

The Millennium.

Paper 18 of 20 'Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects'.

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The word Millennium, as most of our readers are aware, simply denotes a thousand years; while the phrase "the Millennium," is universally understood to imply that period of universal peace and righteousness, which we learn from Rev. 20 is to be of a thousand years' continuance.

The Millennium, as Scripture portrays it to us, has its heavenly as well as its earthly aspect. It is to the former, that our attention has been directed, in examining the subject of the "First Resurrection." That subject discloses to us the persons whose reign, in resurrection-life and heavenly glory, will so wonderfully contribute to the blessedness of the earth and its inhabitants, throughout the Millennium. Our present object is to inquire into the condition of the earth and its population during that blissful era; as also to notice one or two topics of deepest interest relative to its introduction.

First, it is a mistake to suppose that the judgment executed on antichrist (see 2 Thess. 2: 8, and Rev. 19: 20,) at the coming of Christ with all His saints, is immediately succeeded by the full peace and blessedness of the millennial period. That period doubtless commences with the overthrow of antichrist. But the early part of the Millennium itself is characterized by the subjugation of Christ's foes — a work which we have no ground for concluding is accomplished in a moment. Babylon having been previously overthrown, (see Rev. 19: 2,) the destruction of antichrist certainly sets aside all that had been prominently acting in open antagonism to God; and it brings, moreover, the nation of Israel into open, acknowledged connection with Christ. But evidently there are judgments to be inflicted and enemies to be subdued, after the nation of Israel is dwelling peacefully in its land under the protection of Christ. "And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." (Micah 5: 5.) That the Assyrian comes there to his own destruction, numerous passages testify. The point to which we now direct attention is — that his coming, and therefore his destruction, are both at the time when Christ is Israel's peace. This He will not be in the days of antichrist. Even then, as has been fully shown, there will be a remnant seeking after God, and longing for the coming of their Messiah; but the nation, alas! will be in league with antichrist. Gog, moreover, whether or not he be the same as the Assyrian, is said to "come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and gathered out of many people." He is represented as saying,

I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." The prophet is directed "to prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God, In that day, when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come forth from thy place out of the north parts and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land." (Ezek. 38: 11-16.) It is manifest, therefore, that the incursion of this northern confederacy, and the awful judgment by which it is visited, are both subsequent to the return of Israel and their

peaceful establishment in the land, under the protection of their Messiah, and the smile and sanction of God.

Scripture witnesses also of judgments in Idumea, (Isaiah 34 and 63,) on Egypt, (Isaiah 19,) on Moab and Ammon, on Tyre and Sidon, (Ezek. 25-28;) besides which local judgments, we have predictions of others more widely diffused. "For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Isaiah 66: 16.) "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26: 9.) "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13: 41, 42.) The parable of the sheep and goats in Matt. 25 seems to picture forth to us a session of judgment distinct from all these in its character, and yet a judgment of living nations, at the commencement or introduction of Christ's kingdom. It is not in a moment that all these scenes of judgment will transpire.

The history of David's reign affords a striking type of this opening portion of the millennial period. That David in his sorrows, rejection, and exile, was a type of Christ, as the Stone refused by the builders, the whole Church of God has ever recognized. Nor can there be a doubt, that the rejected Stone becoming the head of the corner was typified by David's accession to the throne of Israel. It may not have been so generally discerned, that it requires both David's reign and that of Solomon to furnish the complete type of the millennial period. David reigned at Hebron for seven years before he reigned at Jerusalem. This period was one of conflict between the house of David and the house of Saul. But even after this, when owned as king by all the tribes, David was engaged in one continued series of conflicts with Israel's enemies all around. True, he was successful in these conflicts. His conquests extended far and near, for God was with him and gave him the necks of his enemies; but a period of conflict, however successful, is not one of tranquillity and repose. Solomon, as his name indicates, was the peaceful prince. And while David stands as the type of "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," it is in Solomon's reign we see the divine picture of the peaceful glories of Christ's kingdom. Psalm 72, which is entitled "A psalm for Solomon," has always been justly read as a magnificent prediction of millennial times. And how could there be a livelier representation of those times than in the history of that prince? "Judah and Israel were many; as the sands which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry. And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents and served Solomon all the days of his life. . . . For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphshah even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon." (1 Kings 4) But there is to be a David-reign as well as a Solomon-reign of Christ; and both are included in the thousand years. During a short portion of that period, Christ will be subduing His enemies by power, like David; and afterwards, through the remainder of the Millennium, He will reign in peace, like Solomon.

