

4-1-1935

## Notes on Chiliasm

Th. Engelder

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Engelder, Th. (1935) "Notes on Chiliasm," *Concordia Theological Monthly*: Vol. 6 , Article 28.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol6/iss1/28>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

# Concordia

## Theological Monthly

Vol. VI

APRIL, 1935

No. 4

### Notes on Chiliasm.

(Continued.)

Chiliasm, a mass of confusion, is furthermore a dangerous delusion, which because of its vicious tenets and pernicious influence must be banned from Christian theology. We shall present this matter under three heads.

1. *Chiliasm denies clear teachings of Scripture.*— This, together with the methods it employs to harmonize its unscriptural teachings with Scripture, constitutes a crime against the authority and majesty of Scripture. Chiliasm is guilty of flagrant denials of Scripture-truths. We have encountered a number of these anti-Scriptural teachings in discussing Dr. H. W. Frost's compendium of premillennialism, *The Second Coming of Christ*. We will examine only two of them. The first denies the doctrine of the general resurrection. Scripture teaches that all the dead will be raised up at one time, at the second coming of Christ, at the same time. Chiliasm teaches a twofold resurrection, the last following the first after an interval of a thousand years. "It is evident from other parts of Scripture that there are two resurrections, that of the just (Luke 14, 14; Acts 24, 15), or—in other phraseology—that of life (John 5, 29), and that of damnation (John 5, 29). The first resurrection, then, is that of the righteous saints, upon whom the divine benediction is pronounced, over whom the second death has no power, and who, as priests of God and Christ, are given the rewarding of reigning with Christ for a thousand years; and the second resurrection is that of the wicked, who are left over from the first resurrection and who are not raised from the dead until the thousand years are finished (Rev. 20, 5). There are, therefore, not more than two resurrections;<sup>1)</sup> they differ in the personalities involved; they are opposite in char-

1) We are charging Frost and a number of other premillennialists with teaching, contrary to Scripture, a twofold resurrection. Frost is here charging some of the premillennialists with teaching, contrary to Scripture, more than two resurrections. These insist that there are three resurrections, first, "the resurrection of the Old Testament saints at the Rapture, when Christ comes in the air"; second, "the resurrection of the Tribulation

acter and result, and a thousand years lie between the two." (*The Second Coming of Christ*, p. 224.) Scripture plainly teaches that the resurrection of the righteous will be contemporaneous with that of the wicked. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation," John 5, 28, 29.<sup>2)</sup> We cannot

saints at the Revelation, when Christ comes to the earth"; and, third, the resurrection of the rest at the end of the thousand years (*Jesus is Coming*, p. 54).—We are not particularly interested in the dispute as to whether the final resurrection is preceded by one or two other resurrections. We have no doubt that the three-resurrection men can make out as good a case as the two-resurrection men.—Not even the three alleged resurrections seem to cover the exigencies of the millennial situation. We read in the *Moody Monthly*, December, 1934: "Millennial Believers. Question: Since after the millennium we find only the resurrection of the wicked dead, what becomes of those believers who die during the millennium? Answer: Apparently the death rate will be exceedingly low (Is. 65, 20). While nothing is said about any resurrection for them, we may rest assured that God will take care of their bodies no less gloriously than those of the saints in all other ages." This is a choice bit of chiliastic theology. Offering Is. 65, 20 as proof-text for the low mortality rate obtaining in the millennial land is not so bad,—it is in line with the common chiliastic literalism. But one is surprised to see the low death rate mentioned at all. That has no bearing on the question propounded by the perplexed reader. Be the death rate never so low, death still occurs, and the reader wants to know if and when the believers who die during the millennium will be raised. He has been told that the second resurrection is that of the wicked. Well, it seems that the answer given points to a fourth resurrection.—R. F. Weidner's *Annotations on Revelation* (in *The Lutheran Commentary*) has this to say on the matter: "The remarks of Fausset are very suggestive: 'The wicked who had died from the time of Adam to Christ's second advent, and all the righteous and wicked who had died during and after the millennium shall then have their eternal portion assigned to them. . . .' These remarks of Fausset raise two questions, which the curious are anxious to have answered. . . . The second question is: Do any believers die after the first resurrection, either during the millennium or afterwards? Various answers have been given by premillennialists. Some maintain that few deaths of believers will occur, and if they should die, they will be immediately glorified, and that before the passing away of the heavens and the old earth the living are transfigured. But nearly all these questions are mainly matters of speculation, for we know, after all, very little of the nature of the millennium" (p. 289 f.). If Weidner had not been a chiliast, the question, When are the believers who die during the millennium raised? would certainly have been answered differently.—Th. Zahn's chiliasm does away with the present difficulty. All chiliasts ought to accept his view: "Wo keine ansteckenden Krankheiten und keine Pein und keine schaedlichen Naturereignisse oder Temperaturzustände sind, kann auch, soweit die hier geschilderte tausendjaehrige Weltherrschaft Christi mit seiner Gemeinde auf Erden reicht, kein Mensch sterben." (*Komm. z. N. T., Offenbarung*, p. 592.)

