false prophet which they have learned of the father of lies, Rev. 16:13. It is an amazing instance of infatuation that the testimony of two men is sustained as true in all other cases, while the testimony of Christ's witnesses is rejected! Yet divine and human fellowship is predicated upon their testimony, 1 John 1:1-3. They can not die nor lawfully cease from their work till the sanctuary is cleansed and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,<sup>6</sup> Dan. 8:14, Rev. 11:15. A scriptural magistracy and a gospel ministry are to be established on the earth. {25}

3. Their character as witnesses subjects these servants of the Lord to a close scrutiny. The dragon desires to have them that he may sift them as wheat; and often causes them to appear before kings, councils and ecclesiastical courts, that he may

either destroy their souls through terror, or their natural lives by the flames, or the credibility of their evidence, by loading them with reproach, charging them with enthusiasm, fanaticism, schism, sedition, rebellion, treason, etc.; saying all manner of evil against them for Christ's sake—but all these things are said against them *falsely*; for none of them has suffered as a thief, or as a murderer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Thus it appears that their character has been sufficiently tested according to the forms of law. They only are marked with a character that is *indellible*; for it is impressed upon their foreheads with the seal of the living God, Rev. 7:2-8; and they are not afraid or ashamed to exhibit it in the most public manner, even on the summit of Mount Zion, *chapter* 14:1. This indicates whose they are and whom they serve; for, while this seal or name may have some reference to the ordinance of baptism, it points more directly to the thing signified by baptism, namely: that they belong to the adorable Trinity as covenant property, and bear true allegiance to the Lord's Anointed. However their names may be cast out as evil, it is their comfort and honor that their record is on high—their names in the Lamb's Book of Life. Through grace they have been enabled to live soberly, righteously and godly—blameless and harmless as the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse community, among whom they have shone as lights in the world.

Moreover, it is to be noticed as a distinguishing trait in the character of these two witnesses, that they are loaded with infamy. If they were of the world, the world would love his own; but because they are not of the world, but Christ has chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hateth them. Woe unto them when all men speak well of them. If they be reproached, it is for the name of Christ. This is a special part of his cross which they are required to take up daily and follow him.

In bearing this cross after Jesus, they are greatly encouraged by considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself; for, if they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household? They know that the world hated him before it hated them; and they have his promise, that if they suffer with him, they shall be glorified together. Having this confidence, they voluntarily go forth unto him, without the camp of Antichrist, bearing his reproach; and so are not reckoned among the nations, Rev. 18:4. Being strangers and pilgrims on the earth, their true character is of course unknown; still the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his, 2 Tim. 2:19.

*Query:* How many churches or Christians in our day bear these peculiar and distinguishing marks of Christ's witnesses? {26}

4. All the resources of the covenant, and all the fullness of the covenant Head, being pledged to these witnesses, their furniture is as ample as they can possibly desire.

None of it, however, is superfluous. Luther on the continent, and Knox in the British Isles, required the courage of the lion to brave the wrath of the "man of sin"—to sustain the fire sent down from heaven—the fulminations of the Romish Vatican. Calvin, Melancthon, and others, needed the far-reaching vision of the eagle, the laborious patience of the calf or young ox, to penetrate and expose the sophisms of wily priests, to deal with the open blasphemies of shameless libertines, and thus disclose the mysteries of the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, Rev. 4:7. Thus the woman clothed with the sun—the church of Christ—was blessed with a son (a male), who was destined to rule all nations—an offspring to fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to all nations, *chapter* 12:1,5; 14:6. Instead of worshiping devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk—all which was inculcated by the church of Rome—these servants of Christ obeying his call, *chapter* 18:4, came out of her, and taught their fellow sinners to fear God, and worship him that made heaven and earth, *etc.*

The same furniture enabled their successors to carry forward the work of reformation thus auspiciously begun; and to make great advancement in building upon the scriptural foundation thus laid. For although in tracing the history of the Lord's work in delivering New Testament Zion, out of captivity in mystical Babylon, some may consider the *first* of the three angels, Rev. 14:6-9, as including Luther, Calvin, *etc.*, as identified with the famous and faithful Waldenses: perhaps there is greater accuracy in associating the witnesses on the continent, and the British Isles in the sixteenth century, as harmonizing with the second symbolic angel. That these angels signify a gospel ministry is clear, *chapter* 1:20. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, chapters two and three throughout. Nothing short of divine power is adequate to reform a single sinner, and nothing less could accomplish the reformation of an Antichristian world. Christ gave these his servants power according to his promise,—*God also bearing them witness—with gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.* [Heb. 2:4.] Whatever the achievements of Christ's witnesses, they are ever ready to acknowledge the excellency of the power to have been of God, saying with heroic but humble Paul,—*yet not we, but the grace of God which was with us.*

In their struggles with Antichristian foes, the witnesses found it expedient to take hold of God's strength, which they often did by taking hold of his covenant. This scriptural measure cemented their union, purged out rebels and inspired them with renewed courage. Covenanting with God and with each other was practiced both in Europe and Britain. At such time the witnesses were to their opposers terrible as an army with banners. And although {27} this expedient is natural to man—all nations being in the practice of making covenants relative to their earthly interests—it is

