

Israel's Future Restoration.

Paper 7 of 20 'Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects'.

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Our inquiry into Israel's past history and present state, conducted us to some of the closing statements of the New Testament on this subject. Their "house left to them desolate" — their city and temple doomed to utter destruction — "the kingdom of God taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," while "wrath comes upon *them* to the uttermost" — judicial "blindness" resting upon them as a nation: such are the main features of the state in which, for the present, the New Testament takes its leave of this favoured nation of God's choice. It may be well for us, just at this point, to inquire, whether the New Testament teaches that this overthrow — that these calamities — that this judicial blindness, are all to be perpetual and irreversible; or whether it does not rather intimate, that in the purpose of God a limit is placed to their continuance.

At the close of that long strain of awful denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees, which we find in Matt. 23, our Lord declares, that upon Jerusalem should come all the righteous blood which had been shed upon the earth; and then He utters the well-known words quoted in our last, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth" — does He say, "for ever?" no — "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till *ye shall say*, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Do not these words imply, that the time will yet arrive when Israel shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," and that then, when they do say this, they shall again behold their, till then, rejected and absent Lord? These words, it must be admitted, do not absolutely declare that Israel will say, "Blessed is he that cometh;" but, surely, if there were not another passage on the subject in the whole of God's word, the one before us holds out encouragement sufficient to keep alive in the heart the hope of Israel's final restoration. But we shall find passages in abundance which do absolutely predict that which is here conditionally expressed.

If we turn to Psalm 118, from which our Lord quotes these words, we shall find that Israel is there represented as using them *after the Messiah has been rejected*. They are connected in the psalm with the well-known passage, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." The most superficial reader of Scripture can scarcely be ignorant that this passage is interpreted both by our Lord Himself (Matt. 21: 42) and by the apostle, (1 Peter 2: 7,) of Israel's present rejection of their Messiah, and of God's exaltation of Him while thus rejected. The psalm before us represents Israel as now acknowledging this rejected Stone. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Then, after a prayer for prosperity, we have the words quoted by Christ in Matt. 23, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord."

Can any one resist the conclusion from these scriptures, when thus collated, that Israel is yet to be restored? Ages before Christ was on earth, the psalmist had been inspired to prophesy, that Israel would own the Messiah whom they had at first refused, and that then they should say, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord." In effect, then, our Lord says, "You are now refusing the Stone, which, when so refused, is to be made the head of the corner. Your house is therefore left to you desolate. But you are yet to acknowledge the Stone which you now refuse, and to own that its exaltation is Jehovah's doing, and marvellous in your eyes. Till then, ye shall see me no more. Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

In one of the other Gospels, our Lord limits the period of Israel's calamities in another way. He predicts the destruction of the temple, so that one stone should not be left upon another; he speaks of Jerusalem being compassed with armies, and of this being a sign that its desolation is nigh; he declares that these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled: — then he adds, "For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*" (Luke 21: 23, 24.) Thus it appears that there is a defined period, termed "the times of the Gentiles," during which Jerusalem is to be "trodden down," and at the close of which it is to cease to be so.

In 2 Cor. 3: 15, we have a brief and passing, but very distinct, intimation, that the judgment under which Israel lies is not final and perpetual. The apostle has been referring to the act of Moses, in putting a veil on his face, and treating it as symbolical of Israel's blinded state. "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." Such is their condition, "to this day." "Nevertheless," adds the apostle, "when it (Israel's heart) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." He does not pursue the subject in this passage; it is not the point on which he is expatiating. But these passing allusions to Israel's restoration, as a settled, established truth, with which the reader's mind is supposed to be already familiar, are only the convincing for their being introduced in this incidental way.

In Romans 11 we have the subject more fully and formally considered. The apostle has been declaring, with the most unflinching faithfulness, the results of Israel's rejection of Christ.

He has been quoting to them the words of Moses, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." He has added to these the words of Isaiah: "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." These quotations from the Old Testament suggest the inquiry, whether this rejection of Israel is universal and permanent — whether *all* Israel be rejected, and whether those who are rejected are rejected *for ever*. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people?" This is the question considered in the chapter before us. "God forbid!" is the earnest and almost indignant reply. "*God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.*" This answer the apostle proceeds in various ways to illustrate and establish. A few leading points of his argument are all that can at present be noticed.

