

Israel's Restoration Introductory to Millennial Blessedness.

Paper 8 of 20 'Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects'.

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Ere we enter on the direct consideration of this subject, it may be well to observe, that there are predictions in the Old Testament of an event long since accomplished, viz, the return from Babylon of a remnant of the Jews after a captivity of seventy years. Some, who have not examined the subject, suppose that all the predictions of Israel's return refer to this event: or, if they meet with any which cannot possibly be so explained, they interpret them as applying in a spiritual sense to Christianity, or to the Church of God as it exists on earth, during the present dispensation. For the sake of any of my readers who may be perplexed by these thoughts, I would here mention a number of marks, by which the student of the prophetic word may distinguish the predictions which relate to Israel's future restoration from those which were fulfilled in the return from Babylon, in the days of Cyrus, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

1. There are many passages which predict the restoration of *all the tribes* - of Israel, as well as of Judah — and the union of the whole in one nation, in their own land. At the return from Babylon, it was but a few Jews, properly so called, who were restored. The ten tribes have never returned; and the vast majority even of the Jews remained in the places where they had been carried captive. All predictions, therefore, of a *universal* restoration, must yet remain to be fulfilled.

2. One passage at least, Isa. 11: 11, speaks of a "second" restoration of Israel. This could not be the return from Babylon, which was but the first restoration. What other has there been since that time? Must not then the *second* restoration be one yet to come?

3. Where miraculous events are foretold in connection with Israel's restoration, it must be a future one that is treated of. No such events attended the return from Babylon.

4. Where it is declared that the nation shall be converted as well as restored, there can be no question that the restoration is a future one. Were the Jews converted at the return from Babylon?

5. Many passages declare, that after the nation of Israel is restored, they shall not fall any more into sin, or see trouble any more, Can these passages apply to the return from Babylon? Has not their great, their crowning sin — and have not their heaviest calamities — been since that event?

6. Where the restoration of Israel is declared to be connected with the utter and final overthrow of those who have hated them, and trodden them down, it must be a yet future

restoration which is foretold. No such overthrow of all their enemies was connected with the return of the Jews from Babylon.

7. The prophecies of Israel's restoration which were written after the return from Babylon, cannot be in any way construed to refer to that event. Such are the predictions of Zechariah and Haggai; and such also are those contained in the New Testament.

8. Those predictions of Israel's return which connect it with the coming of Christ, must refer to a yet future restoration. We all know that no restoration of Israel took place in connection with Christ's first coming; and the return from Babylon was not connected either with His first coming or His second.

9. Where Israel's restoration is associated, in prophecy, with the introduction of millennial blessedness, it must be obvious to all, that it is a future restoration which is foretold. The Millennium did not commence with the return from Babylon. Alas, it has never commenced even to this day!

This brings me, however, to the definite subject of this paper — the connection between the restoration of Israel and the introduction of millennial blessing. The Scripture proofs of this connection have to be laid before my readers. This cannot be done without gathering from Scripture still further instruction as to the fact itself of Israel's restoration. Ample proof of this fact was exhibited in our last; but the subject was far from being exhausted. Further light will unavoidably be shed upon it in the prosecution of our present inquiry.

The writer by no means forgets, that many strong and deeply-rooted prepossessions of many of his readers, are likely to be enlisted against the doctrine which he seeks to establish from the word of God. The idea is so generally entertained that Christianity as it now exists is to spread universally, and that the world is to be converted by the blessing of God on means now in operation — that one cannot be ignorant of the strong resistance which a contrary doctrine is sure to encounter in many minds. Then, besides, there is not only our natural fondness for opinions generally entertained by others, and long held by ourselves, but there is, in this case, to be encountered, all the force of our natural unwillingness to plead guilty to a solemn charge, and to acquiesce in the justice of a sentence, which sets us aside and replaces us by others. But let me entreat my Christian readers to consider, that a doctrine cannot be proved true by the number of its adherents, or by the length of time during which it has been generally received. Much less is a doctrine true because it is soothing to ourselves, or palatable to men in general. The one, only, infallible test of the truth of any doctrine is, What saith the word of God? It may be a view long held and fondly cherished by us; or it may be a doctrine newly presented for our consideration; the great, the all-important question in either case, *and in every case*, is, What saith the Scripture? "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It is to this word, and to this alone, that our present appeal is made. The Lord grant to us, that we may have grace to abide by its divine and unfailing decisions.