2) "Note the important and decisive πάντες, 'all,' and the attributive phrase, made such beyond question by the article, 'all in their tombs,' i. e., all the bodily dead. . . . Then the voice of omnipotence sounds, in the last trump, and all the bodily dead shall hear it, for that voice comes with resistless power, 'and shall come out' of their graves, raised, all of them, from bodily death, their bodies once more joined to their souls. This statement of Jesus is the foundation for the one resurrection, and that at the Last Day." (R. Lenski, *Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*, p. 383 f.)

and will not accept that, says chiliasm; all the dead will not arise in the same hour; the hour of the resurrection of the wicked comes one thousand years after the hour of the resurrection of the righteous. — When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, *all nations* shall be gathered before Him, all the dead shall be raised and with all the quick placed before His judgment-seat. So says Scripture, Matt. 25, 31—46; 24, 30—41. Nay, says chiliasm; when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, only the saints shall be resurrected; those who are left over from this first resurrection, the wicked, will be raised at another time. — “This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day,” John 6, 40.<sup>3)</sup> Not at the Last Day, says the chiliast; the resurrection of the believers shall not take place at what is really the Last Day, but a thousand years before the end. — “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,” 1 Cor. 15, 52. The trumpet at whose sound the dead believers shall be raised and the living believers changed is the *last* trumpet, sounded on the day of the general resurrection and judgment. No, says the chiliast. — 2 Thess. 1, 7—10 tells this story: When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, two scenes will be enacted: He will take vengeance in flaming fire on the unbelievers and punish them with everlasting destruction; and at this same coming He will glorify His saints. Paul is not telling the story in our way, says the chiliast; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, He will raise and glorify His saints; when He shall come the third time, He will raise and judge the unbelievers. — Read Matt. 13, 40—49. The separation of the just and the wicked will take place at the end of the world, at that time when the wicked are cast into a furnace of fire. No, says the chiliast; the saints will be separated from the wicked before the judgment on the wicked. Again: “He shall cast them into a furnace of fire. *Then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” No, says the chiliast; the righteous have been glorified long before.

Those who teach a twofold (or a threefold) resurrection are thus

3) “Das Neue Testament erwartet die Auferstehung als Tat des wiederkommenden Christus, also am Ende der Weltgeschichte, am ‘Jüngsten Tage’ (Joh. 6, 39 f. 44. 54; 11, 24). Nicht jeder Mensch zu anderer Zeit, sondern die ganze Menschheit wird gleichzeitig, gemeinsam erweckt. Anders koennen auch wir nicht lehren. . . . Man hat immer wieder an die Stelle der einen gleichzeitigen Auferstehung am Jüngsten Tage das Nacheinander und Nebeneinander individueller Auferstehungen setzen wollen; so vielfach die Theosophie, neuerdings die Anthroposophie.” (P. Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, p. 135.) John 6, 40 and 5, 28 f. means as little to the theosophist as to the chiliast.

in direct and pronounced opposition to Scripture. The chiliastic system imposes upon its adherents the necessity of denying the one general resurrection. The basic idea in the system is that the saints shall rule the earth in the millennial kingdom. That requires that the departed saints be raised from the dead at the inception of this kingdom.<sup>4</sup>) And for the sake of the system its adherents are willing to deny a plain teaching of Scripture. It is a vicious delusion in its demands and a strong delusion in that it can enforce its demands. Before we enlarge on this, it will be well to show more at length what the chiliast is ready to do with Scripture in the interest of his system.

It is easy to deny a teaching of Scripture. It is not so easy to square such denial with the words of Scripture, for then Scripture

---

4) In passing, we would point out that the concomitant idea—this, that the once departed saints will exchange the heavenly bliss for earthly bliss or, perhaps, take up into their heavenly occupation the occupation with earthly affairs—is a grotesque and unscriptural conception. "It is not conceivable that the glorified saints should come down from heaven to live again in the midst of sinful environments." (*Popular Symbolics*, p. 375.) "To have informed these glorified martyrs, who had entered into the privileges and joys of the victorious and reigning Christ, that they would be sent back to earth to live in the flesh for a literal thousand years and then the devil would be set loose again would, I fancy, have had but a poor and melancholy sound to their sainted ears." (Edward B. Pollard. See *Theol. Monthly*, 1921, p. 278.) "*Welch ein wunderlicher Gedanke: eine geistlich vollendete, selige Gottesgemeinde, ihren verklärten Herrn in der Mitte, inmitten einer Menschheit, in der noch Suende und Tod wohnt, und dann eine Geschichte dieser Gemeinde, die abermals in eine Bedrängnis von aussen her, ja in eine Art Leidensgeschichte ausläuft! . . . Eine Gemeinde der auferstandenen Gerechten laesst sich nicht denken ohne Verklärung der Natur; eine Voelkerwelt aber, in der noch die Moeglichkeit des Angriffs auf jene besteht, kann zur Staette ihrer Existenz nur die alte, noch unverklaerte Welt haben.*" (G. Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk*, III, 2, p. 464 f.; quoted in P. Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, p. 304.) The chiliast indeed insists that his conception is not incongruous with Scripture. C. E. Lindberg, a premillennialist, writes: "To the millennial government the objection has been raised that the peculiar situation would arise that glorified men with spiritual bodies would associate with the inhabitants of the earth. The adherents of premillennialism answer that the Logos led the children of Israel in the wilderness, and they point out the repeated theophanies in the Old Testament, the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration and the appearance of our Lord between His resurrection and ascension. The visible appearance and association of glorified saints with men on earth would be like Christ's appearances between His resurrection and ascension. But with Christ the saints would rule from the New Jerusalem in the sky." (*Chr. Dogmatics*, p. 532 f.) Suffice it to say: 1) The Theophanies have no bearing on the question at all. 2) The appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount and of Christ during the forty days and the activities of the saints in the millennium are not parallel cases; Moses and Elias and Christ during the forty days indeed appeared visibly on earth, but did not take over the administration of earthly business. 3) The alleged fact that the saints rule "from the New Jerusalem in the sky" does not remove the difficulty, does not remove these saints from the occupation with earthly affairs. 4) Scripture, in Phil. 1, 22—24, explicitly informs us that the occupation with temporal affairs comes to an end when the believer has departed to be with Christ.