Having shown that all Israel are not even now rejected that he himself was an Israelite — and that, as in the days of Elias, when there were seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, "so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" -he proceeds to consider the case of that part of the nation (the mass of it, alas!) who were cast away. He quotes passages, both from Isaiah and the Psalms, as to the judicial blindness to which they are given up. Well, as to these, — the bulk of the nation, given up thus to blindness, — is it for ever? 'I say, then, have they stumbled that they should fall?' — that is, fall finally, never to be restored. "God forbid," the apostle again replies, "but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." Now, if one object of the present calling of the Gentiles it; to stir up God's ancient people to jealousy — to produce in them the sense of what they have lost, and the desire for its recovery — how evident that they, the Jews, are not finally cast off. Nay, More, the apostle argues thus — that if the effect of Israel's present rejection be the extension of mercy to the Gentiles, the result of Israel's restoration must be something better still. "Now if the fall of them (Israel) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? . . . For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" Does this look like Israel's being for ever rejected? Further, having shown that for unbelief some of the branches of this olive tree have been broken of, while the Gentile wild olive has been grafted in, the apostle warns us Gentiles, in the language considered at large in a previous paper.* "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell (that part of Israel which is now rejected) severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Let the reader mark well the words which follow these. "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: *for God is able to graff them in again.*" This is not an assertion that Israel shall be restored; but it is a declaration *that if they abide not in unbelief* they shall be restored. But the apostle advances another step, and shows, that if there was nothing incongruous in our replacing them, when they were rejected because of their unbelief, still more likely is it that they will be restored when the Gentiles are cut off. "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" Thus he proceeds, step by step. Israel's restoration is first *possible* — "God is able to graff them in again." Then it is conditionally promised — "they, *if they abide not in unbelief*, shall be grafted in." Then it is highly probable — "*how much more* shall these be grafted into their own olive tree." Thus it is that the apostle approaches the climax of his argument. And what is it that completes and crowns this climax? *The full, explicit, emphatic declaration of the truth, that Israel shall yet be restored.* "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." And if it should be said that this is unquestionably a promise of Israel's conversion, but not of their restoration, let me beg the reader's attention to two things. First, we have seen before that there is something promised on condition of their conversion — if they abide not in unbelief, (that is, *if they are converted,*) they are to be grafted in again. *The grafting in again* is their restoration; and so the apostle argues, that if they should be converted, they are sure to be restored. But will they ever be converted? The objection we are considering admits that their conversion is unquestionably

foretold — "*so all Israel shall be saved.*" If saved, then restored, according to the previous reasoning of the apostle. Secondly, the apostle proceeds to say, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." The nation, beloved on account of the patriarchs with whom God's covenant was made, are still the heirs of all the blessings which in that covenant were made over to them. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." There can be no doubt that it is the "calling" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which is here referred to; and that the "gifts" in question are those which God bestowed on them and on their seed after them. Did God "call" Abraham to a land which he should after receive for an inheritance? He has not repented of this: He has not changed his mind on the subject. The inheritance still belongs to Abraham and his seed. Did not God bestow the land of Canaan on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by a deed of gift, composed of promises, and confirmed by an oath — a deed of gift defining most accurately the extent of the land bestowed, and the privileges of earthly greatness and prosperity annexed to the possession of it? Assuredly He did: and God has not repented of these gifts. Israel has proved itself unworthy to possess them: and, when in actual possession, the people proved themselves unable to hold what God's bounty had bestowed. But has all this changed God's mind? By no means. It has been the cause of all the judgments which have overtaken Israel — the cause of their present dispersion, and of the judicial blindness which rests upon them as a nation. But unless God can change His mind, His purpose, as expressed in His "gifts and calling," must yet be accomplished. So unanswerable is the proof which this passage affords of Israel's literal restoration, that the most popular modern opponent of pre-millenarian views makes this remark upon the subject — "If this perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, as respects the *natural* seed, be admitted on the authority of the apostle, it will be difficult, I think, to avoid admitting their *territorial restoration*: the PEOPLE and the LAND of Israel being so connected in numerous prophecies of the Old Testament, that whatever *literality* and *perpetuity* are ascribed to the one, must, one would think, on all strict principles of interpretation, be attributed to the other also."†

*"The Doom of Christendom; or, Why are the Judgments coming."

†"Brown on the Second Advent."