The eleventh of Romans has already been twice under review. First, we considered its solemn testimony to the now inevitable excision of the Gentile professing body — of

Christendom. Secondly, we listened to its assurances as to the natural branches, that God is able to graff them in again; and that, when the wild, Gentile branches are broken off, they, the natural branches, shall be graffed again into their own olive tree. Let us now, a third time, hearken to the testimony of this same chapter, as to the results of this amazing change. "Now if the fall of them (the Jews, the natural branches) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, HOW MUCH MORE THEIR FULNESS?" Again, "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?" Rom. 11: 15. Could any evidence be more decisive than this? Does not the apostle here admit, what every one may perceive, that the present setting aside of the Jews has been the occasion of the extension to us Gentiles of the blessings of Christianity? Their fall has been thus the riches of the world, their loss the riches of the Gentiles, their casting away the reconciling of the world. The ministry of reconciliation, with all its attendant and consequent blessings, has come to us through the cutting off of the natural branches. Their rejection of Christ, on account of which they are for a time rejected, has been the occasion of His being proclaimed as the universal Saviour. But if the Gentiles — the world — have profited thus largely by Israel's fall, what will be the result of Israel's restoration? — the result to the Gentiles — to the world? What will it be but still greater blessing — life from the dead? Such is the reasoning of the Holy Ghost in this wondrous chapter. How clear, then, that universal blessedness will not be introduced by the perpetuation and extension of the present Gentile dispensation, but by the restoration of Israel, when Christendom has been cut off for its non-continuance in God's goodness? No wonder that, in view of all this, the apostle should say, "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." Inattention to this revealed mystery has had the effect which the apostle dreaded in case it had not been revealed. It was disclosed lest we Gentiles should be wise in our own conceit; and we have become so, through our neglect or misapprehension of what has been revealed. Instead of seeing that the continuance, in our hands, of the ministry of reconciliation, depended on our continuance in God's goodness; instead of confessing that we have not continued in it, and that so there is nothing before us, on earth, but the cutting off of the whole Gentile professing body, while the receiving of the natural branches is to be the harbinger and dawn of universal blessing; instead of seeing this, and meekly bowing our heads and adoring the grace which makes sure to the true believer a heavenly glory far brighter, a heavenly portion far richer, than that forfeited on earth by our sad unfaithfulness, in which we have shared the responsibility of the whole of Christendom, and on account of which judgment is at the door; instead of seeing this, and going softly, as became us, we have indeed become wise in our own conceits; we have fancied that Israel was set aside for ever, and that to Gentile Christians was entrusted, and that by Gentile Christians instrumentally should be accomplished, — the conversion of the world: in a word, that the Millennium itself should be but the universal spread and dominion of Christianity as it now exists. How we should have been preserved from all these vain conceits, had we but paid reverent regard to the mystery here disclosed to us by the apostle! The end of apostate Judaism was judgment. The end of apostate Gentile Christianity will be judgment also. But just as blessing came to us, when judgment fell upon the Jew, so when judgment falls on Christendom, blessing will be restored to Israel: and Israel's restoration will be still fuller blessing to the world than any which it has had in the present dispensation; it will be as "life from the dead!" Dear reader, can you prayerfully and impartially peruse the chapter on which we are meditating, and not see that this is its doctrine throughout?

If any one should inquire how this is to be reconciled with the statement, that it is "till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" that partial blindness has happened to Israel; and that it is then when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, that all Israel is to be saved, this is the reply: — the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles cannot mean the conversion of all the Gentiles, inasmuch as the previous part of the chapter itself speaks of fuller blessing to the Gentiles — to the world — through the reception of Israel than through its fall. If all the Gentiles have been brought into blessing prior to the restoration of Israel, how can this event, and its effects upon the Gentiles — upon the world — be thus spoken of, and in this chapter too, by the apostle? We must not suppose that one part of Scripture contradicts another; and this would be to suppose that one verse contradicts another in the same chapter! "If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, HOW MUCH MORE their fulness?" Could the Holy Ghost have said this, if all the Gentiles were to be converted prior to Israel's conversion and restoration? Impossible! We are compelled therefore to seek for another meaning of the phrase "till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." And whether we possess spiritual intelligence to give the true meaning of the phrase or not, it requires but little to see with certainty, that such a meaning as would contradict the testimony of God in the former part of the same chapter, cannot be entertained for a moment.