needs to be perverted all along the line. For instance, there is the term "the Last Day." To us that means that the resurrection of the believers and of the wicked will occur at the same time, since all will be raised "at the Last Day," John 6, 40; 5, 28, 29. Unless this term can be given a new meaning, the whole scheme of premillennialism breaks down. Well, chiliastic theology insists that here "Last Day" has lost its first and obvious meaning and has taken on the meaning "a period of one thousand years." How can Scripture be made to mean that? A sample of chiliastic exegetics is herewith submitted: "*The Last Day.* Again we hear it objected that Christ said He would raise up those who believe in Him at the Last Day (John 6, 39, 40, 44, 45), and if it is at the Last Day, there cannot follow a thousand years before the unbelievers are raised. But Peter says: 'One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day,' 2 Pet. 3, 8. This is the great millennial day, ushered in and ending with resurrection and judgment, and during which Christ shall rule the nations and judge the world in righteousness. It is 'the day of an age,' as the Holy Spirit designates it in 2 Pet. 3, 18. See the Greek *ἡμέραν αἰῶνος* (*heemeran aionos*). In harmony with this we find that the same word *ἡμέρα* (*heemera*, day) signifies 'a long period,' in John 8, 56; 9, 4; Rom. 10, 21; 2 Cor. 6, 2; Heb. 4, 7, 8. . . . In Hos. 6, 2 we read: 'After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up.' Those are evidently three days of one thousand years each, for 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years.' So 'that Day' (Is. 2, 20; Zeph. 1, 15) is doubtless the last thousand-year day of God's great week of *aions* (ages)." (*Jesus is Coming*, p. 54 f.) Remarks: 1) It is an act of desperation to argue that, because one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, "the Last Day" must have a length of a thousand years. That would follow only if it had been established that wherever Scripture uses the term "day" it means a thousand years. Then Luke 2, 21 would mean that the Child was circumcised after eight thousand years were accomplished. 2) We readily admit that "day" frequently signifies "a long period," as in John 8, 56, etc. But we cannot understand the reasoning processes by which a person convinces himself that this usage has any *decisive* bearing on our question. You can prove that "day" frequently signifies a long period. But the question is: *Must* it have that meaning in John 6, 39? And *can* it have that meaning? —The old and ever valid rule governing this matter is of course this: We take every word in Scripture (and in every other writing) in its native, original sense unless Scripture itself plainly indicates that it is used in a wider, etc., sense. We insist that, when Jesus speaks of events occurring on "the Last Day," He nowhere indicates that He means anything else than a real, common day, the last day in a long series of days of twenty-four hours. What is the meaning

of "day" in Luke 17, 27? And in v. 29? And then in v. 30? We do not say that the Last Day is going to measure twenty-four hours. It is the day that links time with eternity. On that day events of an eternal nature will occur. The "changing" will take place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," 1 Cor. 15, 52. So also the resurrection and the judgment. It will not take twenty-four hours. But it will take place on a day which sets in as the last of a series of common every-day days.<sup>5)</sup> — 3) It is hard to believe that any one can honestly believe that Hosea's three days are "evidently" (since "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years") three days of one thousand years each; that Hosea here has in mind "God's great week of *aions* (ages)"; and that the contrite and repentant Israelites are looking to God, who had smitten them, to bind them up after the lapse of two thousand years. But Blackstone assures us that he honestly believes that; we will have to believe it. 4) And what is this? The concluding words of St. Peter's Second Epistle "To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen" ("forever = the day of an age") refer to the great millennial day? Do they actually believe that an apostle would end his epistle, would end his hymn of praise, on a millennial note? They do so. We have read premillennialist books which, setting forth the glorious works of God, end with the