To turn to another point. When we speak of Christ subduing His enemies by power — of the Millennium being introduced by Christ's coming and the judgments to be then executed — we do not for a moment forget, that so far as the conversion of souls is concerned, the Agent by whom it will be accomplished then, even as at present, is the Holy Spirit. It is possible that, in

earnestly insisting on those truths which are generally neglected and forgotten, millenarians may have been in danger of taking for granted, and thus lightly passing over, such a generally acknowledged doctrine as the one just stated. But the prophetic word does not thus take it for granted and pass it over. It shows most clearly, the all important place which the operations of the Spirit fill, in connection with the introduction of millennial blessedness.

Foretelling the sad desolation of Israel's land on account of the nation's sin, the prophet predicts its continuance until, as he says, "the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." (Isaiah 32: 15.) The same prophet, anticipating Israel's forgiveness and restoration, records the following address: "Fear not, O Jacob my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." (Isa. 44: 25.) Nor is it merely at the commencement of the Millennium that this effusion of the Spirit takes place. He operates on the souls of the remnant even prior to the coming of Christ in judgment; and His presence with the nation after that epoch is never to cease. These points are both beautifully presented in Isaiah 59: 19-21. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." This will surely be accomplished in the remnant. "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." The coming of the Redeemer, and His coming to Zion, let it be observed, is not superseded, or rendered unnecessary, by this action of the Spirit on the souls of the remnant. It is in connection with the Redeemer's advent, His second advent, as Romans 11: 26, 27 incontestably proves, that the agency of the Spirit is here exhibited. That gracious agency is to be uninterrupted and perpetual. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy month, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

The well-known passages in Zechariah 12: 10, and Ezekiel 36: 25-27, both apply to Israel. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem) the spirit of grace and of supplications." "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." But while these promises of the Spirit are restricted to the nation of Israel, the prophecy of Joel extends much further. "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit." (Joel 2: 28, 29.) The relation of this passage to Israel's restoration, and to the final crisis of the world's affairs, has been already pointed out. (See "The Spared Remnant.") It is true, that there was at Pentecost a commenced fulfilment of this prophecy, the progress of which was interrupted by Jerusalem's final, definite rejection of the Gospel, when preached by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. The thread of God's dealings with Israel and the earth being thus

cut off, the interval which has since elapsed has been and is still occupied with the formation of Christ's heavenly body, the Church; and not until its completion will that thread be resumed. But when resumed, there will not be merely an effusion of the Holy Spirit on the Jewish remnant, or even on the whole Jewish nation, but on "all flesh." The judgments which immediately precede the Lord's coming — those which accompany that event - or those by which it is quickly succeeded, will have purged out the obstinately wicked of that generation; and the survivors, awed by those judgments, and compelled to bow to the sceptre of Jesus, will, by this universal outpouring of the Spirit, be generally turned in heart to the Lord. Numerous passages would appear to indicate thus much as to the original population of the millennial earth. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Isaiah 40: 5.) "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11: 9.) "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." (Psalm 98: 2, 3.) We are far from affirming, that these passages imply that every soul of man will be converted, even in the earliest stage of that period of universal blessing; but viewed in connection with the promised outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, they would indicate the all-but-universal conversion of the spared ones, who survive the judgments and form the nucleus of the earth's population during the thousand years. The generations to be born during the millennial period *may* not, and there are passages which indicate that they *will* not, be thus universally regenerate; still, the proportion of those who are so throughout, must be very great indeed.

But it is not merely in the vast number of persons truly converted that the distinctive blessedness of the Millennium consists. The conversion of souls has taken place under every dispensation which God has established since the fall, and will, no doubt, more abundantly than ever take place in that bright and coming dispensation. But the characteristics of the dispensation are to be found in that which relates to *the divine government of the earth*. As to the salvation of souls, it has always been by grace, through faith, and on the ground of Christ's redeeming work — His atoning sacrifice; and it has always been by the quickening power of God's Spirit that men have been regenerated, and thus turned in heart to God. These things will be as true in the Millennium as they have always been. But in the Millennium, the earth will be under the government — the *open, manifested government* — of Christ and His glorified saints. Satan, moreover, will be bound. These are the two features of that blessed period, which are prominently presented in Rev. 20; and they form, in fact, the great characteristics by which it is distinguished from every former period or dispensation.