My own conviction is, that the phrase is best explained by reference to the words of James, (Acts 15: 14,) "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." When God has accomplished this work, the fulness of the Gentiles will be come in. And, without going into the detail of the passage at present, I would notice how beautifully James' words illustrate the whole doctrine of Rom. 11. Having quoted from Simeon as above, James proceeds thus, "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." We must not suppose that the apostle is rigidly quoting the words of Amos, is having their full accomplishment in the fact stated by Simeon; or, that when he says, "To this agree the words of the prophets, After this I will return," etc., he would intimate that Amos had been treating of the fact stated by Simeon, and that it was in reference to this fact the words it after this were used by Amos. No; he quotes both Simeon and Amos, to justify, in a general way, the reception of Gentile and Jewish believers on equal terms. But, then, he does more than this, Himself full of the Holy Ghost, and speaking by inspiration, he recognizes that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world;" and taking this wide, comprehensive survey of God's ways, he himself, with the perfect wisdom of the Spirit, adjusts the words of Amos to those of Simeon, so as to exhibit the general order, the grand outline, of God's dispensations. First, God's taking out of the Gentiles a people. for His name. Secondly, and after this, the building up of the tabernacle of David, and the repairing of its ruins. Then, thirdly, the residue of men seeking after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom the Lord's Name shall then be called. Can we fail to trace here the general correspondence of this testimony of James, with that of Paul in Rom. 11. The one speaks of God's taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name; the other of salvation having come to the Gentiles by the fall of Israel. The one speaks of the prostrate tabernacle of David being reared up afresh; the other of the natural branches being grafted in again, and of all Israel being saved. The one speaks of the residue of men then seeking after the Lord, *with all the*

Gentiles; the other of the receiving of Israel being as life from the dead — of Israel's fulness bringing far more abundant blessing to the Gentiles — to the world — than Israel's present setting aside. How harmonious these divine revelations! And how establishing to the heart to trace this harmony, and see how one scripture illustrates and confirms another.

In turning to the Old Testament, the natural repository of divine instruction on such a subject as the one before us, I would, for the sake of convenient reference, and the easy testing of all that may be advanced by the word of God itself, arrange in numbered sections the evidence adduced. And let me beg my readers, above all things, to examine the Scriptures for themselves. Take nothing on trust from any one, but "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good."

1. It is well worthy of remark; that the very first mention of the Lord's reign in Scripture is when Israel is first manifested as a nation on the banks of the Red Sea. It has been noticed that "when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Israel was God's great central thought in these providential arrangements. This was prior, not only to Israel's existence as a nation, but even to the call of Abraham. Israel was not manifested as a nation till the epoch of the redemption out of Egypt. Numerous and continually increasing as the people were, they were but Hebrew slaves of the Egyptians, who kept them in bondage. By judgment on the Egyptians — judgment from which they, the children of Israel, were delivered by the blood of the passover — they were redeemed out of the land of Egypt. Pharaoh and his hosts, who assayed to follow them through the crystal avenue, were drowned by the returning waves: and it is in the song of triumph in which Moses and Israel celebrate the overthrow of their oppressors, that we have the first mention of the Lord's reign. "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. THE LORD SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER." Thus we find that the earliest prophetic announcement of Jehovah's reign associates it with Israel's occupancy of their land, and Jehovah's residence among them, in the sanctuary established by His hands.

2. The Lord did actually reign over Israel from their redemption out of Egypt till the days of Samuel. He not only reigned by that unseen providence in which, as we know, He governs all worlds, and superintends the affairs of the whole universe; but in such a sense, that instead of Israel's having a king like the nations around them, *they had the Lord Himself for their king*. His laws were those by which the nation was governed; and the entire administration of them was by officers of His appointment. HE WAS KING. All the functions of royalty, which in other nations were exercised by human monarchs, were in Israel exercised by the Holy One, who dwelt unseen between the cherubim in the most holy place. All the surrounding nations, too, were dealt with by Him according to two principles, both of which had respect primarily to Israel. On the one hand, when Israel was obedient, God gave them the ascendancy over surrounding nations; while, on the other hand, He used those nations to chastise Israel in case of their disobedience. It was in the midst of Israel that He dwelt; it was over Israel that He reigned; but surrounding nations were dealt with by Him according to the relations in which they stood to Israel. All this continued till Samuel's day, when, as my readers are well aware, the children of Israel rejected the Lord from being their King, and desired a King like the nations round about.

