words “*shall receive wages*” can hardly  
be said of mere abiding the test of tribulation) :—**because it** (the day—not, the  
*work*, which would introduce a mere  
tautology with the next clause) **is** [**to be**]  
**revealed** (in the original, **is revealed**, the  
present tense, expressing the definite certainty  
of prophecy: or perhaps rather the  
*attribute* of that day, which is, to be  
revealed, &c.) **in fire** (‘accompanied,’  
‘clothed,’ ‘ girt,’ ‘with fire;’ i.e. fire will  
be *the element* in which the day will be  
revealed. See 2 Thess. i. 8, and Mal. iii.  
2, 3, iv. 1, to which latter place the reference  
is. But notice, that this is not  
*the fire of hell*, into which the gold, silver,  
and costly stones will never enter, but the  
*fire of judgment*, in which Christ will  
appear, and by which *all works will be  
tried*. This *universality* of trial by fire is  
equally against the idea of a *purgatorial*  
*fire*, which most convenient and lucrative  
fiction has been mainly based by the  
Romanists on a perversion of this passage.  
Their own Commentators are divided on  
the question whether there is any allusion  
to it in this passage); **and each man’s work,  
of what sort it is, the fire itself shall  
prove (the fire itself**, of its own power,  
being a *consuming* fire).

**14.] If any  
man’s work shall endure** (i.e. stand the  
fire,—being of inconsumable materials)  
**which he built on the foundation,—he  
shall receive wages** (as a builder;—i.e.  
‘shall be rewarded for his faithful and  
effectual work as a teacher’):

**15.]**  
**if any man’s work shall be burned up** (i. e.  
consist of such materials as the fire will  
destroy: Stanley adds, “It is possible  
that this whole image, as addressed to the  
Corinthians, may have been suggested, or  
at least illustrated, by the conflagration of  
Corinth under Mummius: the stately  
temples [one of them remaining to this  
day] left standing amidst the universal  
crash and destruction of the meaner buildings”),  
**he shall suffer loss** (literally, **be**  
**mulcted**, viz. of the wages which would  
otherwise have been his): **but he himself  
shall be saved** (having held, and built on,  
the true foundation Jesus Christ, he shall  
not be excluded from that salvation which  
is the free gift of God to all who believe on  
Christ, but shall get no *especial reward*as a faithful and effectual teacher. Compare  
2 John 8, “ *Look to yourselves that we  
lose not the things which we have wrought,  
but receive full wages*:” so literally.  
Meyer remarks, that our Lord hints at  
such persons under the name of “ the last,”  
Matt. xx. 16: Mark x. 31), **yet so as  
through fire** :—i.e. as a builder whose  
building was consumed would escape with  
personal safety, but with the loss of his  
work.—Chrysostom, and others of the  
ancients, strangely understand it, that he  
shall not be consumed like his works, but  
shall be saved from this, and burnt for ever  
in the fire of Hell, unconsumed. But (1) *the  
fire of Hell* is quite alien from the context  
(see above),—and (2) the meaning *thus* given  
to *being saved* is unexampled,—and least of  
all could be intended where the coming of  
the Lord is spoken of: compare among  
other places, ch. v. 5. Grotius and others  
explain the words as a proverb, ‘*as out of  
a fire*, i.e. ‘with difficulty.’ But this is  
needless here, as the *figure itself* is that of  
a fire. The whole imagery of the passage  
will be best understood by carefully keeping in mind the *key*, which is to be found  
in the words *God’s building*, and the  
*temple of God*, as connected with the  
prophecy of Malachi iii. 1—3 and iv. 1.  
The Lord thus coming to His temple in  
flaming fire, all the parts of the building  
which will not stand that fire will be consumed  
the builders of them will escape  
with personal salvation, but with the loss  
of their work, through the midst of the  
conflagration.

**16—23.]** THE FIGURE IS TAKEN UP