peculiar to these witnesses to assert and maintain the divine origin and permanent moral nature of public covenanting with God, both in ecclesiastical and national capacity. The only plausible objection offered by opponents to the doctrine and practice of public social covenanting is taken from the assumption, that it is superseded by the sacraments, especially the Lord's supper. The assumption has never been proved, and it is utterly groundless, as will at once appear to any unbiased mind, by considering that God instituted all three forms of taking hold of his covenant. If it be so that baptism and the Lord's supper are substantially the same seals of the covenant as circumcision and the Passover; then the consequence is inevitable, that as the whole people of Israel were taken and engaged to God at Sinai, he judged the two preceding forms incomplete. And since the privileges of God's covenant people are enlarged—not abridged, under the New Testament dispensation, and that public covenanting was matter of frequent prediction and promise under the Old Testament dispensation; it follows that this instrumentality is to be continued and exemplified. Accordingly we have the witnesses historically represented as resorting to this divine ordinance, both in trying and prosperous times as a special means of reformation. In the British Isles the first and second reformation were effected in this manner. The National Covenant is a standing monument of emancipation from *Popery* by the witnesses; and the Solemn League marks with equal distinctness their onward progress till they successfully shook off the remaining shackles of anti-Christian prelacy. These public documents embody the substance of God's testimony and law, the supreme standard of social organization, the only permanent foundation of church and state—of civil and religious liberty. For although these covenants are binding formally upon the churches and nations of Britain only; yet the principles which they embrace and exhibit to the world, are morally obligatory upon all churches and nations upon earth. After the awful violation of these solemn vows to the Most High, by a large majority of those who made them; the witnesses continued to own them. This fidelity on their part became the occasion of their mother's children being angry with them. Those who had gone back into mystical Egypt, and such as looked to Assyria for alliance, not only deserted the true witnesses—"the society people"—but often betrayed the greatest malignity and cruelty towards *their covenant brethren*. This treachery, perjury, and inhumanity furnished occasion for displaying the testimony of the witnesses in new forms. To meet the exigencies of the case, when a price was set upon the heads of some, and others were actually killed all the day long—when they could neither act in concert nor in a judicative capacity; and when there was no access to the press to give publicity and efficacy to their testimony: those heroic wanderers and invincible {28} patriots drafted occasional "testimonies, declarations, and protestations," and affixed them to the most public and conspicuous places in the land. They were engaged in their Master's service and the power of Christ rested on them, often to the conviction of



their adversaries. The Lord Jesus visibly fulfilled his promise in giving power to his witnesses. The Westminster Standards as received by the church of Scotland, were the landmarks which their fathers had set; the covenants were the most compendious form of those landmarks: and while defending the landmarks by the papers which they emitted in their defense, and by reiterated declarations of adherence to the covenants, noting and confessing the breaches of them, the witnesses made real progress in the application of their principles to individual and social life, until the whole of their attainments were embodied in that standing monument to their achievement—the Judicial Testimony, 1761.

5. It remains to consider the work of these two commissioned, and famous witnesses, as it has a bearing upon the moral condition of society in our own time. This part of the subject may be advantageously handled, and brought within the comprehension of the general reader, by attempting to furnish answers to such questions as may naturally arise in his mind. After all that has been said in the preceding pages, it will not be thought impertinent when we hear the inquiry, so often made after all that has been written by our fathers,—Who are the witnesses? Many and conflicting answers have been given. And the contradictory nature of those answers furnishes *occasion*, while it is not the *cause* of doubt. The cause why we err, in this as in other instances, is our culpable ignorance—not knowing the Scriptures. The Papists say Enoch and Elijah are the witnesses, to appear sometime before the end of the world. This is a vain imagination for the simple reason that the witnesses are to prophesy 1260 years—much longer than the age of Methuselah. Others think the Old and New Testaments are the witnesses. The witnesses die, Rev. 11:7, but the word of God liveth and abideth forever, 1 Pet. 1:23. Again, we are told that John Huss and Jerome were the witnesses. It is sufficient to reply, that they were too short-lived. But, not to mention other crude and groundless fancies, it may be sufficient to affirm, that the witnesses are a select and competent number of professing Christians, employed by Christ and empowered by him, as declared in the text, to confront and withstand Antichrist in the invasion of the rights of God and man. Among these, faithful ministers of the gospel as ambassadors for Christ occupy a conspicuous position. No *two individuals*, either in public office or private life, ever did or ever will constitute the witnesses, although even this erroneous conceit has been facetiously or maliciously applied or attributed to them both of old and of late, being part of the reproaches of Christ endured by those noble martyrs and distinguished patriots—Donald Cargil and Richard Cameron. Yes, lewd fellows of the baser sort attempted to bespatter their holy characters with such filth as was congenial to their vile calumniators. {29}

Again, it may be asked,—How can the witnesses live so long—a thousand two hundred and sixty years? *Answer:*—In their posterity or successors. See Rev. 11:11.

And their lives are not limited even to that period, for when their enemies shall have been utterly destroyed, they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, *chapter 20:4*—not as witnesses but as kings and judges.

Seeing we have considered the company consisting of a hundred and forty and four thousand, as constituting or identifying with the witnesses, Rev. 7:4, 14:1, how is this number reconcilable with the number *two*? To this it may be replied: The reader ought not to entertain the Papal or Protestant misapprehension, that two individuals are intended. For this, as was said, is a groundless error. Moreover, the prime reason beyond doubt why the witnesses are represented as numerically *two* is because the god of this world has his two witnesses—the beast of the sea and the beast of the earth. These must be as it were confronted in person. Thus while all the world, in their own vaunting style, are worshiping the beast; the Lamb's book of life contains the names of the minority. They are the *little flock*, to whom it is their Father's good pleasure to give the millennial kingdom. Some of these may be found in the camp of the enemy for a time, as Luther, Knox, and others of less note: yea, they may linger as Lot in Sodom, as the captives in Babylon, while Christ is calling upon them to come out, *chapter 18:4*—but in his accepted time he will give efficacy to the call, so that not one shall be found among the doomed community, when the deluge of wrath comes—when Babylon is overthrown.

