

"OUR FATHER'S HOUSE,"

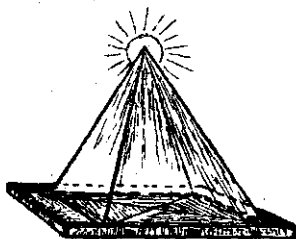
OR

"PRESENT TRUTH" and PRESENT LIES :

A "SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST" ASTRONOMER'S VIEW
COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

By "ZETETES."

[Reprinted from *THE EARTH.*]



"And if they be ashamed of all that they have done shew them
the form of the House."—Ezek. xliii. 11.

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AN ASTRONOMER'S CONFESSION.

Dr. Woodhouse, professor of astronomy at Cambridge about fifty years ago, was candid enough to acknowledge the weak and artificial nature of the Newtonian speculations. He says: "When we consider that the advocates of the earth's stationary and central position can account for and explain the celestial phenomena as accurately, to their own thinking, as we can ours, in addition to which they have the evidence of their senses, and SCRIPTURE, and facts IN THEIR FAVOUR, which we have not; it is not without some show of reason that they maintain the superiority of their system. . . . However perfect our theory may appear in our estimation, and however simply and satisfactorily the Newtonian hypothesis may seem to us to account for all the celestial phenomena, yet we are here compelled to admit the astounding truth, that if our premises be disputed and our facts challenged, the whole range of astronomy does not contain the proofs of its own accuracy."

And Sir Richard Phillips boldly writes:—"It would be much wiser at once to pull down the whole than to continue the system of patch-work of which the Newtonian theory consists. For I am convinced that such a mass of deformity must, in due time, offend the common sense of mankind, however admired and cherished it may be."

"OUR FATHER'S HOUSE,"
OR
"PRESENT TRUTH" AND PRESENT LIES.

Under the title of "An Astronomer's View of our Father's House" a small tract has lately been published by the "Pacific Press Publishing Co.," Oakland, California.

A copy has been sent to me for criticism, as it is being circulated in England by the "Seventh Day Adventists," who publish a paper in England called "The Present Truth."

The article first appeared in the "Signs of the Times," an American S.D.A. paper. But the fact that it is published and circulated by American and English Seventh Day Adventists is carefully concealed from the general reader in accordance with their usual custom of concealment.

On the front page of the tract a large globe and telescope are represented, and it is said to be the sixty-sixth in some "apples of gold" series. It is signed *Gamma Beta*, and is said to have been written by "a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society."

The writer begins by quoting *John* xiv. 2: "In my Father's house are many abiding places, I go to prepare a place for you."

The writer evinces a true astronomical spirit by starting off at once with the usual assumptions. He says that the "sense of the text" is that "God's house" is "God's universe," in which there are "mansions, or abiding places, in which we are to dwell if we are found worthy of a dwelling place with God." But he evidently has more faith in astronomy than in the Bible, for he says: "This text may be considered an astronomical one"; and he launches at once into the usual extravagant astronomical speculations.

The astronomer he says, "sees in imagination unnumbered millions of worlds, systems, and constellations in *our* universe; and beyond this he is reasonably certain that other universes—universe after universe, infinity after infinity—unspeakable in dimensions and duration, stretch away into

unfathomable and endless space, until his judgment is stunned, his mind reels, and his reason cries, Halt"!

This is a fair specimen of the astronomical imagination and method of reasoning. We are invited to visit some part of the Father's house "in imagination," and to take an infinite voyage, of course nowhere.

Being an astronomer, he would prefer to start from the sun, ninety odd millions of miles away! Railway speed is entirely out of the question. Cannon ball speed, twenty miles a minute is "entirely too slow"!

No, we must go with the inconceivable speed of light itself, "or 186,000 miles in a second of time"!

