

The image shows the front cover of an antique book. The cover is made of a dark, textured material, possibly leather or cloth, and is heavily worn, with significant damage and peeling visible on the right side. A decorative border, consisting of a repeating geometric pattern with circular motifs, frames the central text. The title is printed in a bold, serif font. The spine of the book is visible on the left, showing three metal clasps or rivets. The edges of the book are frayed, revealing the underlying board material.

**THIS GOSPEL
OF THE KINGDOM**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIBLE SCHOOL

THIS GOSPEL
OF THE KINGDOM.

A CUP OF COLD WATER FOR A THIRSTY SOUL.

BY

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R 965

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"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord ;
and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall
speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of
thy power ; to make known to the sons of men
his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his
kingdom." Psalm 145 : 10-12.

This Gospel of the Kingdom.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness unto all nations*, and *then shall the end come.*" Matt. 24:14.

THESE are the words of our Lord Jesus, and should be read, not with drowsy listlessness, but with interest alert, for indeed they are freighted with weightiest import to the people of *to-day*. They point to an ideal kingdom over the whole earth which is yet future, but no longer in the distant future; for the testimony of this gospel has now been borne to every nation. These words were spoken in reply to the inquiry of his disciples, "Tell us what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The statement just noted, and now an accomplished fact, is the *sign* that Jesus gave.

In every land where the Word of God has been carried and translated into the language of the people, wherever the Christian missionary has introduced Christ and his gospel, and wherever a few in those nations have accepted Christ and have become living testimonies of the power of

his truth, there the gospel has been a witness to that nation. And though zealous missionaries abroad and faithful supporters at home have failed to accomplish what they hoped for, viz., the conversion of the world to God, they have, nevertheless, accomplished all that God required of them in bearing this witness to all nations. God knew that the task they set for themselves was too heavy for them, but for this necessary preparatory work they have full credit.

A WITNESS TO ALL NATIONS.

The church of Christ was to go into all the world and preach this gospel of the kingdom in all the world *for a witness unto all nations*, and *then the end* of this order of things would come, the promised kingdom of God would be established, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Rev. 11:15.

But, it is asked, of what value is this witness to all nations, if it does not accomplish their conversion to God?

Manifestly, this preparatory work is a step, and a long one, *toward* the desired end of the world's conversion; for it is "the kingdoms of *this world*" that are to "*become* the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." They do not become his by a willing submission, but they are given to Christ, to whom

God said, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." They are given to Christ just as they are, in sin and rebellion, and he brings them into subjection by forcible means, as it is written, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm 2:8, 9. But when the nations are thus subdued under him, then "He shall *speak peace unto the nations*; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth;" for he is "the Prince of peace." "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and 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." Zech. 9:10; Isa. 2:4; 9:6.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION OUTLINED—
A GREAT WEEK.

But the answer to this question can be clearly understood only in the light of an intelligent understanding of the outlines, at least, of God's plan of salvation, the development of which spans a period of seven thousand years—from the fall of man to the complete emancipation of the race from the bondage of sin and death.

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This long epoch of human history is divisible into seven periods of one thousand years each and the Lord counts each one of these thousand-year periods as one day in the outworking of his plan of salvation, as Peter, in this connection, says, "Beloved, be not ignorant of *this one thing*, that *one day* is with the Lord as a *thousand years*, and a *thousand years* as *one day*." 2 Pet. 3:8. Thus these seven periods constitute a great week, each of whose seven days is one thousand years. The last one, corresponding to the Sabbath day, is the period of Christ's reign upon earth.

During the first six days (six thousand years) the race has been increasing, multiplying, to fill the earth, but as it multiplied, generation after generation has been laid in the grave. Because of sin, it has indeed been a mournful procession from the cradle to the tomb, and so it must continue until Christ's kingdom is established in the earth in the dawn of this millennial Sabbath day.

A SABBATH DAY'S WORK.

Within this day, we are told, *all* that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall *come forth*. John 5:28, 29. "*I know*," said Martha, who had learned from the lips of Jesus, that my brother "*shall rise again* in the resurrection *at the last day*"—this millennial Sabbath, "the last day" of this great week. John 11

24. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24: 15. It will be a day of judgment (Matt. 12: 36), a day for restoring all things—"times of refreshing," "times of restitution of all things." Acts 3: 19-21.