5) Note, in passing, that the terms "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," to be applied also in 1 Thess. 4, 16. 17, do not fit in with the chiliastic scheme, according to which the "rapture" and related events are separated from other events, the so-called "second resurrection," the final Judgment, etc., by many years. Thousand years do not pass in the twinkling of an eye. And since the Last Day ushers in eternity, no room is left for an intermediate earthly millennial period. Cp. Luther on 1 Cor. 15, 52 (VIII, 1257): "*Damit zeigt er an, dass es alles zugleich in einem Nu soll zugehen, dass die Toten hervor aus den Gräbern gerueckt und wir mit hingerafft, wie und wo wir gefunden werden, und weggerissen aus dem sterblichen Leben und Wesen, zugleich miteinander verklärt sollen werden. . . . Gott wird seine allmacchtige Gewalt und Majestaet erzeigen, dass alles in einem Augenblick verzehrt muss werden, was auf Erden ist, und die ganze Welt auf einem Haufen liegen und anders werden und wir ewiglich neben und bei Christo sein; die andern aber, so nicht geglaubt haben, in ewige Qual verstossen werden.*" Similarly IX, 1394. Cp. Lenski on Matt. 24, 31: "And so we might ask how both hemispheres shall at once see the Son of Man in the clouds, hear the angel trumpet, and yield up the dead, or, with our notions of space, how all those millions that have lived on earth shall find room to stand, and how long it will take, with our conceptions of time, till the last name is reached for judgment. The answer to all these questions is that after verse 29 [Matt. 24] none of these present limitations of ours will exist any longer, and to urge them with skeptic motives is only to expose our poor folly." K. Heim: "*Der Juengste Tag ist, von der einen Seite gesehen, ein letzter Zeitpunkt, von der andern Seite gesehen, Ewigkeit.*" (P. Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, p. 242. Cp. *Lehre u. Wehre*, 6, p. 312.) Here we agree with Frost: Christ declared "that the advent, whenever it would occur, would take place with a rush or in a flash; that is, its beginning would almost be its ending, for its beginning and ending would be practically at the same moment of time." P. 178.)

millennium as the climax. Such writers can easily believe that St. Peter would do the same.<sup>6)</sup>

They commit other acts of desperation. "Tregelles, who is supported by the Jewish commentators, renders Dan. 12, 2 as follows: 'And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but those (the rest of the sleepers, who do not awake at this time) shall be unto shame.' (See Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown on this passage.) It is needless to add that this most intensely confirms the doctrine of the first resurrection." (*Jesus is Coming*, p. 57.) Yes, A. R. Fausset's commentary confirms Blackstone's teaching. Quoting Tregelles's translation, it says: "Not the *general* resurrection, but that of those who share in the first resurrection, the rest of the dead being not to rise till the end of the thousand years. . . . The Jewish commentators support Tregelles." It will suffice to point out, first, that the words of Tregelles (an ardent premillennialist; member of one of the Plymouth Brethren groups) "who do not awake at this time" are not an interpretation, but virtually an interpolation; and, secondly, that the text reads: "some to *everlasting life*"; nothing that is here said implies that they awake to the millennial life.

"The last trump," 1 Cor. 15, 52, which calls the believers out of the grave, is the last trump. When it sounds, the end is come. Our readers must pardon us for explaining self-explanatory statements. They must not say: Nobody is going to dispute that "the last trump" means the trumpet which will be sounded on the Last Day, the day of the end of all temporal things. Some are going to dispute that. For that reason we shall also call attention to what is apparent to most every reader, to the fact that according to 1 Cor. 15, 52—57 nothing intervenes between the sounding of the last trumpet and the final consummation. When the last trumpet sounds, the final victory is won, the last enemy vanquished, vv. 54—57. One cannot blame the commentators for writing: "At the sounding of the trumpet on the Last Day. . . . Or the Spirit by St. Paul hints that the other trumpets mentioned subsequently in the Apocalypse shall precede and that this shall be the last of all" (A. R. Fausset). "The final trumpet

6) Those Lutheran theologians who have joined the chiliastic camp have additional troubles. They need to square the twofold resurrection with the teaching of the Confessions of their Church. The Small Catechism distinctly says: "—and at the Last Day will raise up me and all the dead." (Cp. *Augsb. Conf.*, XVII; *Apol.*, XVII; *Large Cat.*: "—until finally, at the Last Day, He will completely part and separate us from the wicked world, the devil, death, sin, etc.") But no chiliast can make Luther's "Last Day" mean a long period of time, covering a thousand or more years. Luther's "Last Day" passes very quickly. See VIII, 1257, quoted above. And IX, 1394: "Und in solchem grossen Krachen wird der Tag daherreissen und -platzen, wie ein gross Gewitter, dass in einem Augenblick alles muss verzehrt werden, 2 Petr. 3, 8—10." (Cp. also *Lutheraner*, 1847, p. 11 ff., on Chiliasm and *Augsb. Conf.*, XVII.)