3. The change which ensued on the circumstances just referred to, has been already considered in the paper on *"Israel in the Past and Present."* We saw there how God took occasion from Israel's sin to introduce what He had purposed from the beginning, namely, royal power in the hands of David and his Seed. We saw, too, that in the covenant with David there were conditional promises, which his mere human offspring might and did forfeit by their unfaithfulness; but that there were also unconditional promises, made sure in Him who is at once David's son and David's Lord: that He is the heir of all the unfailing power and glory promised to David's house. We traced, moreover, the sin and rebellion which led to the overturning of David's throne, the Lord's throne on which David and his offspring had been placed, and saw that there was no re-establishment of this throne at the return from Babylon. The true Heir of it was born and presented to Israel, (or the Jews, to speak more strictly) but they crucified their King, and rejected the message of mercy through His blood when He had ascended on high, and the Holy Ghost had been poured out at Jerusalem. It is thus that they are still under wrath, and have even heavier inflictions to endure, at the very close of this long period of tribulation, than any which they have yet endured. But we have seen how amply Scripture foretells their restoration in days to come: no fewer than nine marks have been given, which distinguish this future restoration from the only one which has ever taken place, the return from Babylon; and we are now considering the proof afforded by Old Testament prophecies, that the Millennium, or universal kingdom of Christ, is to be introduced, in connection with this restoration of Israel in days to come. The points thus mentioned are recapitulated thus, that the reader may better estimate the force and application of the prophecies about to be quoted.

4. There is another point of which it is well to be reminded. It has been largely proved in previous papers, that it is by desolating judgments on the wicked, that the Millennium is to be ushered in; and, in our last, we saw that when the period of Israel's dispersion and tribulation terminates, the cup of trembling is to be taken out of Israel's hands, and put into the hands of their enemies and oppressors. Now, we shall find these things most intimately connected in prophecy. The judgments by which the Millennium is introduced, are emphatically those judgments by which God punishes and destroys Israel's enemies and oppressors, and are connected thus with Israel's restoration. We shall find a whole class of passages which inseparably link together these three things: — Israel's restoration — judgment on their adversaries — and the introduction of millennial blessing. Let us examine one or two of them.

The passage in which the very words occur which have just been cited, is one of the most remarkable of this class. "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. Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. . . . How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord

hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." (Isa. 51: 21 - 52: 10.) Will any one dispute, that when the Lord makes bare His arm *in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth see the salvation of God*, the Millennium will have arrived? Are not these words used by Christians continually, as expressive of their anticipations of millennial blessing? How does the passage before us show that it is introduced? *By Israel's restoration, and the transfer to their Gentile oppressors, of the cup of bitterness they have so long had to drink.*

Another passage of this class we have in Joel 3 "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, *when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I WILL ALSO GATHER ALL NATIONS*, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, *and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel*, whom, they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." This, one would suppose, is explicit enough. The epoch treated of, is that at which the Lord shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem; the divine declaration is, that at that epoch the Lord will also gather all nations; and the object for which He determines thus to gather all nations, is to plead with them for Israel, His people, and His heritage, which they have so sorely oppressed. This great gathering of all nations is farther treated of in the same chapter. After a few intervening verses, we have these words: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." In such a strain of solemn irony does God challenge His adversaries to the battle. He calls on them to summon all their forces, and to muster all their strength. "Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." Here, in this last clause, it is the prophet that speaks, invoking Jehovah's interposition to judge the assembled hosts. Nor does He turn a deaf ear to the appeal. "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." And what is to be the issue of this mighty crisis, in which God thus pleads the cause of His people Israel, and executes judgment on their Gentile oppressors? Who can read the remainder of the chapter, without perceiving that it is a prophetic description of millennial times? And who are they that occupy the foreground in the picture? *Restored Israel and Jerusalem.* "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountain shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." Can there be a doubt, in view of this whole passage, that Israel's restoration and God's judgment on the Gentile oppressors of that race, are events that will usher in millennial times?

5. Not only does prophecy reveal, that, as a matter of fact, the events which will usher in the Millennium, are the restoration of Israel, and the judgments with which, at Christ's second

coming, the apostate Gentiles will be visited; it also declares that restored Israel will be instrumental in subjugating the world to Christ's sway, and in filling it with blessing. The Scripture evidence of this will be found in three classes of passages. First, those which speak of the moral effect on men's souls, of God's wonderful interposition on Israel's behalf. Secondly, the passages which set forth Israel's positive action, as the instrument of God's righteous judgments. Thirdly, the passages which foretell the exercise, by restored Israel, of a more genial, beneficent influence on the other nations of the earth. Space will not allow of more than a brief selection from each class.