This is our Lord's Sabbath day work; and he justifies this use of the day when to the Pharisees he says, "Which of you, having an ox or an ass fallen into a pit, will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" "Ought not this woman . . . whom Satan hath bound . . . be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Luke 14: 5; 13: 14-16. Humanity, like the ox, has fallen into the pit, the grave, and the great work of pulling out and restoring the race to life and health is the work of Christ during this Sabbath day.

This is resurrection—and not only of the "blessed and holy" who shall have "part in the *first* resurrection," and who, therefore, shall reign with Christ (Rev. 20: 6), but of all men, good and bad. Those who will have part in this *first* resurrection, and who will thus constitute the reigning priesthood of the incoming age, will be but a very small minority of the human race. To them Jesus says, "Fear not, *little flock*, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give *you* the kingdom." Luke 12: 32. What kingdom? All "the kingdoms of this world" merged into one (Rev. 11: 15; Eph.

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1: 10) under the dominion of Christ Jesus and this *little flock*, who are "*joint-heirs with him.*" This will include not only all the kingdoms now in existence, but also all the kingdoms of the past; for there is not only a *first* resurrection, but there are also subsequent resurrections—"every man in his own order." 1 Cor. 15: 22, 23.

THE FIFTH UNIVERSAL EMPIRE.

Over this vast host of the whole human race, including not only all the living nations, but also all of the resurrected dead, will be established the fifth universal empire referred to by Daniel the prophet, who says, "In the days of these kings [the rulers of this present order] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." It is described in the vision as a *little stone* (Jesus says, a *little flock*—small numerically) taken out of the mountain (the dominion of this world: just so the church has been and is being selected) and finally destroying these kingdoms, and itself becoming a great mountain (kingdom) and *filling the whole earth*. See Dan. 2: 44, 45, 34, 35.

If we inquire further for the object to be attained in the setting up of this kingdom of God in the earth, the suggestion of all this preparation surely is that it must be one of benevolence. The terms used in connection with it—"times of refresh

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ing," "of restitution," of "restoring all things"—clearly indicate blessing, and not cursing. The titles of the new King—"The Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9: 6)—surely indicate the same thing. And even though, at his coming, "clouds and darkness are round about him," and "the rod of his righteous indignation shall dash the nations to pieces as a potter's vessel (disintegrate them as nations), it must be remembered that only when the chastening rod is felt will humanity yield to that righteous authority that seeks to bless: "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Isa. 26: 9.

THE LOST INHERITANCE.

The coming of the Son of God twice to earth is stated to be "to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19: 10. He found the whole race lost, ruined, dead and dying under the just condemnation of God's righteous law. His first work, therefore, was to remove the just legal disability to their restoration. This he did "by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9: 26. He "gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2: 6), "Tasted death for every man," "even the death of the cross." Heb. 2: 9; Phil. 2: 8. And in the interval between then

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and now he has been selecting from among the redeemed race a comparatively small company, composed of those who first believe on his name and who are willing to follow now in the footprints of his humiliation before he is manifested in the glory of his kingdom, to be joined with him in the subsequent kingly and priestly office of restoring all things.

His coming the second time is with these, his saints: "Behold, the Lord cometh *with* ten thousands of his saints." "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints *with thee*." Jude 14; Zec 14: 5. And this second coming of Christ—Jesus, the Head, and the overcoming church which is his body—is to reign over and bless and restore "that which was lost." Therefore the gospel of the kingdom is good news to *all men* even as the angel of the Lord who announced the first advent of the new-born King declared saying, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you *good tidings of great joy*, which shall be *to all people*." Luke 2: 10.

What was lost? When the sentence of death passed upon man he certainly lost *his life*, and lost *his inheritance—the earth*, which God gave him and over which he was given full dominion. Gen 1: 28; 3: 19; Psa. 115: 16—"The earth hath been given to the children of men." "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself

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formed the earth and made it: he hath established it, *he created it not in vain*, he formed it *to be bited;*" and "The earth abideth forever."

5:18; Eccl. 1:4; Psalms 119:90. This, then, is what was lost. Then bear in mind that it is "which was lost" that is to be "saved," "redeemed," in these "times of restitution," of "re-creating," of restoring all things.