will sound, and the dead, all of them, will arise" (P. E. Kretzmann). "*Letzte Posaune, das heisst, am Ende der Welt, wenn Gott die Toten erwecken wird*" (*Hirschberger Bibel*). Of course, if a thousand years must follow the sounding of this last trumpet, a different meaning than the obvious one must attach to this term. And so it does, says P. Bachmann, a believer in the twofold resurrection: "BEIM SCHALL DER LETZTEN (*naemlich der das Letzte einleitenden, weil den zur Erweckung seiner Toten kommenden Herrn begleitenden*) POSAUNE" (*Zahn's Kommentar*), meaning it is called the *last* trumpet because it inaugurates the last *period*, the time of the millennium. A. C. Gaebelein has a different explanation of the troublesome term. "It will be at the last trump. This trumpet has nothing whatever to do with the seventh trumpet in Revelation." (No need to investigate that.) "Before any trumpet has sounded, before the Lamb of God opens the seals, He comes for His saints. . . . The *trumpet* is a military term. The first trumpet bade the armies to rise and be ready; the last trumpet commanded them to depart; it was the signal to march." (*The Annotated Bible*.) Who would have thought of that??

What about Matt. 25, 31—46? We are told that we have been misreading this passage: it does not treat of the general Judgment. It does not prove that the believers and the unbelievers will be raised up at the same time. It does not state that before Him shall at that time be gathered *all* nations. This is how Dr. Frost treats Scripture. "The Matthew passage says that the judgment is that of 'all nations,' which cannot point to a time after death, for 'nations' in the Scripture are only related to the present life and the existing earthly social order (Gen. 10, 32; 17, 4; Matt. 28, 19; Acts 17, 26). . . . This judgment takes place at the end of the present age, just subsequent to the seven-year reign of Antichrist, and thus it is the outcome of that time and event. Antichrist has hated and persecuted all godly persons, particularly godly Jews; these last have been driven from Palestine broadcast throughout the nations; multitudes of persons among the Gentile nations have joined the Antichrist in his persecutions of the Jews, while some have opposed him by showing compassion upon them. . . . The Jew always has been the divine test as to what the nations think of God. . . . The judgment is in respect to what the nations have or have not done to the King's 'brethren,' namely, godly Jews. The result of the judgment is, on the one hand, life and the kingdom and, on the other, death and everlasting punishment (vv. 34. 41. 46). It is to be observed that the 'kingdom' spoken of v. 34 is not the heavenly one, because the nations as such will

7) One does not quite know what to make of Fausset's comment. It seems correct. It does full justice to St. Paul's words. But he believes in the twofold resurrection. See preceding paragraph and his notes on 1 Thess. 4, 16. Do his words as quoted above carry a hidden meaning?

have no place there, but the earthly one, that is, the millennial, unto which those who are spared from death will enter as living persons, to be nationally recognized therein under Christ's benignant reign." (P. 115 f.) Matt. 25 treats of the fifth of Dr. Frost's seven judgments, the seventh being that of the wicked dead, which takes place much later. And so Matt. 25 does not stand in the way of the twofold resurrection. Greater arbitrariness in interpretation and a more merciless mutilation of Scripture terms is hardly conceivable.

1) "Brethren" here means "godly Jews." 2) "These shall go into everlasting punishment" — that may stand; they are consigned to eternal death. "The righteous into life eternal" — that cannot stand as it reads. It cannot mean the heavenly kingdom. It must mean the millennium. We have not the time now to discuss Dr. Frost's misinterpretation of "all nations" and his story of the seven-year reign of Antichrist. — A. C. Gaebelein (in the *Annotated Bible*) does not agree with H. W. Frost on the number of the resurrections. He is a three-resurrection man. But he joins forces with the two-resurrection man in the assault on the plain meaning of our passage and offers an additional exegetical reason for the chiliastic interpretation. "The King returned will occupy the throne of His glory. The judgment is not a judgment of the entire human race. None of the dead are here. The dead saints are raised when He comes in the air to receive His own, and the dead martyrs of the Tribulation period will also have been raised at the close of that period. The rest of the dead does not live till the thousand years of the Kingdom are ended (Rev. 20, 5). Here the living nations are seen judged. The standard is the treatment they accorded to the last messengers of the King; these are 'the brethren' of the King, of the Jewish race. If these nations believed that testimony, they treated the messengers with kindness; if they rejected this final message, they refused help to the messengers. The righteous nations who believed will remain on the earth for the Kingdom. The unrighteous will go into everlasting punishment." The exegetical proof offered for the notion that this judgment cannot be the general Judgment of the Ecumenic Creeds ("from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead") is this: "None of the dead are here." Sure enough, our passage does not mention the resurrection of the dead. And: "living nations are seen judged." (The *Scotfield Reference Bible*, p. 1036, employs the same subterfuge.) Sure enough, our passage does state that the Judge is speaking, not to corpses, but to living persons. Dr. Gaebelein and Dr. Scotfield have stated two undeniable truths; let them make the most of it. As for the rest, Dr. Gaebelein cares as little as Dr. Frost for the meaning and value of words. "The righteous (enter) into eternal life," the life of heavenly bliss, means, "the righteous will remain on the earth." And

he derives the idea that the "brethren of the King" are of the Jewish race from Dr. Frost's source: he picks it out of the air.