Another inquiry may arise here:—Why are the witnesses so few that they are represented by the number two? *Answer:*—In this way Christ is more glorified, and the Father in him. His own glory is God's ultimate and highest end in all his works; and thus out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he perfects praise. He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. Besides, the principles which the witnesses profess, and the practices which they exemplify are not adapted to the taste of the world. All who embrace their testimony must count upon bearing Christ's cross—upon opposition from the world of the ungodly. No man may expect, if of their company, to enjoy the honors or emoluments of office, either civil or ecclesiastic—to be permitted either to buy or sell in any of the streets of mystical Babylon. All who refuse to have Christ to reign over them, will contrive and establish legal barriers to exclude from places of power such as recognize practically Mediatory authority. The indulgence of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life will prove an insurmountable obstacle in the way of worldly men's accession to the standard which God has given to them that fear him to be displayed because of the truth. The wine which mystical Babylon presents in her golden cups is intoxicating. Those who have once tasted its bewitching {30} contents, are thereby incapacitated for understanding or embracing the word of Christ's patience. As the intellect of the inebriate is clouded, and his conceptions obscured and confused, so is it with the votaries of Antichrist. They can not see afar

off. The interest of Christ, the glory of Immanuel, is too high for them; they can not attain unto it. His judgments are far above, out of their sight.

Lastly, the witnesses are few, because so hath the Lord ordained. Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world, and he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Infinite in knowledge and almighty in power, it is alike to him to save by many or by few,—by instruments or without them. As he knoweth them that are his, being comprehended within the election of free grace; so he has unalterably ordained the exact number of the witnesses. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names; so he does in the case of his witnesses, as Paul, Antipas, Acts 9:11. To him whose understanding is infinite, the number of the witnesses is as certain and definite as two is to us.

Again, it may be asked why the witnesses are so calumniated in the world? And it is easy to answer,—Because they testify of it that the works thereof are evil. Thus it was in the experience of their Lord, and for the same reason. *The Son of man came eating and drinking and they say, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners—John the baptist came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he hath a devil.* If the witnesses neither eat flesh nor drink wine, nor do anything whereby a brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak—if they eat and drink whatsoever is set before them, asking no questions for conscience sake; the men of the world, but especially the more zealous votaries of Antichrist, will be sure to turn either kind of action to their reproach. And when the man of sin fails to secure compliance with his commands to abstain from meats, etc., then the dragon, cast out of heaven—defeated in his attempt to seduce the servants of Christ through the agency of the man of sin—ecclesiastical authority: will come down to the earth—the body of general society, and endeavor to reach his object by tempting to a *voluntary* compliance, Rev. 11:12. Defeated in this masterpiece of his serpentine policy; he resorts to the next stratagem as accuser of the brethren—representing them as secretly the friends of all unrighteousness, with a view to destroy the credibility of their testimony. The great whore of Babylon—that woman Jezebel—the mother of harlots, with her numerous harlot daughters—the illegitimate progeny from her adulterous commerce with the kings of the earth; has ever hunted for the precious life of Christ's witnesses,—has been often drunk with their blood, and has always labored to cover their names with infamy—denouncing them as heretics, schismatics, *etc.* These two prophets have a name better than of sons and of daughters, even an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. The righteous shall be {31} in everlasting remembrance, while those who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ, shall be clothed with shame and everlasting contempt.

Seeing that the witnesses are few and feeble, often counted as sheep for the slaughter, and their enemies many and mighty—how is it that they survive? Simply on the principle that the bush burned and was not consumed—the Lord was in the bush, Ex. 3:3,4. Greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world, 1 John 4:4. In the furnace of fire—in the lion’s den—on the scaffold—or at the stake, these witnesses enjoy special communion with their glorious Lord. They have ascended the rounds of the fatal ladder with less trepidation than they ascended the steps of the pulpit—their souls leaning on their Beloved, and realizing his promise: *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour:—Surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto them.* [Isa. 43:2,3; Psalm 32:6.] Wisdom is commended, patriotism is eulogized, heroism is applauded—all these properties are possessed and displayed by the witnesses of Christ in greater measure and harmony than in any others of the human race. As natural endowments, they come from God, and may be seen in the military conduct or cabinet counsel of such men as Joab, Jehu, Ahithophel; but it is only when they are the gracious gifts of the Spirit of Christ that they fit men for such achievements as entitle them to rank among the great cloud of witnesses, Heb. 11:32-34. The sensible presence of Christ by his Spirit, the Comforter, applying his promises to the heart; and his witnessing thus with their spirits that they are the children of God, enables these witnesses—like Moses and Elijah, to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, to become mighty in word and deed. Yes, they that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits—while such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupted by flatteries, Dan. 11:32. Throughout all the eventful period since the Antichrist arose, Christ has made good his promise to these famous witnesses—they have hitherto received power, all requisite furniture, enabling them to continue their prophecy against all the combined forces and forces and frauds of that cruel, subtle, and implacable enemy. Assuredly they shall finish their testimony: for to this end they are called and chosen and faithful.

On the last branch of our subject, which is much the most important; namely, the special work for the accomplishing of which Christ appointed the two witnesses, it will be necessary to enlarge in making an application. Their work consisting, as we have seen, in contending for all divine truth, in its practical bearing upon individual and social man; and in opposing whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness: it may be inquired—What is their peculiar and appropriate work in the present condition of the world? {32}

Assuming that the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline of the Church of

Christ; as also, the constitution and administration of civil government were duly settled according to the divine pattern in the Holy Scriptures, as exhibited in the symbols of the covenanted reformation, compiled at Westminster, and as these were received by the Church of Scotland; it would follow that the special business of Christ's witnesses is to build upon that foundation. But inasmuch as that glorious reformation was really and speedily overthrown in the British Isles; and the scriptural foundation then laid, has been since covered with accumulating heaps of Antichristian rubbish; much of the labor of their legitimate successors has been employed in removing this, and in endeavoring to keep the foundation visible.