The government of the earth, as is well known, was originally confided to Adam. When he had fallen, and subjected both himself and the creation over which he was placed to the dominion of the great deceiver, God did not at once introduce the Second Adam and establish His kingdom. In the curse pronounced on the serpent, there was an intimation of His coming, as the Seed of the woman, to bruise the serpent's head; while the mystery of His humiliation and sacrificial death was hinted at in the words, "Thou shalt bruise his heel." This precious light was afforded to faith, in whomsoever it might be found, throughout even the antediluvian age; but the race of mankind, as such, seem to have been left to make manifest what was in their hearts. The result is well known: the earth was filled with violence, and, by means of the flood, God interposed in judgment on the guilty, rebellious race.

A new order of things commenced with Noah. The judgment having vindicated God's holiness, and grace having triumphed in the deliverance of Noah and his house — the Lord having smelled, moreover, the sweet savour of Noah's burnt offerings, (types, as they doubtless were, of Christ's precious sacrifice,) He says in His heart, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." (Gen. 8: 22.) Under this covenant with creation, of which the bow in the cloud is the sign or token, the earth has continued till the present time, And will continue throughout the millennial period, till, the kingdom being delivered up by Christ to the Father, the heaven and the earth shall pass away, giving place to the new heaven and the new earth — the everlasting state — in which God shall be all in all. The Millennium is the last of those dispensations under which the earth and its inhabitants were to be placed, during the continuance of God's covenant with creation after the flood.

The establishment of this covenant was connected with the introduction of the simplest elements of judicial authority. To man, in the person of Adam, had been entrusted power over all the inferior tribes of living creatures; but we find no trace of the sceptre or the sword among men themselves, as ruling over, or subject to, one another, till the days of Noah. Then it was that the solemn principle was established, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. 9: 6.) This power in man's hand over the life of his fellow-man, as a restraint upon the violence which would otherwise fill the earth, is the fundamental principle of government, and characterizes all the ages, from the flood to the close of the millennial period. In that period, the government of the earth will be in the hand of Christ. In what other hands could it be the means of universal blessing?

Passing by the instances in which this power has been based on nothing but military success, or human will — instances of which Nimrod's kingdom is the first recorded example — it is well known that God has entrusted to man repeated grants of power, to be held and exercised in responsibility to Himself. The nations at large being left to their own ways on account of their idolatry, and Abraham being separated therefrom by the call of God, the nation that sprang from his loins became the scene of God's manifested government. Not to dwell on the period during which that government existed as a pure theocracy, God appointing first Moses, then Joshua, and afterwards raising up judges from time to time, we would remind our readers of David's elevation to the throne, and of God's covenant with him and with his house. To David and his offspring was the power of the sword entrusted, with the responsibility of using it according to the laws and directions of God himself. Such was their unfaithfulness to this deposit — so awfully did they employ this heaven-entrusted power in rebellion against God, and the slaughter of God's prophets and messengers — that they and their land were given up to judgment and desolation, and God's throne was removed from Jerusalem, the city of His choice. At that time God made another grant of power to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors among the Gentiles. This was unaccompanied by God's presence, and the direction of His laws, which had been connected with His throne at Jerusalem. The throne of the Lord was never set up at Babylon, but a man was placed there, to whom "the God of heaven gave a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory," informing him by the prophet, that wheresoever the children of men dwelt, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, had he given into his hand, and made him ruler over them

all. His kingdom was to be succeeded by another one, inferior to it, that by a third, and it also by a fourth, which was to be found in existence at the last great crisis, when God Himself should set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed — a kingdom that should not be left to other people, but which should break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and stand for ever. *That is the millennial kingdom*; and if it should be asked, "How can a kingdom be said to stand for ever, which is limited in its duration to a thousand years?" the answer is obvious. The passage itself defines the sense in which it is said to "stand for ever." These words do not imply that there will be a kingdom on earth to all eternity, but, that as long as there is a kingdom on earth, this one shall endure. *It "shall not be left to other people"* — that is, it shall not pass away, and be followed by a *sixth* empire, as the four previous kingdoms pass away and give place to this one. This shall be the last, the final monarchy. When Christ delivers it up to the Father, having put down all rule and all authority and power, it is not that another kingdom may be set up, but that *"God may be all in all."* All the dispensations having run their course, the unchanging, eternal state will ensue.