We are going to start from the sun which is supposed to be the centre of "our universe;" but we have to start from the "centre of that vast globe." So take your seats gentlemen. The sun is only "1,300,000 times as large as our earth"! And it is said to be as hot as another place familiarly known to some theologians, though not so familiar as yet to the astronomers! Never mind the heat, gentlemen, get inside! Now we are ready. But lest we should frighten the people in Mars, when we rush past them, we are invited to send a messenger before us, a cannon ball travelling at the rate of 28,000 miles a day, "and that it may have plenty of time we can give it a start of a hundred years"!

We want to "start fair," so will suppose the cannon ball had been started a hundred years ago. "Now then, all ready, full speed ahead."

I quote these sentences from the writer of the tract. Mercury is past, and in less than three minutes we cross the orbit of Venus. At the rate we go we cannot scrutinize closely, but our astronomical friend says, "life is just as probable on Venus as on any other planet." We quite agree with him. Just as *probable*, no more! The whole article is full of "suppositions" and probabilities.

As passing Venus we have got 26,000,000 miles away from the sun "in less than three minutes, and the sun seems to grow less. In a little over two minutes we reach *our* two stars," the earth and the moon. Of course to an astronomical mind the earth is a star "in imagination." Its muddy streets and dirty lanes shine, to the astronomer, like the moon; but to the mere layman the dull dark soil of the earth is never seen to glow. But this may be because we are deficient in the faculty of "imagination."

We must be careful as we get near the earth lest we should be "drawn" to it. "But our speed is our safety and gravitation will not be able to overcome such a velocity as ours." This is very comforting. The writer calls the earth a "tiny speck," but he adds, "here on this little world are the saints, those that 'keep *all* the commandments of God.'" That is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, as well as the other nine.

Of course the saints here referred to are the Seventh Day Adventists, yet the whole of this tract which they have published is a violation of the second commandment which says that

HEAVEN IS ABOVE,
THE EARTH BENEATH, and
WATER UNDER THE EARTH.

We may also note that there are others besides Seventh Day Adventists who observe the Seventh Day Sabbath, but the implication is that they only are the people of God.

However, we must proceed on our journey. In eight minutes we pass the earth. In "four minutes more we reach the little planet Mars, with his two little moons (only five and seven miles in diameter), baby mansions truly." Mars is next said to be "a world four thousand miles in diameter," with seas and continents, and snowy poles "just like our earth." We could almost feel at home there, but we must rush on.

We then dart through the asteroids, about four hundred, which our friend assures us are "more baby mansions"! and as these "baby mansions" are flying through space at a fearful rate, like so many cannon-balls, we shall have to be careful. We must dodge them, lest we come into collision with such terrible missiles of destruction! We really need Col. Baden Powell's Mafeking bell to ring an alarm for us when one of these baby "abiding places" comes rushing past. Look out! Yet our "Christian Astronomer" calls these things "baby mansions," or "abiding places"! It seems funny to a planist, but then as we are lacking in the astronomer's "imagination" we must shoot on.

In half-an-hour we reach Jupiter, "swinging round in a majestic orbit," with five moons..... "a real giant as large as thirteen hundred and nine such worlds as ours put together. The sun appears from Jupiter only about one-fifth

his size from the earth. Hence he gives only one twenty-fifth as much light and heat to the Jovians (assuming there are Jovians) as we receive"!

But we cannot stop to decide the important question as to whether there are any Jovians or not. "Our tremendous speed carries us by Jupiter in a twinkle"! and we have to pass over "the enormous gulf of over 400,000,000 miles that separates the orbits of Jupiter and his big brother Saturn—our next station."

Saturn's dimensions rival those of Jupiter. This Christian Astronomer tells us that "his volume is over seven hundred times greater than the world upon which we live! He has eight 'moons' besides his enormous ring system." Of course every little satellite is a moon to such a man.