Let us now turn to the Old Testament. I have dwelt thus largely on the evidence afforded elsewhere, because of the tenacity with which some maintain the idea, that unless the doctrine in question can be proved from the New Testament, no proofs from the Old can be considered satisfactory. That the New Testament recognizes the doctrine as true, and even proves it at length, we have now surely seen. But the natural place for the treatment of such a subject is the Old Testament. Israel and the earth are as properly and distinctively the leading subjects of the Old Testament, as the Church and heaven are of the New. And let it never be forgotten, that the Holy Ghost is as much the Author of the one as of the other, and that the contents of both are equally and absolutely true. The Lord grant us true subjection of mind to His holy word.

First, let us glance at the terms of God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to which the apostle evidently alludes when he says, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." "And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12: 7.) This was when Abram first passed through the land of Canaan, in obedience to

God's call. In the next chapter, we find that when Lot had separated from him, the Lord said unto Abram, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. . . . Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; *for I will give it unto thee.*" (Gen. 13: 14-17.) This promise is afterwards made the subject of a covenant: "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites and the Kenezites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." (Gen. 15: 18-21.) Then again, when Abram's name was changed to Abraham, God says to him, "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all *the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*" (Gen. 17: 8.) To Isaac it was said, "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries; and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father." (Gen. 26: 3.) To Jacob, in like manner, when he journeyed through the land, — his pilgrim staff his only companion by day, and the stones of the place his pillow by night, — to Jacob it was said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." (Gen. 28: 13.) These are not the whole of the passages in which God's promises to the patriarchs, as to the possession of the land by them and their seed, are recorded. These promises were never in any sense fulfilled to the patriarchs themselves. Never, save for a very short time in Solomon's day, were they in any sense fulfilled to Israel; and how could Israel's possession of the whole territory, for a little while under Solomon's reign, be the complete accomplishment of promises which declared that they should possess it *for ever — for an everlasting inheritance?* True it is, that their sins, and above all, their rejection of Christ, have caused them, for the present, to be dispossessed of their inheritance. But it is in view of this very state of things, that the apostle predicts their ultimate conversion, and declares that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Clearly then these promises to the patriarchs, and their seed, remain to be fulfilled. It must be equally clear, that in order to their fulfilment Israel must be restored.

But we are not left to inferences, however clear. Passages without end declare in the plainest terms, that after Israel's long dispersion and many calamities, it is, as a nation, to be restored. It is not in the New Testament alone, that the present dispersion and sufferings of this people are foretold. We have seen how they are foretold in the New Testament, and the limits which are there assigned to their continuance. But the Old Testament had long before predicted these calamities; and their continuance is as distinctly limited in the Old Testament as in the New.

Can anything exceed, in fidelity, the prophetic description of Israel's past and present state contained in Lev. 26? After threatening them with many inflictions during their continuance in the land, their long dispersion is thus foretold: "And I will make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. . . . And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land. . . . And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their

enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. . . . And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up." Awful, however, as these predictions are, and dreadfully as they have been fulfilled, can we gather from the chapter in which they are recorded, whether or not these judgments were to be perpetual? Ah! there is a door of mercy, and of hope, set before this down-trodden and afflicted race! Speaking of those that are left of them in their enemies' lands, God says, "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: *and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity*: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the Lord." How sweet this assurance of final mercy, at the close of all the richly-deserved punishment the nation has undergone! Mercy too, according to the covenant with their ancestors, a covenant which, the Lord declares, he will not break.

In Deut. 28 and 29 the predictions of Israel's captivity, and dispersion, and extreme sufferings, are even more detailed and minute than in Lev. 26. Towards the close, the nations are represented as inquiring, in utter astonishment, "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?" Disobedience, and idolatry, and violation of the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, are assigned as the causes of these judicial inflictions; and the men into whose lips this answer to the inquiry is put, are represented as saying, "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: and the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day." Why do I quote these words? To show how far these predictions of judgment on the nation extend; and that they include its present dispersion and afflictions. What follows the language just quoted? "And it shall come to pass, *when all these things are come upon thee*, the blessing *and the curse* which I have set before thee, *and thou shalt call them to mind*, among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God. . . . *that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity*, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and *gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee*." And, as though this general promise of restoration was not sufficient, — as though it were foreseen that some one of the outcasts might suppose he was too far off from the land, too isolated from his brethren — it is added, "If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." This promise of restoration to the land is connected, moreover with the promise of spiritual renewal. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Still further, the restoration and renewal of Israel, here foretold, are to be attended by the infliction upon their enemies of the curses so long endured by themselves. "And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee." Let the reader remember that this prophecy was spoken and written before the nation had entered the land — that it spans the whole extent of their history, denouncing on them

