

THE

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"The Lord God is a Sun and Shield"

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From the Christian Messenger.

Interview Between an Old and Young Preacher.

Y. P.—Father T, my mind has been, and yet is, much embarrassed on viewing the effects of the gospel now preached, in comparison of what they were in its first promulgation. Will you explain to me the reason of it?

O. P. I will gladly try. It is an important matter, and has not been sufficiently considered by the present generation of christians. I will state what I view to be the causes, first, negatively, and secondly, positively.

1. Negatively. It is not because we have not the same gospel. This must be acknowledged by all. It is not, because we have not the same gracious and Almighty God and Saviour, who are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

It is not because we have not the same privilege, for the throne of grace is as accessible by the fallen world now as then—the same Spirit of promise—the same life and salvation offered freely to all without exception,—the same motive to obedience proposed to the world in every age.

2. Positively. I consider the reasons why the gospel produces not the same great and good effects now, as in the first ages of the church, to be many, which are necessary to be known in order to be corrected, as soon as can be done, as far as human agency is concerned.

1. The early rise, growth and establishment of Anti-Christ or the man of sin; or the apostacy spoken of by Paul, (2 Thes. ii.) is one great cause. The two witnesses—the old and new Testaments, have been prophesying in sackcloth ever since, as predicted by the apostle John. This event is represented by him in two very strong figures; one of which is recorded in Rev. v. A book, sealed with seven seals;

so effectually sealed, that none in heaven nor on earth was able to open the book or look thereon. Yet it was preserved and held in the right hand of him who sat upon the throne. This book was, without doubt, the book of God's revelations,—the Bible given to the poor benighted world as a directory how to escape from ruin, and enter into eternal life. But an enemy—the man of sin, sealed it from the view of men, even forbidding them to read it; for in the light of it he could not live, nor seat himself as God in the temple of God, and bind the nations under his power and dominion. John wept much at the sight, till an angel was sent to inform him that the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to take the book, and loose the seals thereof. The seals have been opening ever since that time; the seventh yet remains unopened, when the mystery of God shall be finished—the everlasting gospel restored—the King of glory again descend to earth—and Babylon and the man of sin be destroyed.

Another representation is a star fallen from heaven, which opened the bottomless pit, and a great smoke as of a furnace issued thence, which darkened the sun and the air. This smoke is the doctrine of devils, and of men under their influence—this has darkened the character of God—the sun and shield of his people—and has obscured the scriptures, which is the air, through which medium he shines, and communicates light and life to them. Well may the two witnesses be in sackcloth and mourning, that their testimony is so obscured and so little effect produced among mankind now! That the book is partially sealed yet, and the testimony obscured, is too evident to be denied—witness the jarring, contending parties in christendom. This state of things I fear, will continue till the destruction of the man of sin, and fall of Babylon, which will not take place