But we must rush on to the next "abiding place," Uranus, with his four moons. We leave Saturn for Uranus, a distance of "900,000,000 miles..... We will just settle ourselves comfortably for our flight across this mighty span, and, whiz! What was that? Why it is our messenger, the cannon ball, that left the sun a hundred years ago, while it is less than one and a half hours since we left on the wings of light."

"But in a single beat of the clock we leave our messenger, the cannon ball 186,000 miles behind us"! Is it not grand? It beats the father of lies himself. But perhaps they are his "mansions" that our friend is describing, and to which he would lead us.

But we have to make another mighty plunge across the vast abyss of space to reach Neptune, the last of the planets, and the "sentinel of our system." We are supposed to find Neptune "eighty-five times larger than the earth." And we are told "it requires one hundred and sixty-four of our years to equal one of his." Children born in Neptune will have to wait a long while for their birthdays, I should think. But we cannot now pause to watch one of their birthday celebrations. Our Astronomical friend proceeds: "We don't wish to discourage our friend and messenger, the cannon ball, but it would take him three hundred years to cross the tremendous distance from the sun to Neptune; and a railway train—going a mile a minute—would require ten thousand years to cross the orbit of this the most distant of the sun's family."

The writer then truly adds: "We get thoroughly bewildered in dealing with these vast dimensions, and they

cease to have a meaning". This is just what we Zetetics think, yet he continues: "It is well to remember that the sun is over seven hundred times as large as *all* of the planets put together.'

He does not attempt the slightest proof of these vast stretches of imagination. Like a true astronomer he is above all that. But as a Christian he would do well to remember the divine injunction "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." But how can we obey this injunction if we travel so fast? We must go ahead.

We are now supposed to have travelled so far from the sun to Neptune in four and a quarter hours; and our imaginative friend quaintly adds, "we are getting lonesome." He fears he has travelled too fast for some of his readers! Then lest any of them should think they had seen God's House, and, using a frequent Americanism, he asks, "Will we call this worthy of Him? Not so! For in our 'Father's house are many mansions.'"

"We are still *standing* upon our own threshold." We are "standing," mind you, in space, on the threshold of more space! Our friend does not say whether we are "standing" up straight or sideways. We may be head downwards for anything he knows. Is it not beautiful? Though as our friend owns, "rather lonely"!

And this is supposed to be a part of "our Father's House." Well! all that we "will" say now is that it is not *our* Father's House of the Bible; and it is not like the "Father's House" spoken of by the Lord Jesus, from which the Saviour once, with a whip of small cords, drove out a set of thieves. There is nothing like an "abiding place" in such a madly whirling set of balls and globes. It is not God's universe.

So-called "scientific" thieves have stolen *our* Father's House, and have spirited it away to some "mansion in the skies," to which no plain Christian can at all view his title clear. Let us hope when the Lord does return that He will drive forth such sacrilegious robbers from the place where the soles of his feet shall "abide" on the earth with the Children of Israel for ever. *Ezek: xliii. 7-10.*

A dear saint of old once complained, "they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him;" but the modern Christian who has faith enough left to believe in the Bible may rightly complain, "they have taken away our Father's House, and have transplanted it beyond the

bounds of time and space. They have hidden it away into infinite space and 'loneliness,' and we know not where they have laid it."

The Seventh Day Adventists some years ago rejected the writer of this article because he had more faith in the Bible than in "science;" because he had more faith in Moses than in Newton; more faith in God's Prophets than in their "prophetess"; and more faith in Genesis than in geology. For these things they "cast him out of the synagogue." They thus rejected the truth of God—the truth of God's Word respecting His Creation—and yet they profess to honour the Sabbath as the memorial of Creation.

The Sabbath indeed is the memorial of Creation, but it is, and was, the memorial of God's Creation, not that of Sir Isaac Newton.

And now these spiritual guides are feeding the souls of the faithful on such wretched pabulum as that we have quoted above. There is no reason in it. It contains neither sense, science, nor Scripture. We warn their followers against partaking of such unspiritual provender.