The reader can have no difficulty in distinguishing between the subject of God's gracious actings, in the salvation of souls by Jesus Christ, and the subject of God's government of the earth, as entrusted to the kings of Israel and Judah, and afterwards to the four Gentile empires. Why, then, should it be more difficult to distinguish them with regard to the Millennium? No doubt, when He who is the alone Saviour of souls (blessed be His name!) is also the King of the whole earth, the knowledge of Him as the Saviour will be diffused to a wonderful extent. But this is not what exclusively characterizes that blessed period. It is His reign, and the reign with Him of His risen and glorified saints, that constitute its grand distinction from every other period.

The seventh, as well as the second chapter of Daniel, presents us with prophetic emblems of the four great Gentile monarchies; and both chapters predict the existence of the fourth, till the moment of its destruction by God's judgment at the coming of Christ; a judgment accompanied by the transfer of universal dominion to Christ and (as foretold in Dan. 7.) to the heavenly saints. Should it be replied, that the fourth empire is not now in existence, the answer is that admitting the fact of its present non-existence in its united, consolidated form, Scripture provides for this apparent anomaly, by showing that its last form — that in which it is to be overthrown and destroyed — is one in which it has never yet existed, and to exist in which *it must reappear*. Even Daniel's prophecy establishes this fact; while the Revelation actually predicts the reappearance of the fourth empire, in an awful, blasphemous, Satanic form and character, leaving no room for surprise that it should be in its days that divine long-suffering reaches its limit, and gives place to righteous wrath and holy judgment. It is immediately upon the execution of this judgment, as foretold in Revelation 19 that in chapter 20 we have the binding of Satan, and the reign of Christ with the risen saints for a thousand years. Could there be more decisive evidence that the real character of the Millennium consists in the substitution of Christ's manifested rule, for that of all those to whom human government has been entrusted, but in whose hands (however great a blessing in itself, and on the whole, so long as upheld by God's secret providence) it has been used for self-aggrandisement, oppression of the poor and of God's people, and, at last, for open and blasphemous revolt against God?

Endeavour then, dear reader, to realize what would be the condition of a kingdom, under the absolute government of a monarch so wise as never to make one single mistake, so equitable

as to deal even-handed justice to all, so tender-hearted as to rule with the gentlest sway, so pious and benevolent as to seek no object but the glory of God and the well-being of his subjects, and so powerful as to secure the absolute submission of all within the sphere of his dominions! What a kingdom! But when we think of such a kingdom, as extending over the whole earth, and embracing all nations within its limits; and when we understand that Christ Himself is to be its Head and Lord, and that the risen saints are to be His associates on the throne, all language fails, and the heart can only find relief in adoration too profound to be expressed!

The binding of Satan is another feature of the millennial period, very essentially distinguishing it from all preceding dispensations. Our Lord describes him as "a murderer from the beginning," who "abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." "When he speaketh a lie," says the same blessed One, "he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it." (John 8: 44.) No wonder that a world subject to such a deceiver and destroyer should be the theatre of rebellion and the vale of tears which this world actually is! Not only did Satan deceive our first parents, and thus corrupt human nature in its original stock; he has since been permitted to exercise his malevolent power in actively deceiving, and still further corrupting, the successive generations of mankind. It was the true character of his murderous reign which was evinced in the antediluvian world, from the shedding of the first blood spilled by man's hand, to the scenes of matured wickedness by which the earth was filled with violence, only to be repressed by the flood which swept the whole race from off the earth. Occupying, with his angels, the created heavens, Satan succeeded after the deluge in leading men to idolatry, which Scripture declares to be the worship of devils. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God." (Deut. 32: 17.) The things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." (1 Cor. 10: 20.) It becomes evident thus, that all the horrible superstitions, impurities, cruelties, and enormities of paganism are but the genuine expression of the character of Satan's rule. Even Israel, God's redeemed and chosen nation, he succeeded in ensnaring to the same awful wickedness. It is of Israel that the passage in Deut. 32 speaks. And whatever amount of good may have been wrought at any time amongst men by the rich and sovereign grace of God, the effects of this grace being entrusted to man's responsibility, Satan has always succeeded in marring and corrupting them. The reign of David and that of Solomon form an illustrious era in Israel's history; but it bears the marks both of human weakness and of Satan's successful wiles. The sons of Zeruah were too strong for David; and worse than that, the pride and lusts of his own heart were too strong for him, when stimulated and called into play by the enemy. "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." Solomon was in his old age turned away from the Lord, and the disruption of his kingdom on his son's accession to the throne bore a mournful testimony that Satan was still it large, and that the reign of the promised Seed of David had not yet arrived. Even after the return from Babylon, Satan is seen as the accuser and adversary of Jerusalem. (Zech. 3.) In the New Testament, Satan's workings are still more clearly brought to light. Daring to become the tempter of the Holy One, his efforts are, for the first time since the world began, completely foiled, and he retires before the rebuke of Jesus, departing from him for a little season. Put to shame by the steadfastness of the Second Adam, the woman's seed, he gathers all his forces, and urges and leads them on to the rejection and murder of God's blessed Son. Proved thus the prince and god of this world, in the death of Jesus, he receives the death-blow to his own power. Jesus dies; but in dying He cancels Satan's claims and seals his doom. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12: 31.) but this judgment has not yet been executed. The apostle speaks of him as