The whole of that work was completed, so far as it progressed, by an open profession of faith in Christ, and a solemn engagement to obey his law—both sealed in covenant form. Both the principles deduced from the lively Oracles, and the manner of their application in individual and social life, are to be ascertained only from *history*. The various steps of defection or apostasy from that reformation can be known *only from history*. The witnesses have put upon record a narrative of their own "life and times," and they *only* are qualified for that work. In vain will any inquirer find their true character or work delineated in the pages of the popular writers of civil and ecclesiastical history, much less in the historical romance which Babylon's sons and daughters have fabricated for the amusement of "her tender little ones." As these two witnesses represent and embody God's covenant society, so they are the only truly *historical* community whose annals run parallel with the wheels of time. Cities are razed, and perished with them is their memorial: kingdoms arise in the earth, and flourish for a time, but they are soon supplanted by others:—it is otherwise with Zion,—God will establish her forever.

It has been the aim of Antichrist all along to divide and conquer these witnesses. The civil and ecclesiastical beasts act in concert for their overthrow. The two-horned beast—the false prophet—makes it his business to "steal the words of God," with a design to deceive them that dwell upon the earth. Each assumes to exercise the prerogatives of Christ,—to reign by divine right—a right from heaven to act on earth as the vicegerents of the Mediator. Thus all the heads of the civil beast are marked with the names of blasphemy, Rev. 13:1. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven*—the witnesses, *verse 6*. To this he is instigated by the false prophet, who in Christ's name, blaspheming his name, demands and commands "submission to the powers that be." The pope of Rome and his vassals, who are the antitypes of the ten horns of the first beast, and who have learned this policy from their spiritual father,—all assume a blasphemous headship over the church within their civil jurisdiction. The purple-clad {33} woman sits upon the scarlet-colored beast—the *almost living* symbols of an apostate church and state, the former

directing and urging the latter to deeds of blood: for both are represented with garments dyed in the blood of the saints. It is their meat and their drink to do the will of their father, who was a murderer from the beginning. And here it is proper to notice, that not only on the continent of Europe, but in Protestant Britain, the mitre and the crown have often been stained with the blood of the martyrs. Yes, at the present moment that horn of the beast insults the majesty of heaven—denies the Father and the Son, by giving an establishment to paganism in India, Popery in Canada, Prelacy in England and Ireland, and a restricted Presbyterianism in Scotland—the chief magistrate being head of all these churches—and all by the authority of Christ—"by the grace of God!" Can any thing be conceived more blasphemous? Such *facts* as these the witnesses collect from *history*—bring them to the law and to the testimony, and in the name of the Lord pass judgment upon them. *Deprive them of history as a term of communion, and they are deprived of life. The same is true of argument.* They must confess their fathers' sins with their own; they must have understanding of the times; they must assert and maintain the Protestant doctrine against the man of sin—"That all necessary deductions from the words of scripture, are of divine authority:" and these things *cannot be done* without the use of history and argument.

But it will be asked, "Does not saving faith rest on divine testimony?" Certainly. But when did the two witnesses believe or teach that saving faith is a term, and especially the only term, of communion in the visible church of Christ? Never—they left that dogma with the *infallible* fraternity of Rome and their legitimate progeny—the enthusiasts of Germany and affiliated sectaries of England, Baptists and other Independents. Christ's witnesses have not professed to have the miraculous gift of discerning spirits. All such power, and signs, and lying wonders, they habitually renounced and cordially detested, as may be seen in their historical footsteps, marked down in their solemn covenants. The terms of communion among the witnesses are resolvable into an agreement in principle and practice, deduced from the Holy Scriptures *by themselves*. And they have told us that "to shift the terms of church fellowship from such agreement, to the supposed goodness of persons, is a most dangerous" course. Let their professed followers be admonished by their matured judgment and experience. God established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children. Alas! to many of the children—teachers and taught—these things are a blank, as a book that is sealed. "Reformation Principles Exhibited,"<sup>7</sup> without correspondent *practices*,—"The Banner of the Covenant,"<sup>8</sup> together with other cognate false lights, have well nigh quenched the light {34} in many minds, of our covenanted testimony. This, also was the effort of the Indulged in Scotland, in the seventeenth century, after the national overthrow of the "cause of God." They and their abettors conspired to obstruct the rays of heavenly light which

the witnesses endeavored to diffuse in their guilty land. Such struggles will be made by the carnal mind to exclude that light which when admitted, gives energy to the accusations of a guilty conscience. Such rebel against the light—quench the Spirit, and furnish occasion for "Faithful Contendings," yea, "Earnest Contendings," and "Wrestlings" on the part of the witnesses.<sup>9</sup> The witnesses have affirmed constantly, that faith without works is dead, being alone; that there must be a continuance in both doctrine and fellowship, to evince their apostolic origin and legitimate succession.

But in view of the light and social progress of the nineteenth century—the multitude of benevolent societies organized for the express purpose of effecting political, moral, and spiritual reform—what place is found, what occasion given, for the continuance of the witnesses? Are not the nations of Europe and America all avowedly *Christian* states? And are not the churches, *Christian* churches? especially Protestant churches, the churches of the Reformation?