in case of their disobedience all the multiplied, innumerable woes which have actually overtaken them — that the epoch of their promised restoration is "when all these things have come upon them" — that the restoration promised is to be so complete as to embrace "any who may be driven out to the utmost parts of heaven" — that it is connected with their complete conversion — and that it is associated with the transfer to their enemies of the woes till then endured by themselves — let the reader bear all these things in mind, and then let him say whether it be possible to doubt the futurity of the restoration here predicted, or to question whether the faithfulness of God be not pledged for its accomplishment.

A passage from the song of Moses next demands our attention. God reveals to Moses how His people will sin against Him and break His covenant, and says, "Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them." It is in anticipation of all this that Moses is directed to write this song, respecting which it is said, "And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouth of their seed." In this song Moses pathetically expostulates with the people, as to the sins which he foretells they will commit, and faithfully predicts the calamities which will, in consequence, overtake them. He represents the Lord Himself as speaking, and what is it He declares? He speaks of hiding His face from the people, of kindling a fire in His anger that shall burn to the lowest hell, of heaping mischiefs upon them, and spending all His arrows upon them. He threatens them with hunger, and burning heat, and bitter destruction. "The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs." But is there to be no termination to these calamities? Ah yes! "I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men; were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this." And how is this to be prevented? By Israel's deliverance when at the last extremity, and by the judgments of God's hand being transferred from them to their adversaries. "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left. . . . If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy." How completely God's judgments are to be removed from Israel, and inflicted on their Gentile oppressors, we see in the next verse: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people." How evident that this prophecy is as yet unfulfilled! Whatever partial restorations of Israel there may have been in the past, this entire transfer of God's judgments from them to their adversaries is what has never taken place. We shall find it a marked feature in most of the prophecies of their future restoration.

A remarkable instance of this we have in Isaiah 14: 1, 2: "For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants

and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." Surely this is a prophecy which has never yet been accomplished. A few captives did indeed return from Babylon by permission of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, the Persian kings: but Nehemiah, who lived and wrote in those days, leaves us in no uncertainty as to what the position of this returned remnant was. "Behold we are servants this day; and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." (Neh. 9: 36, 37.) Surely this was not possessing their former rulers, for servants and for handmaids, or ruling over their oppressors. Nor has there ever yet been a page in Israel's history, on which anything like a fulfilment of Isaiah 14: 1, 2, could be recorded. No; it remains to be fulfilled. God's word cannot fail; and as it is certain that this part of it has not yet come to pass, it is equally certain that it will hereafter be accomplished.

Before examining other predictions of Israel's restoration, I would present my readers with a number of passages from the Old Testament, which plainly declare that God has put limits to the continuance of Israel's calamities. Many of them, like those already considered, predict the transfer of these calamities to their enemies. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, and that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40: 1, 2.) Whatever be the epoch to which the fulfilment of this prophecy may have to be assigned, the prophecy itself clearly intimates that there is a defined limit beyond which Jerusalem's desolations are not to continue. A moment approaches at which it can be said, "that her warfare is accomplished," and her iniquity forgiven. Again, "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury: thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up." How affecting this figurative representation of Jerusalem's extremity of anguish! "Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine: Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury: thou shalt no more drink it again: but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over." (Isaiah 51: 17-23.) Can any question be entertained for a moment as to the futurity of the events here foretold? We have a similar passage in Jer. 30: 41 Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, *yet will I not make a full end of thee*: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." We have, in connection with this, the same declarations as to Israel's adversaries as in all the previous passages. "Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured: and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord." (Verses 16, 17.) These are but a few out of many passages which bear unequivocal testimony to these two points — that Israel's overthrow and

rejection are limited in their continuance; and that when Israel ceases to suffer the inflictions of God's wrath, these inflictions will fall upon those who have been the rod in His hand, for the chastisement of His people Israel.

Let us now glance at a number of direct testimonies to Israel's future restoration, noticing the distinctive features of each passage as it rises for consideration. We have not to read far in the prophetic page before we arrive at a prediction of this event — a striking prediction, which associates it, as many others do, with those "approaching judgments" which formed the subject of one of our earlier numbers. "Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: and I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: *and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning*: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." (Isaiah 1: 24-28.) We learn thus, that the future restoration of Israel is connected with the great crisis which is so fast approaching, in which God will interpose in power to settle His long-pending controversy with His rebellious creatures. "Ah," is his language, "I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies."