"the god of this world," as "the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;" and while it is undoubtedly true that, as believers in Christ, we are already delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we are continually cautioned against the wiles of the devil, and told that as a roaring lion he goeth about, seeking whom he may devour. The world is still under his yoke and energized by his power; and it is as having the imperial power of this world under his direction and control that he is seen in heaven, in Rev. 12, as a great red dragon, with the characteristic marks of the fourth Gentile empire, seven heads and fell horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. As long as the created heavens retain him, he is not only "the ruler of the darkness of this world," but also "the accuser of the brethren;" and it is only by "the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony" that they can overcome him, and often only by "not loving their lives unto the death." "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits (see margin) in heavenly places." (Eph. 6: 12.) Had she been faithful in these conflicts, what a bright vessel of God's testimony and grace might the Church have been! How would her rejected Lord have been glorified in her! But, alas! the testimony of this, as of all previous dispensations, being confided to man's responsibility, the Church has not withstood in the evil day. Satan has succeeded by his wiles, where he could not prevail by power; and in the bosom of the Church itself, as existing upon earth, there has grown up that which is the very masterpiece of Satanic craft. When men slept, this vigilant enemy was employed in sowing tares among the wheat. The leaven was soon introduced into that which should have been in unleavened lump. The mystery of iniquity had already, even in the apostles' days, begun to work. It has wrought since with fearful energy, and produced the most disastrous results. It is still working, and will continue to work, until, the hindrance being removed, it issues in the manifestation of the man of sin. The corruption of Christianity by Satan's wiles, while he remains in the heavens, gives birth (when his expulsion thence has taken place) to the last great product of his malicious opposition to God and to Christ — to that, indeed, which becomes the object of utter judgment, before such judgment falls on Satan himself. "The beast and the false prophet" are cast into "*the lake of fire*" before the thousand years begin: Satan is not cast *there* till after they have run their course. Throughout the Millennium he is confined to the abyss, or "bottomless pit." Expelled from the created heavens, as seen in Rev. 12, his expulsion is celebrated in songs of triumph, while, as to the earth, it is the occasion for the time of yet deeper woe. "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." The prophetic history of that short time of Satan's "great wrath," and of tribulation to mankind unequalled since the world began, has been considered in previous portions of this work. The events which are to be crowded into it will all have transpired, and the utter overthrow of Satan's vast confederation against God will have taken place, when he himself shall be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. He will thus be excluded from the earth as well as the heavens. The object of his restraint and imprisonment is stated to be, "that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled." What a wondrous change! All power in the hands of Christ and His glorified saints, and that in open, manifested exercise, while Satan is both bound and banished, and the nations delivered thus from his usurped ascendancy, and from all the deep deceptions which he has been permitted so long and so successfully to practise!