Such questions are popular and prevalent, and the objections which they imply contain a degree of plausibility. Let the following facts be considered:

Human nature is corrupt; man is helpless since the fall, Gen. 6:5, Rom. 3:10-18. The prevailing theory of man's recuperative powers is at once at variance with scripture and experience, Rom. 5:6. Wars and fightings come of the lusts of men. Duellings, robberies, murders, accompanied by all circumstances of cruelty and brutality continue to be perpetrated in city and country, as attested in the current news of the day. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. All this is verified in private and social life. Now of such elements are composed the social organizations of mankind. Man is an enemy to man, because he is first an enemy to God. And the unjust judge, whether in ecclesiastical or civil judicature, who fears not God, will not regard man. Such are the little antichrists who, in the aggregate constitute the great Antichrist, who denies the Father and the Son. It is still the character of the civil beast, that there is given him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, Rev. 13:5. The same is true of the little horn—the ecclesiastical beast—the false prophet, Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:11; 19:20. And their combined blasphemies are never so blasphemous as when uttered in the *name of the Lord*—by divine authority. As Christ's vicegerent, the Pope, forbids to marry, and commands to abstain from meats—institutes sacraments, holy-days, image-worship, *etc.*, and anathematizes {35} all recusants! "By the grace of God" the sovereign of the British Empire, among other blasphemies, usurps Christ's throne, as "supreme judge in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil"—dictates the faith and worship of the subject, except those authoritatively tolerated! By an equal usurpation of Jehovah's prerogative,

"the people of the United States" disown any "higher law," abrogate any "religious test," and "ordain" slavery—trading in the bodies and souls of men—subjecting the life, liberty, and property of about every sixth person to the despotic will of his fellow—attempting, with equal impiety and inconsistency, to ratify and confirm the enormity, by an appeal to "patriarchal institutions!"—On his heads the name of blasphemy. All the remarks apply, in whole or in part, to every other nation within the geographical boundaries of Christendom.

Next, it may be asked: "Are the churches implicated in these sacrilegious robberies of God and invasions of human rights?" Yes. Though the princes be chief in the trespass, the priests, and prophets, and all the people of the lands are involved. There is an "unholy alliance" existing, and of long continuance, betwixt the two beasts. The beast of the earth causes all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond; to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads, Rev. 13:16. The mark is that of the first or civil beast at the instigation of the other—an apostate church commands, under awful pains and penalties, *allegiance* to the civil power, *verse* 13. The same alliance and co-operation is presented more plainly, *chapter* 17:1-3. The woman is carried by the beast—the beast is controlled by the woman, *verse* 7—the church is supported by the state, the state is molded by the church—there are Cardinals and Lord-bishops in the legislatures and cabinets of the nations; and there are many—very many other ecclesiastics who, though destitute of titles of dignity, wear soft raiment and are in kings' palaces.

Could Popery exist in Spain, France, Austria—Prelacy in England and Ireland, without the influence of the hierarchy? Could infidelity, slavery, Mormonism exist in the United States without the concurrence of the church? And what shall be said of Freemasonry, Odd-Fellowship and kindred combinations of Christians and infidels, whether angels of light or of darkness; but that they are all the inventions of men, whose faith no longer relies on the ordinances of divine institution. Substitutes they are, and often avowedly so, for the resources of the covenant of grace; which, it is assumed, has failed to reform the human race. This is the doing of the false prophet—the mother of harlots, who is equally the mother of all these abominations. The kings of the earth, and many others, have committed spiritual fornication with the mother and many of her daughters. The golden cup, worldly gain and sensual gratification, have proved irresistible incentives to multitudes in the church as well as in the state, to renounce {36} allegiance to Zion's King, the Prince of the kings of the earth. And while these unhallowed combinations continue to subvert or counteract the great ordinances of heavenly origin—a gospel ministry and a scriptural magistracy, the witnesses must prophesy. To give testimony against them, and judicially to pass sentence upon them, is their appropriate work; and, like their divine Lord and exemplar, they shall not fail nor be discouraged till he,



through their instrumentality, has set judgment in the earth. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. The little stone, cut out without hands, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; and they shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

God's people sing of mercy and of judgment, Psalm 101:1. 89:1, and their prayers are often answered by terrible things in righteousness, 65:5; they are his remembrancers, Isa. 43:26; and all the judgment denounced against the enemies of the church are mercies promised to the Church, Psalm 136:17-20: so that the harvest of God's wrath and the vintage—the final overthrow of rebellious nations and apostate churches—is to take place in answer to the prayer of the witnesses, Rev. 14:15-18. He has engaged all his perfections to avenge his own elect that cry unto him. When he maketh inquisition for blood—especially martyr blood—he then remembereth the humble, *chapter* 6:9-10, he forgetteth not their prayer.<sup>10</sup> This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth—great Babylon shall come in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; and the kings of the earth, that have committed fornication with her, will so change their policy, that the hatred wherewith they shall hate her shall be greater than the love wherewith they loved her; for God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast till the words of God shall be fulfilled. Then the ten horns shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire—for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her. [Rev. 17:16; 18:8.]

Thus are the witnesses destined to overcome the confederated hosts of Antichrist by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and while the high praises of God are in their mouth, they will invoke the aid of all holy beings in setting forth the glory of God and of the Lamb, saying—*Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.* Thus shall these two prophets, in view of their enemies, ascend to the heaven of civil and ecclesiastical power, *chapter* 11:12, 20:4, {37} and reign with Christ a thousand years. Standing on the sea of glass, mingled with fire, they will celebrate their victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name. Their victory will be complete, their triumph glorious. Let us, uninfluenced by the popular theology and unscriptural worship of our time, adopt their principles, cultivate their spirit, and emulate their example, their praise, and their prayers. *Arise, O God, judge the earth! for thou shalt inherit all nations.*<sup>11</sup>

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## APPENDIX.

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*Note A.* When we say—all the doctrines of the Bible—we mean all of supernatural revelation. "Nature itself teacheth," but its teaching is often vague, always imperfect; and without an adequate sanction, necessarily leaves the mind in impenetrable darkness, and the heart under the dominion of sin, Rom. 1:19. It is assumed in the very first words of the Bible, that its adorable Author has revealed something of himself through a previous medium. But the actings of the divine mind and the operation of Jehovah's hand in creation and providence, including man's redemption, these are things which are satisfactorily revealed only in the scriptures. Now, if we begin with the doctrine of the Trinity, the constitution of the Mediatory Person, the decrees of God, the atonement of Christ, *etc.*, and ask: "Are these and their connections, as principles of supernatural revelation, generally received in the Christian Church?" By no means. There is not a doctrine of grace which is not opposed—which is not supplanted by the false prophet. To state these doctrines—to place them before the eye in logical connections, to apply them to saints and sinners; to defend them and their just application when denied in theory and disregarded in practice: to exemplify their sanctifying power in the hand of the Spirit of Christ:—this, this is the work of the witnesses.