The Lutheran R. F. Weidner will not accept the monstrous interpretation of Frost and Gaebelein, but he comes to the aid of the first-resurrection men, who are bothered by Matt. 25, 31—46, in this wise: "Nor does their doctrine of the first resurrection come in conflict with Christ's description of Judgment as recorded in Matt. 25, 31—46; for this description is in harmony with Rev. 20, 11—15, for all the risen saints shall be present at the final Judgment, although they do not come *into* the Judgment (John 5, 24), and shall even in some way take part in the Judgment (1 Cor. 6, 2. 3)." (*Annotations on Rev.*, p. 361.) That will not do. True enough, the believers will not be condemned in the Judgment. So says John 5, 24 and so says Matt. 25, 31—46. And it is absolutely true that they will judge the world. But that phase of the Judgment is not described in our passage. In our passage the believers and the unbelievers stand before the same Judge, at the same time. — Now as to the original question: Will the saints be raised at a different time than the wicked? our passage should be decisive to those who, like Weidner, agree that it describes the final Judgment. (Those chiliasts who believe that it does not refer to the final Judgment will not pay any attention to our present remarks.) The first-resurrection men hold that the final Judgment in the case of the believers takes place at the alleged first resurrection. Resurrection and judgment go together, they say; and so we say. But our passage links the final judgment of the believers with that of the unbelievers; therefore also their resurrection. That is also brought out by the term "separate." In the first-resurrection theory the separation has taken place long before the judgment of the wicked. — As to the fact that the general resurrection is not mentioned here in so many words, that does not bother us. It is implied. Dr. Gaebelein insisted a while ago that "*living nations are judged.*" Exactly. So that part of "all nations" which will not be living at the end will have to be resurrected. But might it not be conceivable that the final judgment will be pronounced on the souls alone? Conceivable or not, this conception is ruled out by Scripture. Men will be judged on the Last Day in their bodies, John 5, 27—29; 6, 40; 1 Cor. 15, 23. 24; 1 Thess. 4, 16; Rev. 20, 12. 13.

Mark also this: If the premillennialist interpretation of Matt. 25, 31—46 is correct, Christ did not know how to express His thoughts in unmistakable language. In the words of David Brown (*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Com.*): "Before Him shall be gathered all nations,' or 'all the nations.' That this should be understood to mean *heathen nations*, or all *except* believers in Christ, will seem amazing to any simple reader. Yes, this is the exposition of Olshausen, Stier, Keil, Alford, . . . and of a number, though not all, of those who hold that

Christ will come the second time before the millennium and that the saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air before His appearing. . . . But here we may just say that, if this scene do not describe a personal, public, *final* judgment on men, . . . we shall have to consider again whether our Lord's teaching on the greatest themes of human interest does indeed possess that incomparable simplicity and transparency of meaning which by universal consent has been ascribed to it."—"Lord, on that day, that wrathful day, When man to *Judgment wakes from clay*, Be Thou the trembling sinner's stay, Though heaven and earth shall pass away."

Changing the meaning of Scripture terms constitutes one half of the chiliasmic Scripture-proof for the "first resurrection." The other half consists in inserting the needed thought into texts which do not contain it. When men insert new words into the actual text, that is called interpolation. And that is an unlawful proceeding. Chiliasm will not do that. It has never constructed a text which reads, in so many words: The first resurrection precedes the last resurrection by a long period. But its adherents do offer to show us several passages where this thought is distinctly and incontrovertibly expressed. They tell us to look up, for instance, 1 Thess. 4, 16. P. Bachmann (*Zahn's Commentary*) tells us, in his exposition of 1 Cor. 15, 52, to do so. H. E. Jacobs (*Lutheran Com.*), on 1 Cor. 15, 23, tells us to do so. And Fausset, in his interpretation of Phil. 3, 11 says: "The resurrection *from* (out of) the dead,' *viz.*, the first resurrection; that of believers at Christ's coming (1 Cor. 15, 23; 1 Thess. 4, 15; Rev. 20, 5, 6)." And so the *Scotfield Reference Bible* reads our text in this wise: "Not church saints only, but all bodies of the saved, of whatever dispensation, are included in the first resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15, 52, note), as here described." The note says: "The 'first resurrection' will occur at the second coming of Christ. . . . After the thousand years the 'resurrection unto judgment' occurs." We look up 1 Thess. 4, 16 and read: "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them." Pray, my masters, where do you see anything said concerning a first resurrection as distinct from a later resurrection? There is the word "first" indeed, and it surely modifies a verb denoting resurrection; and where there is a "first," we usually look for something that follows. But what here follows is not another resurrection. You say that the "first" indicates that there is a second resurrection. The *text* says something altogether different. The contrast is between the "first" and the "then," between what will befall the *dead believers* and the *living believers*. *First* the dead in Christ will arise; *then* the living believers will be changed. The text itself says that you are interpolating a foreign thought if you establish a contrast between such as rise first and others who do not rise till later. "The passage

