

ABOUT OLD MANUSCRIPTS.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: – I have read with much interest your work "MILLENNIAL DAWN," and I agree that the theory it presents, though new [The original, *old theology* of the Bible, we call it. – EDITOR.], ought not to be rejected because so. But that passage in Rev. 20:5, "But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were past," arose in my mind at once as a barrier to the reception of your view. You state it to be an interpolation, and that the words are not found in the best and most ancient manuscripts. I wrote to Dr. Manly of the S.B. Theological Seminary as to his knowledge of the matter. He writes to me, that so far as his investigations have gone there has been no dispute as to the authenticity of the passage, but some as to the verbal construction. He further says, that in his opinion there is no copy of Revelation ante-dating the fifth century.

Now I am anxious to know just what God's Word teaches. Will you please give me the source of your information upon which you state that it is not in the ancient copies? Do you know from a personal investigation? Are there no copies of Revelation ante-dating the fifth century? I am anxious to be informed on the subject, for your theory will relieve my mind on some things that have been hard to understand. I want to believe it, if the Scriptures will allow me. But while that passage remains, it effectually bars the door to belief. I have been a pre-millennialist for nearly thirty years, and the doctrine becomes clearer with the coming years. Now, if your theory be true, a beautiful harmony will exist in my mind.

Fraternally Yours,

G. E. BREWER.

– IN REPLY –

There are but two known copies of the New Testament, in Greek, ante-dating the fifth century: these are known among scholars as the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts. They are given the same date, – about A.D. 350 – though by some the Sinaitic, which was most recently found, by Prof. Cons. Tischendorf in 1859, is supposed to date a little earlier.

The Vatican MS. came into the possession of European scholars in 1475 A.D., and is known from other more recent Vatican MSS. by its number, 1209. It is very accurate so far as it goes, but it is of no authority on the clause of Rev. 20:5 in question, because it is defective, incomplete, – the Epistle to the Hebrews from 9:15 to close is lacking, as well as all of the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and the book of Revelation.

The Sinaitic MS., remarkable as being the oldest as well as for its completeness and accuracy, is therefore the only Greek authority on Revelation ante-dating the fifth century: and it does not contain the clause, of Rev. 20:5, in dispute.

Regarding your question, as to our authority and information, we would say: We do not possess these old manuscripts and do not hope to – they are esteemed as of almost priceless value among scholars. The Sinaitic is now in the possession of the Russian government at St. Petersburg. However, at great expense, borne by the Czar of Russia, Prof. Tischendorf, the finder, published an exact copy of this MS. And later, for the benefit of the general public, Mr. T. prepared and published, in 1869, the common version of our English New Testament, with foot-notes showing all instances in which it varies from the three oldest Greek MSS. – the Sinaitic, and Vatican, above mentioned, and the Alexandrine, a later and less accurate MS. This work in a small form, cheaply bound in cloth, can be ordered through your nearest book-seller. Its retail price is one dollar.

We hope, at some time ere long, to get out a copy of this last mentioned edition in cheaper form, for the benefit of all our

subscribers; being desirous that they should all enjoy the benefits and information thus afforded.