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*Note B.* The history of Romish traditions, infallibility, apostolic succession, *etc.*, admonishes of danger here. The Pharisees made void the law of God through their traditions. Professing Christians did the same in apostolic times, Col. 2:8,23. Are we, by nature, better than they? No, in no wise. The advocates of uninspired psalmody have fallen into this error. Dr. Watts proposed to convert David into a Christian. His argument was chiefly grounded on a perversion of the words of our Lord,—"The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the baptist." Others of less celebrity have ventured to assert, "That a hymn, if agreeable to scripture, is inspired." But who is to judge? We must go to Rome for the infallible decision. And here we ought not to overlook the novel dogma propounded in less suspected quarters: for who would surmise that the same, or a worse form of the same heresy, should find entertainment among reformers—covenanted reformers? But so it is. A *heresy* (for it is more {39} than an error), has been imputed to us, which our soul abhors; and from a source too, from which that very heresy emanated. See *Covenanter*, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 75: "None so blind as one who will not see." True, the maxim results from observation and experience. That the reader may be prepared to understand the following observations with precision, he is referred to

the following preliminaries: *Covenanter*, (Philadelphia) Vol. 11, No. 8, pp. 231-237; No. 10, pp. 301-305; Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 72-75: *Articles*:—"Analysis of Preface to Reformation Principles Exhibited,"—"Preface to Reformation Principles," *etc.*,—"Judicial Testimonies."

While commenting on the articles here placed in their titles before the reader's eye; the "Covenanter" made free to charge to us the "damnable heresy" of *infallibility* avowed by the Romish church. Take the charge in *some* of his select phraseology: "A great error,"—"this writer's great error,"—"a strange delusion,"—"human history on a par with Bible truth,"—"the worst form of the Popish doctrine,"—"the radical and most dangerous error,"—"fearful error, putting human compositions on a par with the Bible." These are but *some* of the charitable and complimentary terms and phrases by which the "Covenanter" "cast dust" in the eyes of the credulous, and eluded the point of an argument which he could not meet. And it is to be deplored that a spirit of deep sleep has closed the eyes of many professing witnesses for a covenanted testimony. It is certain that if scripture light and sound reasoning do not prevail to awaken sinners in Zion,—judgments must follow. Then woe to blind seers, and to those who say to the seers, see not. Why is the rod in the parent's hand—why the ferule in the hand of the schoolmaster?—"To sharpen the intellect!"—say the ancients. Modern reformers, we know, conduct intellectual culture and moral discipline in a "milder mode." To such you might as well suggest propelling an Atlantic steamer with the old fashioned boat-oar, as "a rod for the fool's back!" What is it to us if the Most High says,—*Why will ye be stricken any more?—I will punish you yet seven times for your iniquities*. Is there such a thing as "receiving correction?" Yes, if when God's hand is lifted up, we *will* not see—we *shall* see. It were easy to retort, to answer the "Covenanter" according to his folly—to cry, "Papist, Sophist, Schismatic," *etc.*, *etc.*: What would such railing for railing prove? Nothing—save the present, not to say, the reigning power of corruption. We are constrained, however, to roll off the odium attached to a claim of *infallibility*; and show the reader to whom this fearful error belongs, praying that he who originated it, may be brought to renounce the error and repent of former rashness. We should reflect that a *real* disciple may, for a time, resist the truth—fundamental truth in the plan of redemption, while his heart is biased by a clouded intellect, Matt. 16:21-23. Such reflection would contribute to the right direction of our charity.

But, to our present purpose:—

1. Distinguish between the ground of saving faith and terms of communion {40} in the visible church. These are not identical. Rome's error results from confounding these. Her reasoning (if it may be called reasoning) is this:—The Church receives

none to communion but believers:—all beyond her pale are unbelievers—heretics:—there is no salvation but in her communion; therefore, saving faith, or the grounds of saving faith, should alone constitute the bond of fellowship in the church. In the time of the First Reformation, both in Europe and England, enthusiasts would receive none but "true believers." Luther himself was troubled—perplexed for about three years, in dealing with this question, after he had obtained clear views of the grounds of saving faith! The "Covenanter" is entangled in the same difficulty.

2. Distinguish between the visible Church and the Church invisible. Saving faith, or the ground of saving faith, is the bond of communion in the invisible church; not so in the visible church, otherwise hypocrites could not be there. The doctrines, arguments, and history of the visible church are all *her own deductions from scripture*. None of these has the attribute of infallibility, because the Church is not infallible. An effect cannot be greater than its cause—the stream rise higher than its source. Now we have tested the "Covenanter's" orthodoxy here—on this very point—Popish infallibility. We have supposed that the reason "why he can swear to the truth of *doctrine* is, because he is sure of its infallibility," *Covenanter*, Vol. 12; pp. 73-74. Now let the reader mark the reply: "Certainly, 'infallible' because Bible truth." But how shall it be ascertained that the deductions are Bible truth—infallible? Do we receive this *infallibility* by tradition from our fathers of Scotland or Westminster? No, indignantly we say, no. In the very body of the doctrinal standards which they framed, they tell us, "All synods and councils, since the apostles' times, may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice," *etc.* Surely the Assembly at Westminster were not so impious or stupid as to claim an infallibility which they so explicitly denied to all uninspired predecessors. The "Covenanter" "wonders we do not see, that if we show we have a history with our Testimony, it must be infallible." Besides separating here between history and testimony, we wonder at his persistence in asserting, by plain implication, the infallibility of a *human Testimony!* We deny, before the world, the infallibility of our own testimony, the "Covenanter's" Testimony—every other uninspired testimony; and, moreover, humbly suggest to the "Covenanter" the danger of encroaching upon the divine prerogatives, and charging such impiety on his neighbors. It is amazing, amidst perpetual displays of supercilious contempt, dogmatic assertion, *etc.*, that such palpable evidence occurs in almost every paragraph, that the "Covenanter" has yet much to learn of the nature, substance, and arrangement of the terms of communion and the Testimony of the Reformed Covenanted Church. {41 }