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the change in the entire condition of things, resulting from the two facts, of Satan being bound, and of the world's government being exercised by Christ and His saints. Now Christ, our life, is *hidden*, and Satan is *at large*. Faith knows Christ, trusts Him, feeds upon Him, delights in Him, loves Him, and seeks, however feeble the measure may be, to serve and glorify Him. This faith is produced and sustained by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. But what opposition does He encounter! It is not only that our own fallen nature — the flesh — is contrary to the Spirit, but Satan acts by it in order to deceive and enthral us, and being the god — the prince — of this world, all that it contains is at his disposal* for the furtherance of his treacherous designs. Every sense becomes thus the avenue of temptation; while the tendency of every object on which the senses are exercised, is to hide Christ's glory from our view, and to draw away the heart from Him. They who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, are so kept in spite of everything. This is the time, in short, for the life of faith, the walk of faith, the fight of faith, the trial of faith; and it is by faith alone that we can stand, or conquer, or endure. But when the world's condition is formed and its affairs regulated by the government of Christ Himself and His risen saints; when all outward power is on the side of God, of truth, of obedience; and when in addition to this, temptation is entirely absent, the tempter himself being bound in the abyss, who can estimate the difference between such a state of things, and that which has existed ever since the fall?

* Luke 4: 6 bears solemn testimony to this fact. Satan did thus use all the glory of this world in tempting Christ, and Christ did not in His reply contradict the words of Satan, "for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it,"

Think of the One who is then to "bear the glory and sit and rule upon his throne." It has been well said, and often said, that no man is fit to command who has not first learned to obey. Such a statement applies only to delegated power, and not, as is obvious, to the divine government, supremely exercised by God Himself, who does all things according to the counsel of His own will. But it is His good pleasure to confide the government of the earth to man; and all those to whom it has hitherto been confided, have failed in this first great qualification — obedience. Not so Jesus. He became man, and took the servant's place and form. To be the servant, He had to *become* man; for as to His essential glory, "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." But "he made himself of no reputation," and while all others owe obedience, he "*learned*" it, "by the things which he suffered." And He did learn it! Who besides has been subjected to such tests as He? Who has had such a path of sorrow, or gone through such depths of anguish and distress? But in all He was obedient — obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And this is the wondrous title He has acquired to universal dominion. *Acquired*, we say, for it is not to be forgotten, that while He has his inherent titles of infinite dignity as God and Creator, He has by the incarnation and the cross, by His obedient life and His obedience unto death, *acquired* titles, which must, in the righteousness of God's ways, be acknowledged and made good. "Wherefore God also," says the apostle, "hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2: 9-11.) Be it that even in this given glory He stands alone and pre-eminent; be it that the universal lordship here attributed to Jesus is of a deeper, more essential, and therefore more enduring character than that special form of dominion over the earth, which characterizes the thousand years, and is delivered

up to God, even the Father, at the close; be it that this lordship of Jesus over all in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, which is the reward of His obedience unto death, can never cease — never be delivered up; still, it is impossible to contemplate His fitness for the glories of the millennial sovereignty, in which the saints are associated with Him, without adverting to the divine glory of His person, and the infinite reward of His humiliation, and obedience, and death. True, it is as Son of David that He is heir to David's throne. But David's Son is David's Lord. The child born, the son given, according to Isaiah 9: 6, upon whose shoulder the government is to rest, has for His name, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Father of the everlasting age, The Prince of Peace." It is "of the increase of his government and peace," that "there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

To whom could have been entrusted the mighty work of redemption, but to the One who is God and man in one person? How could we, dear christian readers, have trusted our souls to any one who was less than God? And how could any one who was not perfect man, have suffered what was needed for man's redemption? And is not all this true of Christ's fitness for His coming glories, as well as of His mighty, redeeming work? Who else could bear the glory? Who besides is entitled to the throne, or qualified to fill it? And if infinite grace has associated us, poor, saved sinners, with the glory of Christ's millennial sway — yea, associated "his body the church" with his future inheritance of all things — well do our hearts know that it is in *His* title, and by virtue of what *He* is, what *He* has done, what *He* has suffered, that we are thus co-heirs of His kingdom and His crown. Blessings, eternal blessings, to His mighty and glorious name!

How the Holy Ghost delights to exhibit in the Scriptures, the connection of what Christ is in Himself, and the life He led, and the work He accomplished when here in humiliation, with the full results of that work when He comes again in glory. This has just been glanced at as to His Godhead, His incarnation, His redeeming work, and the perfection of that obedience in which He humbled Himself to death, even the death of the cross: but in the Old Testament we find the Spirit tracing this connection as to all the detailed perfectness of His human character and ways. "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." "For thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance. For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved." "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." It was doubtless in the days of His humiliation, that these excellencies of His character were displayed; but the Spirit of God connects them thus with His millennial rule, as affording the fullest assurance of what the righteous and beneficent character of that rule must be.