The next passage I would quote is a very remarkable one. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." (Isaiah 11: 11-16.) I have quoted the whole of this long passage on account of its exceeding importance. The reader has it now before his eyes, and can refer to it for the proof of the following remarks.

1. "That day," in which all these things are said to come to pass, is the period of the overthrow of Antichrist, and the introduction of Christ's glorious reign. The whole of the chapter, down to verse 11, is the proof of this.

2. This is a "second" restoration of Israel. So that, whatever may be alleged as to Israel's having been once restored in Ezra's and Nehemiah's day, this is declared to be the "second time" that the Lord sets His hand to recover His people.

3. It is from an universal dispersion that they are to be thus recovered.

4. This future restoration embraces both Israel (the kingdom of the ten tribes) and Judah.
5. When this restoration is effected, the rivalry and enmity between these divisions of the nation cease for ever.
6. It is connected with the cutting off of their adversaries: "the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off."
7. The nations occupying the regions once peopled by the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, and so designated by these terms, *or probably even the descendants of these ancient races themselves*, are to have part in these solemn transactions.
8. There are to be divine interferences with the order of nature, similar to those which characterized the departure of Israel out of Egypt, in days of old. How manifestly are all these things taught in the passage before us! How manifest, also, that the fulfilment of the prophecy is yet to come!

The last particular in the passage just considered, namely, the divine interference with the established order of nature, seems to be set forth in another passage on the subject — Isaiah 27: 12, 13: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." The former part of this quotation would seem to refer to the same extraordinary interposition of God's power, as is foretold in Isa. 11: 15, 16. Then, in this passage we are also instructed that the re-gathering of Israel will extend to all the scattered individuals of that distinguished race — "gathered one by one." "The great trumpet," moreover, is to be blown, and this, the sounding of the true jubilee blast, is to be the signal for Egypt's outcasts, and those ready to perish in Assyria, to return and worship the Lord of hosts at Jerusalem.

Should the reader be surprised at these intimations of supernatural convulsions, in connection with Israel's restoration, let him call to mind the extraordinary interposition of God's power, when Israel was redeemed from Egypt several thousands of years ago. I am not forgetting how far the spirit of infidelity has infected even many true Christians, who seem to think that the age of miracles has so entirely past, that there will never again be any supernatural deviation from the established order of things. "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," is already in many hearts and on many lips. But how express is the testimony of Scripture, that this order, which to reason and unbelief seems so unalterable, will again be solemnly interrupted. One of the passages that we have been examining declares that it is to be "like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." But another, about to be cited, goes beyond this, and affirms that Israel's future restoration will so far exceed in wonder the ancient exodus from Egypt, that this last named will no longer be remembered — that is, in comparison with the other. "Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from

the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave to their fathers." And as though anticipating the question of unbelief, How can these things be? it is added, "Behold I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." Here also we find that there is a defined limit set to the chastisements they are to endure; and that it is when this limit has been reached that the Lord will turn their captivity, and forgive and restore them, as all these prophecies declare He will. "For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. *And first, I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double:* because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the caresses of their detestable and abominable things." (Jer. 16: 14-18.) How happy to find that, as in our individual salvation, the grace that blots out all our sin is the grace of Him who has observed and taken knowledge of it all, and provided for its being justly and holily forgiven, in visiting it all on the head of our sinless, holy, divine Substitute, so that grace reigns *through* righteousness, *not by setting it aside*, in like manner, Israel, when restored and forgiven, will have no fear of anything being called to mind, or brought to light, which had not been noticed when forgiveness was bestowed! "*For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face!*" Those very principles of God's character and ways which are now known to faith (and to faith only) as the foundation of the soul's peace, and the secret of its practical victory over sin, will, by and by, be conspicuously displayed in the open, manifested dealings of God with Israel and with the earth. It is thus that, in the words immediately following those which have been quoted, we find the Gentiles learning, by this display of God's character in His ways towards Israel, to turn from their idols to the true God. "O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will thus once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is THE LORD." I am aware that in this remark I am anticipating, in some degree, a future branch of our present inquiry: but the remark is so naturally suggested by the passage under review, that it could not be withheld.