3. Beware of acting implicit faith. It is long since the error falsely imputed to us, was broached among professing Covenanters. For example—we heard from the

mouth of a minister in that body, more than a quarter of a century ago, the declaration in the pulpit: "The *first* is the only proper term of communion in the church, and the time is not distant, we trust, when she will have no more"<sup>12</sup>—that is, when all the displays of a covenant God's justice, mercy, faithfulness, *etc.*, in dealing with the Church and her Antichristian opposers, shall have passed into oblivion—an unbelieving and ungrateful hope, or desire. The protestant world is so denominated simply because of a solemn protest against Rome's impious claim to infallibility and cognate invasions of Messiah's prerogatives. Attach the attribute of infallibility to *any* of the subordinate standards of our Christian profession, and we are instantly deprived of them all, as a near and necessary consequence. We sincerely hope the "Covenanter" will arrive at clearer light on the general subject of creeds and confession; and, if so, we are sure he will come to a better temper. It is part of the known character of the two witnesses that they contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, as the nearest and surest way to victory. Again, we would say to the reader, beware of exercising implicit faith in *human* authority as well as *testimony*; and hold in dread all assumptions of infallibility by Pope, Prelate, or Presbyterian; and especially Reformed Presbyterian, standing by the exclusive supremacy of Zion's King.

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*Note C.* What should be incorporated with the Confession of the Church's faith? This is a question about which there is a great diversity of sentiment among professing Christians. Many join in the cry—"Down with all creeds and confessions—they reflect upon the sufficiency of the sacred scriptures; they divide or tend to divide the Church; they foster alienation among Christians; are contrary to the love of the brethren which the gospel enjoins, and for which the Savior prays." If these were necessary consequences of creeds, *etc.*, in the Church, we would certainly join in the cry. But, when we see, as we cannot but see, that the opposition comes strengthened by an infidel cooperation, as is manifest on the pages of the illiterate literature and false science of popular periodicals, we take the alarm and begin to question both the integrity and sincerity of the motley multitude. One object of Christ's witnesses, in framing visible symbols of their faith and practice, was to detect error. This end they do eminently subserve. Those who allow their active powers an undisputed mastery over their intellectual powers, are easily deceived by a show of wisdom and voluntary humility. A form of godliness is perfectly consistent with a habit of feeding on husks. It is not at all strange that Christian professors, who relish soulless romances, obscene novels, and brainless sentimentality, commonly called "polite literature," should resist the application of any tests of morality and orthodoxy. {42}

As the primary object of terms of communion in the Church is to exhibit the law and covenant of God, and then agreement of persons in their apprehension of these, together with their joint and declared resolution to walk accordingly; it would appear that they are a rational expedient to reach the proposed end. Those who oppose creeds, *etc.*, are apt to forget that the acknowledgment of the Holy Scriptures does not of itself secure union of sentiment and concert in action. Besides, the witnesses of Christ, in preserving the integrity of their testimony, and their own moral identity, are necessitated to know and expose the errors and ungodliness which prevail under the name of religion. Hence they are obliged so to direct their testimony as to meet the ever-shifting forms and phases of error and immorality. And as their testimony thus progresses towards its consummation, there is a correspondent bearing given to their terms of communion. The Church is never stationary, and her motion is either retrograde or progressive. In case of defection, she must ascertain from history, the footsteps of the flock, whereto she had attained in time past; that she may obey the divine direction—*walk by the same rule and mind the same thing*, Song 1:7-8, Phil. 3:16.

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*Note D.* The late union of the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches, has assumed a position which may be said to be stereotyped by their predecessors for the last half century. This body explicitly distinguishes between what they call "testimony" and the "argument and illustration" which are to the reader's eye incorporated with the volume!

However equivocal the terms and phraseology employed in stating the doctrinal propositions of their "testimony," the excluding of argument and illustration from their testimony and terms of communion, will effectually exclude from their fellowship the witnesses of Jesus. Besides, the doctrinal declarations themselves are neutralized by the *adopting act*—an act which, fairly interpreted, would render union on the basis of the Bible itself impossible!!! That act secures to each one entering fellowship in "the United Presbyterian Church," the right of dissent from *any*, and so from *all the principles* of the so-called "Testimony!"

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*Note E.* Many of the churches not only tolerate slavery, but their ministry attempt to defend it from the sacred Oracles. This is to offer violence to that sense of *natural* justice inherent in the human constitution, and to insult the majesty of heaven. Among the contraband wares of mystical Babylon are to be found "slaves and souls of men," Rev. 18:13. In this inhuman traffic, many of the Protestant churches make

common cause with Rome. Partaking of her sins, they must receive of her plagues. In civil relations Rome's faithful disciples are almost unanimous in casting their ballots for the worst kind of despotism; and it is to be deplored that many, who renounce her Antichristian dogmas in the Church, so readily fraternize with her votaries in civil relations. Such buyers and sellers, who make {43} Christ's Father's house an house of merchandise; may expect to be driven hence, when he comes in millennial glory to cleanse the sanctuary. The signs of the times would seem to portend the near approach of that desirable period. For besides the unprecedented advance of the human race in material improvement within the last quarter of a century; the invincible obstinacy with which despotic, civil and ecclesiastical rule is defended, and the publicity with which social crime is perpetrated, seem to indicate the near approach of desolating judgments. Men must be taught that the "heavens do rule;" and this lesson such men as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, *etc.*, wilt not learn from God's will revealed by Moses or Daniel. Nothing remains in such cases but *a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour such adversaries.* [Heb. 10:27.] Slavery will prove the ruin of churches and nations.