In glancing at some details of what Scripture teaches concerning this glorious kingdom of Christ, space will allow of little more than a bare enumeration of particulars. The connection of the Church with the millennial state is portrayed to us in John's vision of "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." It is styled, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife:" and while its relation to Christ is thus expressed, its relation to the millennial earth is indicated by various parts of the description. There is no night in the heavenly city, and yet it is not by candle, or by sun and moon, that it is enlightened, but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its light, while "the nations of them which are saved" — the spared nations of the millennial earth — "shall walk in the light of it." It has no temple, "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" — but to it, as to a temple, "the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour." Nor do the kings alone thus resort to it: — "they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into (or unto) it." The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, flows through the midst of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Such is the relation of the Church to this scene of blessing. Herself the witness and expression of God's perfect grace, and of the perfect love of Christ her Lord and Bridegroom, she is the vessel of that grace, in ministering light and healing to the nations. With her, in her governmental glory as reigning with Christ, are associated the saints of the Old Testament, and those of the Apocalyptic crisis, as noticed in "*The First Resurrection*." All who form "the first resurrection," live and reign with Christ throughout the thousand years.

The earthly seat of dominion and centre of blessing, is "the city of the great king" — Jerusalem. The twelve tribes restored to the land, and no longer two nations, but one, will have Christ for their king and head, and will constitute the most favoured and honoured portion of the earth's redeemed population. This national pre-eminence of Israel in millennial times has been considered in a previous part of this work, and is demonstrated by almost every reference to the Millennium which the Old Testament contains. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord: and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." "The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." "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." "And they shall call thee "The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations."

With regard to this point, it is interesting to trace the harmony between the Old Testament and the New, and the striking correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem. The one is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife" — the other is the earthly metropolis of His kingdom. Does the Old Testament assign a place of special and pre-eminent blessing to the twelve tribes? Mark how the New Testament accords with this. To the apostle Christ says, "In the regeneration, (or, the restitution of all things,) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19: 28.) But seeing that the apostles became afterwards a part of the Church — the Bride, the Lamb's wife — they must needs be found in their place in the heavenly city. Accordingly, while the wall of the city is seen to have "twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," it is also represented as having "twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." The gate was, as is

well known, the place for thrones, or seats of judgment; and one can scarcely fail to mark the coincidence between our Lord's words to the twelve, and this mention of them in the description of the heavenly city.

There is much ground for believing, that all who survive of Israel at the commencement of the Millennium will be saved, and that the whole nation also throughout the thousand years will be saved. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The "new covenant" is to be made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, in which covenant God engages to put His law in their inward parts, and to write it in their hearts. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Then, as to the world at large, *idolatry will have entirely ceased.* "The idols he shall utterly abolish." *The true God will be known and worshipped.* "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." *War will be at an end, and universal peace be enjoyed.* "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." *All subordinate rulers acting as the ministers of Christ justice will be impartially administered.* "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful." "I will also make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness." "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." "In his days shall the righteous flourish." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper." *The curse being removed, and creation delivered, the fertility of the earth will be wonderfully increased, and teeming abundance will be the natural result.* "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing." "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." *The very habits and instincts of the brute creation shall be changed.* "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." *Every cause of fear, whether from man or beast, being removed, men will dwell in delightful confidence, security, and repose.* "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." "And I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." *The minds of men, without an vain pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, shall yet be*

well instructed. "And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure." *Human life will be greatly prolonged.* "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." What must be the longevity of mankind in those days, for a man to be deemed a child at a hundred years, while every one dying at so tender an age, shall be seen to be cut off by judgment for his sin!

Such are some of the ways in which "the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth," will, in those days of the rule of heaven, make known His beneficence to the sons of men. The true Melchizedec, "king of righteousness," and "king of peace," will be exercising His royal priesthood, blessing men from the Most High God, and blessing the Most High God on behalf of the happy myriads of the earth's teeming population. How wondrous the grace that has assigned to us, poor sinners of the Gentiles, the place of reigning with Him, as kings and priests unto God! Happy they who are the subjects in that kingdom! Thrice happy, such as are destined to be sharers of Christ's glory, sitting with Him on His throne!