(a.) As to the moral effect on men's souls of Israel's restoration, and the stupendous interpositions of Divine power with which it will be accompanied, let us glance at Isaiah 12. The whole chapter is the sequel to that remarkable prophecy of Israel's restoration, which the previous chapter contains, and which was considered so fully in "*Israel's Future Restoration*." The connection between the two chapters is marked in the opening words of the one before us. "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." Such is the introduction to this majestic anthem, in which restored Israel is to celebrate the forgiving mercy of Jehovah, her Redeemer. Consider what follows, a verse or two further on: "And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord: for he hath done excellent things: **THIS IS KNOWN IN ALL THE EARTH 1**" Jehovah's doings in the restoration of His ancient people, are not only to be celebrated by themselves, but in so celebrating them they are represented as recognizing that they are *universally known* — "known in all the earth."

The passage quoted and examined at some length in "*Israel's Future Restoration*," (Jer. 16: 14-21,) is to the same effect, but it goes more into detail as to the actual effect produced on the nations. It is the passage in which we are told, that Israel's redemption out of Egypt shall be eclipsed by their future restoration; the passage in which we are told of many fishers who shall fish them, and many hunters who shall hunt them, from the mountains, hills, and holes of the rocks. And what is to be the effect of this mighty interposition of God's power? "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 this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; **AND THEY SHALL KNOW THAT MY NAME IS JEHOVAH.**" From the call of Abraham, he and his offspring, the nation that sprung from his loins, have been God's chosen witnesses that there is but one God, and that Jehovah is He. Israel, as we saw, entirely failed in this testimony, and hence their subjugation by the Gentiles, and their long captivity and dispersion. The Church's testimony, as we have also seen, is of another character. It is a testimony to the perfect grace in which she stands, and the accomplished redemption in which that grace has been manifested towards her. It is as Father that she knows God, through Jesus, by the Holy Ghost; and it is as Father, in all the grace of that wondrous name, that she is called to make Him known. But when the Church has been translated to the glory in which she is to be manifested with Jesus, and the sentence of utter excision has taken effect on that which falsely bears the name of the Church, God will resume His dealings with the earth, and it is then that idolatry will cease from among men. Israel, the chosen witness to God's unity, shall become such

indeed and of a truth. God's power and glory shall be so displayed in Israel's restoration, and so displayed before all, that the Gentiles shall cast away their idols as profitless things; and thus shall be accomplished the word on which we are meditating, "Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; AND THEY SHALL KNOW THAT MY NAME IS JEHOVAH."

Another remarkable passage is Jer. 33: 9. It is introduced as follows, and the reader may see in this, its moral connection with the passage just examined. "Thus saith Jehovah,* the maker thereof, Jehovah that formed it, to establish it; JEHOVAH IS HIS NAME." The passage proceeds to treat of Jerusalem's restoration, and of Judah and Israel's return. "And I will cause the captivity of Judah, and the captivity of Israel, to return, and will build them as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me!" And what is to be the effect on the nations? "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." In Israel's restoration and conversion, and in all the earthly blessing with which this event shall be succeeded, there shall be even to the senses of mankind such a display of God's being, and power, and faithfulness, — yea, and of His abounding grace, in pardoning and blessing thus the guilty nation who stained their hands with Messiah's blood, — that all the nations of the earth shall hear, *and shall fear and tremble* for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity, that Jehovah procures to the nation and city of His choice!

*It is the word Jehovah in the Hebrew.

Passage upon passage in Ezekiel bears the same testimony. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; AND. THE HEATHEN SHALL KNOW THAT I AM JEHOVAH, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen (it is thus this mighty and world-wide impression is to be produced) and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." (Ezek. 36: 23, 24.) This passage needs no comment — it speaks for itself. So also another passage in the same chapter. "And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, and desolate, and ruined cities, are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen, that are left round about you, shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." Then again, in Ezek. 38:, after predicting the incursions and overthrow of Gog and his hosts, "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations; AND THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM JEHOVAH." Testimonies such as these might be greatly multiplied: But surely these place it beyond question, that the great moral effect, upon all nations, of Israel's restoration will be, that Jehovah, the one true God, will become universally known.