If we reject the truth of God we are in danger of swallowing poison in its place. Beware! The truth of God is simple, consistent, and ennobling. Be like the noble Bereans of old, who were more noble than others because they searched the Scriptures to see whether their teachers were right or not. *Acts xvii. 11.*

Be not priest-ridden, nor presbyter ridden. Dare to examine for yourselves, and to reject, that which your own astronomical elder confesses "causes the judgment to be stunned, the mind to reel, and reason to cry, Halt!"

THE WORD IGNORED.

Paul writing to Titus says that an Elder, or Presbyter, should "Hold fast to the faithful Word"; and that by so doing he will be able to "convict" or refute gainsayers. There are many "vain talkers and deceivers" now as in Paul's day, whose "mouths must be stopped," and their errors refuted by the faithful Word.

One would expect a professed Christian, even if he were an F.R.A.S., to attempt to show what "Our Father's House" is by some reference to the Scriptures, which reveal to us

the future abode of God's people ; but the "Fellow" who wrote the tract under consideration does nothing of the kind. He quotes astronomers, poets, and dreamers ; but he does not quote the Prophets of God, nor the Apostles of Jesus, in support of his extravagant assumptions. Yet he belongs to the "Seventh Day Adventists" who profess to take the Bible only for their guide ; and with the tithes or funds which their elders squeeze out of that honest but misguided people they print such wretched and infidel effusions as the above. We are compelled to speak out that gainsayers may be refuted, and that simple minded and faithful Christians may be delivered from their lying vanities. *Jer. xvi. 19.*

"APPLES OF GOLD."

Such tracts as the one under criticism may well be likened to "apples of gold." They are astronomical apples. They shine and look well to the natural, or unnatural man, but they are totally unfit for human or spiritual food. Let anyone attempt to masticate such "apples" and his digestive organs would soon be impaired. Such gilded fruit is only fit for show. When a sect gets hold of a great man, or one its members think great, they naturally like to exhibit him. A scientist with alphabetical letters attached to his name looks imposing to the eye of flesh, even though his "science," as Paul says, be "falsely so-called." Moses, who was a true scientist, knew the secret art of grinding gold to powder. Unfaithful Israelites, in his absence, tried to introduce Egyptian Sun-Worship, or the worship of Osiris under the form of a Golden Calf, into the Israelitish camp. Moses, in righteous indignation, ground the gilded calf to powder, and putting it into their water, made the Israelites drink it. *Exod. xxxii. 20.* The sun is the great god of the astronomers, and the physical father of their universe. These "apples of gold" tracts support the unscriptural idea. If we had the skill of Moses we would reduce them to powder, and make the S.D.A. drink it. We would not dissolve their "golden apples" chemically lest the poison might kill ; but reduced mechanically, and the powder placed in suspension in the pure water of life, it might prove a medicinal tonic, beneficial if not altogether pleasant, even to the S.D.A. May it be so.

WHERE IS THE S.D.A. HEAVEN?

We have only space for one or two further samples of this infidel science in Christian guise.

We are told that the star *Alpha Centauri* is another vast sun, and "our" sun's nearest neighbour, "about twenty-five millions of millions of miles away." The writer of the tract owns that this is "absolutely meaningless to the mind of either the layman or the astronomer." He says, "the human mind breaks down at this point." We are glad to agree with him when the truth is confessed; and it will leak out. He goes on: "We will continue our journey.....at the rate of six hundred and sixty-nine million six hundred thousand miles an hour." And it will take us "a little over four years," at this inconceivable and awful rate, to reach our sun's next door neighbour. One cannot find words adequately to describe such teaching without seeming to be uncharitable. But while we reprobate the rot, and those who are inoculating others with it, we pity the poor sheep.