in 1 Thess. 4, 16. 17 which is often quoted in support of a first and second bodily resurrection does not teach such a doctrine. 'The dead in Christ shall rise first' does not mean that they shall rise before the unbelieving dead, but that they shall rise before those who are alive at Christ's coming shall be caught up with Him in the air. The purpose of the apostle is not to teach that there are two bodily resurrections, but to assure the Thessalonians that their friends who have died will rise from the dead and share with the living the joy of being caught up with Christ." (Joseph Stump, *The Christian Faith*, p. 399 f. Cp. *Lehre und Wehre*, 6, p. 312.) Even the *Lange-Schaff Commentary*, which believes in the twofold resurrection, declares that in 1 Thess. 4, 16. 17 it cannot be found. And even Fausset interprets: "'Shall rise first'—previously to the living being 'caught up.' The 'first' here has no reference to the first resurrection as contrasted with that of 'the rest of the dead.' That reference occurs elsewhere (Matt. 13, 41. 42. 50; John 5, 29; 1 Cor. 15, 23. 24; Rev. 20, 5. 6)." Only those who first have read their teaching of the twofold resurrection into 1 Thess. 4, 16 will adduce this text as a proof-text for it.<sup>8)</sup>

There is no reference to the first resurrection in 1 Thess. 4, says Fausset, but elsewhere that reference occurs, for instance, 1 Cor. 15, 23 f. *Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1228: "The 'first resurrection,' that 'unto life,' will occur at the second coming of Christ, 1 Cor. 15, 23." Weidner: "Of the first resurrection our Savior likewise speaks (Luke 14, 14) and designates it as the resurrection of the just; and Paul also, 1 Cor. 15, 23." (*Op. cit.*, p. 356.) G. Wohlenberg (*Zahn, Kom.*) on 1 Thess. 4, 14: "*Wir wissen aus anderen Schriftstellen zur Genuege, dass die Unterscheidung einer ersten und zweiten, einer ersten, nur den treu gebliebenen Christen widerfahrenden, und einer zweiten, alle Menschen umfassenden, zeitlich durch eine Herrschaft Christi auf Erden innerhalb seiner verklaerten Gemeinde geschiedenen, Auferstehung zum Allgemeingut christlicher Verkueundigung und Ueberzeugung gehoerte. Vgl. Offenb. 20, 1 ff.; 1 Kor. 15, 23 f.; Phil. 3, 11; demnaechst auch Luk. 14, 14; Joh. 5, 29.*" All right, we will look very closely at 1 Cor. 15, 23 f. "Every man in his own order: Christ the First-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." Pray, my masters, where

8) Here is a somewhat disconcerting quirk. Fausset had just referred us to 1 Thess. 4, 15 as proving his twofold resurrection and now tells us to forget about 1 Thess. 4, 15.—Weidner, in his *Annotations on Rev.*, p. 361, makes a useless remark. "In 1 Thess. 4, 16. 17 Paul, on the one hand, does not draw a distinction between the first resurrection of believers and the second resurrection of unbelievers, but, on the other hand, this passage does not exclude such a distinction." Why this last remark? And how does that help his case?

do you see anything said concerning your "second resurrection," that of the wicked? You are certain that you see it. Your Dr. Weidner sees this: "Paul evidently distinguishes here (1 Cor. 15, 23) three gradations of resurrection: Christ, the First-fruits, rose first; then they who belong to Him at His appearing; then—*εἶτα* corresponding to *ἐπειτα*, that preceded, and again introducing a considerable interval—the end, that is, the general resurrection." *Op. cit.*, 356.) I can see only two gradations of resurrection mentioned here, that of Christ and that of the believers. I cannot see that *εἶτα* corresponds to *ἐπειτα* in that it introduces a considerable interval. All that a Greek eye can here see is that *εἶτα*, "then," after the resurrection of the believers, comes the end. A second resurrection, following the first, cannot be seen here. "End" certainly does not mean "resurrection." But the chiliast insists he can see all these things. Dr. H. E. Jacobs: "Three groups, or ranks, successively appear: 1) Christ; 2) 'then they that are Christ's,' viz., all believers; and 3) by implication the resurrection of the unbelieving is included in 'the end,' mentioned in the next verse. (Cp. 1 Thess. 4, 16.)" (*The Luth. Commentary, on 1 Cor. 15.*) Dr. Ph. Bachmann cannot see it, at times. In his commentary on 1 Cor. (*Zahn, Kom.*) he writes, p. 443: "*Von einer dritten Gruppe Auferstehender ist, buchstaeblich betrachtet, auch weiterhin keine Rede.*" But then again he sees it. He adds: "*Naeheres darueber siehe nach 1 Kor. 15, 26; S. 445 f.*" And he says on p. 445: "*Diese Uebergabe kann aber nicht geschehen, ohne dass zuvor auch diejenigen Lebendigzumachenden lebendig gemacht sind, die bei der Parusie Christi dessen nicht teilhaftig wurden.*"<sup>9)</sup> We