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*Note F.* In the preceding pages, matters of deep interest and lasting moment to the church and to the world, are but touched in their outlines. If the interest of any reader shall be awakened in such measure as to make farther inquiry, the following catalogue is suggested from present memory. The works designated will greatly facilitate the researches of those who are sincerely desirous to know the principles, and through grace resolved to follow the footsteps of Christ's covenanted witnesses:

*History of the Church of Scotland*, by John Knox; *The First and Second Books of Discipline*; *The History of the Church of Scotland*; *The Pastor and Prelate*; *Altare Damascenum*, by Calderwood; *Lex Rex*; *Due Right of Presbytery*, by Rutherford; *Rectius Instruendum* [by Thomas Forrester]; *Confederacies*, by Hugh Binning and George Gillespie; *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*; *Dispute against the English Popish Ceremonies* [by George Gillespie]; *History of the Indulgence*; *Apologetical Relation, etc.* [by John Brown of Wamphray]; *Earnest Contendings* [by Robert M'Ward]; *Hind Let Loose* [by Alexander Shields]; *Faithful Contendings Displayed*; *Informatory Vindication*; *Naphtali, or the Wrestlings of the Church of Scotland*; *Cloud of Witnesses*; *Scots Worthies*.

These and cotemporary works, by the reformers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are the best commentaries on the subordinate standards—the distinctive Terms of Communion among God's Reformed Covenanted Society, in domestic, ecclesiastical, and civil relations; and without some competent measure of

acquaintance with these, even a sincere inquirer, though by more recent light, will continue to wander in desert's pathless way. *Jerusalem shall be built upon her own heap, and the palace after the manner thereof.* [Jer. 30:18.] The time, we trust, is near when *the Lord shall be one, and his name one over all the earth* [Zech. 14:9]; and for this happy consummation all the children of Zion will continue to pray.

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### Footnotes:

1. See Appendix, [Note A.](#)

2. [Note B.](#)

3. John Knox before queen Mary,—Stephen, Acts 7:54.

4. Still others have suggested that this period of Antichrist's power and the corresponding 1260-day (year) testimony of the Two Witnesses began in the year 756, when the Pope became a temporal prince. Some, at and before the time of our author, presented fair textual arguments from scripture against this interpretation, but as they argued instead for the dating of this period from 606, which would conclude a period terminating in the year 1866, it appears conclusive from history that they were wrong.—ED.

5. [Note C.](#)

6. [Note D.](#)

7. A work composed by early Reformed Presbyterian ministers in North America, which, when finished in 1807, immediately supplanted the original *Act, Declaration, & Testimony* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church as including (in Part 2,) the new testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA.) Though the work contains many things that are good, yet it leaves much to be desired, and fails, as hinted here by our author, to incorporate anything into the Church's Testimony, except that which is doctrinal:—*Principles* without *Practices*. The preface of the work makes it plain that, as helpful as Part 1 is, with its historical overview of the history of the Church, yet only Part 2 is to be considered the Church's Testimony. All along there were those who testified against this step of defection, before and since the *Reformed Presbytery* was constituted by *David Steele, Robert Lusk*, and elders, in 1840. The fruits of this defection are long since ripe, and now quite rotten:—witness the modern RPCNA, as well as the other ecclesiastical descendents of the 1807 RPCNA.—ED.

8. A publication of the "New Light" Reformed Presbyterians, who followed an accelerated course of defection from our Covenanted Reformation, beginning in 1833, when the RPCNA divided into "Old Light" and "New Light" synods,—the "New Lights" casting off various Covenanter distinctives which *at that time* were still maintained by the "Old Light" Synod. Since



then, through a series of divisions and mergers, the main body of the former “New Light” congregations have come into communion with what is known as the “Presbyterian Church in America,” or PCA.—ED.

9. “Faithful Contendings Displayed” was a collection edited by John Howie and published in 1780, containing, amongst other things, a historical relation of the United Societies during the times of persecution, with the text of several related documents, papers, and letters. “Earnest Contendings for the Faith” was a work written by Robert M’Ward during the same time, in which he defends the necessity of maintaining a separate existence from the Indulged whilst they obstinately refused to repent of their compliance with the so-called king. Though written in the 1680’s, this work was not published until 1723. “The Wrestlings of the Church of Scotland,” also known as “Naphtali,” written by James Stewart of Goodtrees and James Stirling of Paisley, was a brief history of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation until the year 1667. It was first published then, and then later at various times, such as, 1680, 1693, 1846, as well as at least one Dutch edition in 1668. All three of these works have been out of print for some time, but can be obtained as photocopies from Still Waters Revival Books: [www.swrb.com](http://www.swrb.com)—ED.

10. Note E.

11. Note F.

12. The first *Term of Communion* requires an acknowledgement of the Scriptures of the Old & New Testaments as the Word of God, and the “only rule of faith and manners.” Obviously, an adherence to the word of God in it’s right interpretation and application would be a sufficient condition to the admitting of persons to communicant membership within the Church of Jesus Christ; but, as many of the worst of heretics will profess to hold scripture for the Word of God and “only rule of faith and manners,” and the majority of all the various erring “denominations” do make this formally a term of their church communion, and, as the word of God wrongly interpreted and applied, is not the word of God; therefore, it is necessary that, as a formal term of communion, the church must require a sound interpretation and application of the word of God, professed and practiced, which among Reformed Presbyterians is found in their Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Covenants, Testimony, &c.—ED.