(b.) There are many passages which foretell that Israel will be actually employed in executing God's judgments on the obstinately wicked and rebellious. This is a work in which the saints of the present dispensation could not, at least while in their earthly condition,* be employed. The present is a dispensation of pure, perfect grace, and the Church's place that of

treading in the steps of Him "who, when he suffered, took it patiently," and on the cross exclaimed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." But just as certainly is there a dispensation of *righteousness* to succeed the present dispensation of *grace*. And as Abraham was used to execute judgment on the confederated kings, as Israel was used to destroy the guilty inhabitants of Canaan, and as David was raised up of God to subdue the wicked nations round about Israel, so will Israel again be used as one of God's instruments in executing judgment on the wicked — in executing those judgments by which, as we have seen so largely, Israel's enemies will be overthrown, and the millennial period introduced. I shall content myself with little more than barely quoting a few plain passages in proof of this. In Psalm 149, one of the closing prophetic hallelujahs of the book, we read, "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." It is of Israel, therefore, that the psalm treats. The saints of whom it speaks are Jewish or Israelitish saints. And of them it says, "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron: to execute upon them the judgment written; this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord." What fearful consequences have resulted from misapprehending and misapplying such a scripture as this! How has the sword thus been put into the hands of those whose only testimony and service should have been one of pure, patient, unresisting love and grace, the reflection and expression of the grace in which God has abounded toward us, requiting his enemies by the gift of His only-begotten Son for their salvation! But such a passage as the above is not to be disregarded, however manifestly inapplicable to ourselves it may be. There are to be those who will be used thus as instruments of God's retributive righteousness; and it is to restored Israel pre-eminently that this place is assigned. Turn to Isa. 41: 14-16: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." This is figurative language; but can there be any doubt that the execution of judgment is that which the figures employed express? See also Micah 5: 7-9: "And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off." Nor is this mere human warfare, undertaken from human motives, and conducted for selfish, worldly ends. Israel will be but the instrument in God's hand of executing His judgments on the wicked. "And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." (Verse 15.) No wonder that when it is God acting by them thus it should be said in Micah 7: 15-17, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee." How emphatic, too, is Zechariah's testimony, or, rather, God's testimony by Zechariah: "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and

shall go with whirlwinds of the south." (Zech. 9: 13, 14.) Again, "And they shall be is mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded. And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy on them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them." (Zech. 10: 5, 6.) In Zech. 12 we read of Jerusalem being made a cup of trembling to all the people round about, and a burdensome stone for all people. Then, in verse 6, "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like all hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem." Finally, in Zech. 14: 14, we are told, "and Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem:" and the reader must recollect that this is in the midst of a chapter which treats of the final conflict, in which the Lord Himself shall come, attended by all His saints, and which is to issue, as the chapter itself informs us, in that blissful period in which "the Lord shall be king overall the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord and his name one." (Verse 9.)

*It is indeed a part of their future portion, when glorified with Christ, to be employed in the execution of judgment. (See Rev. 2: 26, 27.)

(c.) Let not my readers, however, suppose that the execution of judgment on the nations, and the moral effect of God's interposition thus, are the only ways in which restored Israel will be instrumental in subjugating the world to the dominion of Jehovah. There are passages which clearly foretell the exercise by Israel of a more genial, beneficent influence — an influence by means of which the whole world will be filled with blessing. In Isa. 25: 6-8 we read, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the for the Lord hath spoken it." There can be no difficulty as to what is meant by "this mountain." The only mountain mentioned in the context is Mount Zion. The previous chapter treats of the awful judgments by which the earth is to be desolated. The last verse of the chapter declares, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." There is no mention of any other mountain till in the words just quoted, in which we are told that "in this mountain" the Lord of hosts shall make a feast unto all people; and that "in this mountain" the face of the covering and the veil spread over all nations is to be destroyed. The removal of the universal darkness under which men labour, and their ample refreshment, set forth under the figure of a feast, are both to take place in connection with "this mountain." It is from "this mountain" that those influences are to go forth which are to enlighten and refresh the inhabitants of all lands.