9) Ph. Bachmann does not agree with other chiliasts (a common phenomenon, as we have seen) on just what is to be seen in 1 Cor. 15, 24. "*Wer sind die Toten, deren Auferweckung den Abschluss der Lebendig-machung bildet, wenn doch weder diejenigen darunter zu verstehen sind, die, weil sie glaeubige Anhaenger Christi gewesen waren, schon bei seiner Parusie erweckt wurden, noch die, welche nach dem Begriff von ζωοποιήσις hier ueberhaupt nicht in Betracht kommen, die zum Verderbensgericht aus ihren Graebnern Hervorgehenden?*" The third group is formed, according to the common chiliastic reckoning, by the wicked. No, says Bachmann, I cannot see that; the resurrection of the wicked is not to be thought of here. Then what class does form the alleged third group? "*Die einst ohne Kenntnis von Christus und doch mit einem solchen Lebensertrag Entschlafenen, dass sie fuer die Teilhaberschaft am Reiche Gottes, wie sie ihnen durch Christus in jener Endzeit zu vermitteln sein wird, in Betracht kommen, wie z. B. DIE FROMMEN DES ALTEN BUNDES (Roem. 2, 11 ff.), ebenso die in den Krisen der Endzeit dem Glauben sich Zuwendenden und doch noch durch das Todesgericht Hindurchzufuehrenden.*" And when Bachmann declares that the just of the Old Testament will be raised after the "first resurrection," Zahn declares (on Rev. XX, p. 603) that he cannot see that. "*Es kann keinem Zweifel unterliegen, dass alle diese Maertyrer und Propheten nach der Darstellung der Apokalypse an der πρώτῃ ἀνάστασις vollen Anteil haben werden, . . . alle Gerechten von Abel an.*"

cannot see these things. It can be seen only when it is put into the text, and it can be seen only by those who are blinded by a preconceived opinion. The *Expositor's Greek Testament*, which is certainly not a tyro in exegetics, says: "It is incongruous to make a third *τάγμα* out of *τὸ τέλος*, as Bg. and Mr. would do, paraphrasing this as 'the last act (of the resurrection),' viz., the resurrection of non-Christians. Their introduction is irrelevant. *ἔπειτα*, opp. of *πρῶτον*, implied in *ἀπαρχή*, is defined by *ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ... εἰς τὸ τέλος*: 'Then (is) the end,' sc., 'at His coming.' Christ's advent, attended with the resurrection of His redeemed to eternal life, concludes the world's history." A *New Commentary of Holy Scripture* (Charles Gore, etc.), which certainly is not biased in the direction of orthodoxy, says: "The word translated 'order' has a military significance equivalent to 'division'; but the only definite distinction made is between *Christ*, *the First-fruits*, and *they that are Christ's*. That 'the end' in v. 24 means 'the rest,' and so another class, is improbable." Luther (this for the benefit of the Lutheran chiliasts: "DARNACH DAS ENDE." *Wenn das Stuedlein kommen wird (will er sagen), dass wir, so Christo angehören, auferstehen und ihm nachfolgen sollen, so wird's denn alles ausgerichtet sein, und das Ende, dahin die Schrift zeigt, dass dies weltliche Leben soll aufhoeren mit allem seinem Jammer und Unglueck. . . . Summa, es soll ein Ende sein aller Dinge auf Erden.*) And again (for the benefit of those who favor Bachmann's grouping): "*Und wenn es Zeit sein wird, soll er AUF EINEN TAG alle, die ihm angehören, wieder hervor heissen kommen und mit sich fuehren.*" (VIII, 1165 f. Cp. *Lehre und Wehre*, 6, 311.)

But there is Rev. 20, 1—6! Here at any rate no thought-interpolation is required! Here are the very words "This is the first resurrection."—Let us study these words and their context during the next month. (To be continued.) TH. ENGELDER.

### Ist die Variata synergistisch und majoristisch?

„Wir bekennen uns zu der ersten, ungewänderten Augsburgerischen Konfession.“ (*Trigl.*, 850, 5.) Tatsache aber ist, daß man in rein kritischem Sinne von keiner Invariata reden kann. Weder der deutsche Text, die sogenannte Mainzer Handschrift, noch der lateinische, ein Abdruck der von Melancthon besorgten Ausgabe der Augsburgerischen Konfession, sind exakte Reproduktionen der dem Kaiser überreichten Texte. (Cf. *Trigl.*, Introduction, 21; L. u. B. 65, 219 ff.) Die neuesten Augustanastudien weisen jedoch nach, daß die Redakteure des Konfessionsbuchs nicht hinters Licht geführt worden sind, als sie „von wohlbeglaubigten Leuten“ die ursprünglichen Texte haben genau verglichen lassen. (*Trigl.*, 14.) Wir haben also mit der Ausnahme von ganz unwesent-