Yet the writer adds: "We have scarce begun our journey"; and "at the snail's pace of 180,000 miles a second it would require from tens of years to centuries to visit our near neighbours of the star depths." And it would require "50,000 years to reach the stars that lie at the limit" of telescopic vision. Even then this is not the limit of the lie, for he adds: "There are no bounds, no centre, no circumference" to our Father's House. - Fancy a house like that. No walls, no chambers, no floor, no ceiling, no roof! What is it? Nothing! Limitless "space" with "tiny specks" floating about in it, or shooting about like cannon balls.

Can such people believe in heaven? Certainly not in the heaven of the Bible, only a few thousand miles above the earth. To what place did the Lord Jesus ascend? How many "centuries" did it take Him to go there? When will He return; and how will He catch the flying ball? And how are those who are to be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" (no higher than the air) ever to catch up with those madly whirling "abiding places" (?) some of which this "Fellow" says are rushing "at the rate of fifty miles every second"? To say nothing of others "approaching us"! It is fearful! It approaches the blasphemous. Well might the writer confess of these "wild dreams" of the astronomer, "Our minds and hearts grow sick with the knowledge (?)

of this infinity of greatness." And again, "So, this is the God of the astronomer." Yes, of the astronomer; not the God of the Christian who "so loved the world," this the only world. It cannot be the same God, nor the same universe, for the writer confesses himself "*utterly dazed and overwhelmed; bewildered and hopelessly cast down.*" (*Italics mine*).

Such is the natural effect of the present lies taught in the name of astronomy. There is no comfort in them. The Saviour said "Let not your heart be troubled..... I will come again to receive you." Our S.D.A. friend quotes the German poet Richer. This poet says that a man who was conducted over the universe by an angel, "sighed, and stopped, shuddered and wept." There was no "abiding place" anywhere. "Above," he says, "was below, and below was above to the man stripped of gravitation. And he wanted to 'lie down,' and go no further." We sympathize with him. He might well be suspicious of such an "angel," who was evidently leading the poor man astray. Let us turn back; back to the Word of Truth; back to the Works as well as to the Word of the Builder of the House; and let us notice with care and reverence what He says about

"OUR FATHER'S HOUSE."

If we go to the Bible we find that, in regard to the future abode of the redeemed, the earth is everything and the stars comparatively nothing. Even heaven itself is never directly promised as our future home. Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit *the earth.*" *Matt.* v. 5. Hence the importance of this subject, and our contention about the shape of the earth. The renewed earth is to be the inheritance of Abraham, our father, and all his faithful seed. *Rom.* iv. 13. The inspired writers tell us that the earth, or land, is established on "foundations," that "it cannot be moved"; and that it is "outstretched" above the water, and goes down into the waters of the great deep. (See the tract *Scoffers and Cosmogony*). They tell us also that it is the sun which moves round the world, not the world round the sun. *Psa.* xix. 6, and xxiv. 2. We can verify these facts by actual observations. Yet because we believe the Bible and our God-given senses, a religious paper entitled *Present Truth*,

quotes with approval the following from a worldly newspaper, *The Chronicle*.

"There are still people who believe that Britons are the Lost Ten Tribes, as there are people, Mr. Kruger among them, who hold that the world is flat."

Then the editor of the same religious periodical adds :

"There is no notion in the world so absurd that it will not find many believers, often among people who are very 'cautious' when a Bible truth is presented to them."—*Present Truth*, Dec. 20th, 1900.

True! And I think the absurdities of their "Father's House" tract remarkably illustrates this observation; as also their front page print in the same issue of *P.T.*, which gives a large Bible lying open (and flat) on a ridiculous sea-earth globe, floating mid-air over some matter of fact mountains! Our brother ought to read the Lord's Words in *Matt.* vii. 3. Why do they not keep to the flat and open Bible? Why did not the astronomical "Fellow" try to show us what the "Father's House" is, or will be, from the same source? Why? But want of space presses and we must briefly try to make good their defects.

NOT HEAVEN.

When Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you," He doubtless referred to His Ascension. But though after His Resurrection He "went up into Heaven" ("up" mind you), He could not refer to heaven itself as the place which then needed "preparing." Heaven existed at "the beginning," but this "place" needed preparing. No one at that time had gone to it. It was not ready. Besides, the redeemed will live again, after the Resurrection, and Reign with the Christ "on the earth." *Rev.* v. 10. As the "Father's House" of *John* ii. 16, was a building formerly on the earth, so the future "House" will be a grander building, yet to be established in the same place "in the midst of the children of Israel for ever." *Ezek.* xliii. 7-10.

Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." *Heb.* xi. 10. This is the "heavenly Jerusalem," builded and prepared in heaven; but at the Return and "Revelation of Jesus Christ" it will come "down" from heaven to the earth. *Rev.* iii. 12, and xxi. 2. It will rest on glorious "foundations," in a place made level for it by an earthquake. *Zech.* xiv. 10. It will "lie" flat and four-square at the bottom, rising like a "mountain," or the

Great Pyramid, upwards towards heaven. *Isa.* ii. 2, and *Rev.* xxi. 10-16. The mystery of the Pillar of Witness in Egypt will then be explained. *Isa.* xix. 19-20. There will be "twelve gates" in the wall which will surround it, three on each side, for the "Twelve Tribes of Israel." They will be needed because the sides of the City will be about twelve miles each at the bottom and the wall rather more. The height of the City will be the same as the length and breadth. The "square" covered by the City will be 12,000 furlongs. The square root of 12,000 furlongs, or Roman "stadia," gives 109 stadia, or about twelve miles each side at the base. Taking the square root of the measurement given reconciles the figures of *John* and *Ezek.* xlvi. 35, and brings the House and "City of God," to the reasonable proportions of *Zech.* xiv. 10. The Elders of the S.D.A. never could explain for me the last chapter of *Zechariah*. God's prophet says the very "pots in the Lord's House" shall be stamped with "Holiness to the Lord"; but their prophets (and prophetess) practically deny the whole chapter. They have no place for it, nor for *Ezekiel's* in their system; their system therefore must be wrong. Their "house" is open "space," without form and limitless, with "tiny specks" floating in it, or flying about like cannon balls. A house which would make men weep for its very vastness and "loneliness." Our "Father's House" will be a magnificent building, the New Jerusalem, resting on the outstretched earth, and having "foundations" of precious stones all aglow with divine radiance. Its light will be seen over the outstretched earth, and it will be the "Joy of the whole earth." *Psa.* xlvi. 2.

Well might the Saviour comfort His people with the prospect of such a glorious "mansion," or "abiding place." It will be firm and immovable, and secure from the assaults of the Enemy. Its high wall will shut out "whosoever loveth, or maketh a lie," and there are no present lies so far reaching, so seductive, and so pernicious as the astronomical lie of an evolutionary sea-earth globe flying through limitless space. It is one of "The Signs of the Times." Surely some of those who have from childhood insensibly imbibed this great lie cannot really love it; for when they come to realize its teaching it makes them weep, as *Gamma Beta* confesses, with disappointment and despair. Then give it up! There is no evidence in its support. The offer of reward has failed to secure a single proof of the earth's sup-

posed terrible motion. It rests in "foundations which cannot be moved." Give up, therefore, "the oppositions of science, falsely so-called." Wash your hands of such mental and spiritual defilement. Repent, and believe the Gospel. The good news that Israel's Messiah is about to return to the earth, to renew and bless it; and to reign over the whole world as its Righteous and Lawful King. *Isa.* xxxii. 1, and *Jer.* xxiii. 5. Deceivers shall then be no more; and God's Will, or Law, shall "be done on earth as it is in heaven." There will then be peace on earth amongst men of good will. Amen. May it be so.

"Blessed are they that wash their robes that they may have the right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in by the gates

INTO THE CITY." *Rev.* xxii. 14. (R.V.)