In Isa. 27: 6, we have further evidence in the testimony of a passage, if possible, still more unmistakably plain and to the point. In the closing verses of Isa. 26: God invites His people to enter into their chambers, and shut their doors, and hide themselves as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. "For, behold," says the prophet, "the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity! The earth also shall disclose

her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Chap. 27 begins with these words, "In that day," etc., thus plainly showing that the two chapters form but one prophecy, and identifying the events predicted in the one with the epoch so solemnly portrayed in the close of the other. And what is it to which this solemn epoch of judgment is introductory? This is the answer: "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: ISRAEL, SHALL BLOSSOM AND BUD, AND FILL THE FACE OF THE WORLD WITH FRUIT." Surely this is a testimony explicit enough! Paul tells us that the natural branches are to be grafted in again; Isaiah himself informs us in Isa. 6, after foretelling Israel's judicial blindness, and the long-continued desolation of the land, "Nevertheless, there shall still be in it a tenth, and it shall return and shall be to be consumed, as the oak and the tei tree, which being cut down have still the trunk; (or the rooted stump;) thus the holy seed shall be their stock:"* and here, in the passage before us, the holy seed, having been preserved through the judgments, are spoken of as taking root, while the prophet declares that, as the result, "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the whole world with fruit." Surely this testimony would be decisive if no other could be produced.

*This is said to be a more exact rendering of the Hebrew than we have in our English version.

But there are many. Scripture bears one testimony throughout, let it be uttered by ever so many voices, or recorded by ever so many pens. Turn to Hosea 2. Bear in mind that there are two ways in which the nation of Israel is viewed. It is sometimes viewed according to the divine purpose, and then, as we know, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance: Israel is still beloved for the fathers' sakes; and there remains, as in the passage last quoted, a rooted stump, from which the most luxuriant verdure and abundant fruit are yet to spring. But Israel is often viewed in respect to God's actual manifested government, and then, as we know, the nation is for the present set aside, and Lo-ruhamah — not having obtained mercy, and Lo-ammi — not my people, are written upon it of God. This is the light in which Hosea views the subject. Accordingly, the figure employed, is not that of fresh life and beauty and fertility from an old rooted stump, but it is the figure of an entire new beginning, *a sowing of seed*. But what is the seed? Let the prophet answer. Speaking of Israel as an unfaithful wife, and portraying the unexampled love with which her dishonoured Lord not only receives her, but woos her to return to Him, He says, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, (matchless grace!) as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt and in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." Is it not of millennial times — times of universal peace and safety — that all this is spoken? "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." And now let the reader ponder what follows. "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. AND I WILL SOW HER UNTO ME IN THE EARTH; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." Let us consider this. "In that

day," — the day of Israel's restoration "I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens." Now we know from the New Testament, that in that day "the heavens" will be occupied by Christ and His glorified saints. Jehovah will hear the heavens. "And they shall hear the earth." Christ, in whom all things both in heaven and in earth will then be gathered, will be the One to whom prayer shall be addressed from all on earth, even as it will be through Him and His glorified saints, that blessing will be universally administered. "And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil." No want, no scarcity, then. The voice of complaining will have ceased to be heard in the streets. Creation's universal groan will have been hushed; yea, it will have given place to universal hymns of gratitude and praise. "And they shall hear Jezreel." Now Jezreel, as scholars tell us, means, "the seed of God;" and this interpretation of the word is confirmed by what immediately follows: "*And I will sow her unto me in the earth.*" Who is it that is thus spoken of? There has been but one subject treated of in the chapter, to which this feminine term can apply — Israel, under the figure of an unfaithful wife, whose restoration has been so affectingly foretold. It is of her that it is said, "I will sow her unto me in the earth;" she is the "Jezreel," "the seed of God," from the sowing of which this harvest of universal blessing is to spring; and if there wanted confirmation of this, it is in the next words: "and I will have mercy upon her (mark this, the same word "her") that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." Sentence of "Lo-ruhamah," and "Lo-ammi," had been in Hosea 1: 6, 9, pronounced upon the nation. This sentence is to be reversed; and its reversal is to usher in the glorious period of which this magnificent prophecy treats. There shall be one unbroken chain of blessing, from the throne of Jehovah, the great source of all, down to the enjoyment by mankind of all the blessings of this life: and the place in this wondrous chain filled by restored Israel is that of Jezreel, the seed of God, sown by Jehovah, and to Him, in the earth, and filling, as we learn from the passage previously considered, the face of the world with fruit. Jehovah - the heavens occupied by Christ and the Church in glory — the earth — restored Israel, or Jezreel, the seed of God — universal blessing on the earth, even to abundance of corn, and wine, and oil, while war and violence are at an end, and "the glory of the Lord is revealed, and all flesh see it together!" Praise, eternal praise, to Him who alone doeth wondrous things! Let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.