Jer. 30 has been already quoted in proof of two points, namely, that Israel's desolations are limited in their duration, and that when they come to a close, their enemies will be visited with equal, or even greater calamities. But the predictions of Israel's restoration which this chapter contains are so express, and they descend to particulars so minute, that we may well bestow upon them a little further attention. "Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord, and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers; and they shall possess it." And, as though to guard against the spiritualizing mode of interpretation, which would explain away such prophecies, in the attempt to apply them to the Church and to Christianity, we are told, "And these are the words that the Lord spake *concerning Israel and concerning Judah.*" They are not words concerning something else figuratively represented under the names of Israel and Judah, but words spoken by the Lord (solemn thought!) *concerning Israel and concerning Judah.* And what are those words? Not to quote again those already considered, hear what follows: "Because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after, Thus saith the lord,

Behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small." How precise and how emphatic is this testimony. "At the same time, saith the Lord (Jer. 31: 1) will I be the God of all *the families of Israel*, and they shall be my people." No longer Judah owned, while Israel or Ephraim (that is, the ten tribes) is cast off, but the Lord declaring Himself the God of *all the families of Israel*. No longer, "Lo-Ammi, not my people," written upon them: "they shall be my people." God remembers His ancient love to Israel. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have, loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." It is in all the freshness, and unfailing power and constancy of this love, that the Lord now takes up Israel again. "Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things." And when Israel, even the ten tribes, are thus restored, there is none of the old hostility to Judah, none of the old reluctance to own Jerusalem as the place where God has put His name. "For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God." The chief of the nations are called on to sing with gladness for Jacob, and to publish the praises of the Lord who restores them. For, "Behold," says the Lord, "I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coast of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child, and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, (all their hardness of heart will then have been removed,) and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." Nor let it be supposed that these touching declarations of God's interest in His people, and care over them, at this epoch of their approaching restoration, are intended for their own comfort alone. *Universal attention is called to the subject.* All nations have witnessed Israel's downfall, and long and complicated afflictions, and all nations are called on to observe God's mercy in their restoration. "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." Then, let me ask my reader, whether anything can surpass the beauty of the description which follows — a description of the results of this restoration of Israel? Ah, when God does in His word condescend to sketch a scene of earthly prosperity, (connected, of course, with spiritual blessing,) none can group the objects, or combine the colours, or mingle the light and shade, as He does! "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden: and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." What a picture. The full heart overflowing in songs of praise, where praise has so long been silent, in the height of Zion — the goodness of the Lord the attractive centre around which all are gathered, and to which all flow together — every expression of this goodness, even in present plenty — the good things of this life no longer a snare to the heart, but the possession

of them combined with spiritual fertility to the full — sorrow excluded for ever — young and old, virgin and married wife, joining to evince their cheerfulness and delight — sorrow and mourning only mentioned as being past, and mentioned thus to mark the contrast between past and present; the whole picture closing, as it begins, with the goodness of the Lord - *there* as recorded in songs of praise, *here* as satisfying the souls both of the people and of the priests!

It is in Israel, restored Israel, that this picture is to be realized, and more than realized. Israel's is an earthly calling. When under law, they failed to fulfil the conditions on which was suspended the continued enjoyment of earthly blessing; and hence they failed to retain possession of it, even when, in Joshua's and Solomon's day, God had bestowed it so largely upon them. When, in days to come, grace shall restore and save them, and when they shall stand in grace, no longer holding their blessings on the tenure of their own obedience, their blessings — the blessings distinctive of their calling and position — will still be earthly. Ours is a heavenly calling. The Church is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Saints now have no portion on earth save to share the rejection of their Lord; and the proximate object of our hope is not Christ's coming to gather Israel and restore all things, but to receive us to Himself in glory; in which glory we shall appear with Him when He appears, and reign with Him when He reigns — Israel and the earth being happy and at rest under the joint reign of Christ and His glorified saints — His body — His Bride.

This is our hope. May our hearts be true to it! If they are, everything that God has been pleased to reveal, as to the scene of glory and blessing which heaven and earth united shall present to His eye, in the coming "dispensation of the fulness of times," must be interesting to our souls. May we indeed find it so!

Further inquiries as to Israel and the millennial kingdom will demand our attention. May we be divinely prepared for them, and find them fruitful, as a means of truly building us up in Christ!