A thousand years is to be devoted to this re-creating work, it is manifest that the lost inheritance is not to be restored to man until man himself is restored, made perfect, and thus fit to have dominion over it. The new age will therefore be not only the day of the resurrection of the dead, but are in the graves, both the just and the unjust, but also the day for their instruction, discipline, correction; a day of rewards and punishments too, when stripes, many or few, as may be, will follow the wasted or abused privileges of the present life: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret whether it be good, or whether it be evil." That servant which knew his Lord's will, but feared not himself, neither did according thereto, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of punishment, shall be beaten with few stripes. Forasmuch as soever much is given, of him shall be

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much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. Eccl. 12: 14; Luke 12: 47, 48.

Thus, to the extent that men have led clean lives in this age will they have the advantage in the age to come, while those who have reveled in wickedness have been treasuring up for themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom. 2: 5.

In this view of the great millennial day of judgment, it is very manifest how judgment will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28: 17); and how "there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known." Luke 12: 2. The pall of death has covered many a hideous secret which must be revealed and punished, while the echo of many a good deed, unappreciated here, will resound there to the praise of him that did it. And so exact will this judgment be that even a cup of cold water given to refresh another shall not lose its reward. Matt. 10: 42.

Thus the world's probation is seen to *begin* with this life, and to *continue* through the *millennial day*, the interval of death being a blank parenthesis: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day *his thoughts perish*." "His sons come to honor, and he *knoweth it not*; and they are brought low, but he *perceiveth it not* of them."

"So man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens [the present ruling powers, which shall pass away] be no more. They shall not *awake*, nor be raised *out of their sleep*." Psa. 146:4; Job. 14:21, 12. See also John 11:11-14.

THE BINDING AND LOOSING
OF SATAN.

In the beginning of this millennial day, we are further informed, Satan is to be bound for a thousand years, that the world, being thus relieved from his deceptions and snares, may the more rapidly progress toward perfection of character: "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, . . . that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled. *and after that*, he must be loosed a little season." Rev. 20:1-3.

As soon as Satan is thus loosed we see that the entire work of the millennial day is put to the test. Under the favorable conditions of Christ's reign of righteousness—its wholesome measures of discipline, correction, instruction and training, unhampered by any of the wiles of Satan—humanity will make rapid strides of progress; and at the end of that day God will require of every man an established righteous character. And rightfully so, for

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that long experience will have fully manifested the love and wisdom and grace of God and the righteousness of his requirement.

But before God will grant to men the full possession of eternal life and of the original inheritance, the earth, the characters thus formed must be put to the test. The loosing of Satan for a little season at this time does this. At once he resorts to his old deceptions, not as to what is the will of God, for men will know that perfectly, but as to their opportunity again to ignore his will, and to pursue their own independent course. This final deception will make manifest all the wicked, who, with Satan, their leader, will suffer the final penalty of sin, the second death, which, in the symbolic language of Revelation, is called "the lake of fire" and defined "the second death." Rev. 20:14.

Then, "Blessed are the meek, for *they shall inherit the earth*" (Matt. 5:5); for God "made it not in vain: he made it to be inhabited." Then shall its desert places "blossom as the rose," and "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid; *for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.*" "In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." Isa. 35:1; Micah. 4:4; Psa. 72:7.

THE END OF THE SEVENTH DAY.

Mankind being thus established in everlasting life and in full possession of the restored earthly inheritance at the end of this millennial day, "then cometh the end [the end of Christ's special reign on earth, the end of the great plan of salvation, issuing in the glorious victory of truth and righteousness, and in the eternal salvation of all the righteous], when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. 15 : 24, 25; Matt. 12 : 20, 21.

The testimony concerning these "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all his holy prophets since the world began*," is so voluminous that space forbids its elaboration here, our present object being to gain merely a bird's-eye view of the divine plan of salvation. Here we have briefly sketched the work of its seventh or last day. Now let us observe further that the six preceding days (six thousand years) have all been days of preparation for this last day's work, and that no less time could have accomplished that necessary preparation.

THE SIX DAYS' WORK.

During these six days the race has been increasing toward the filling of the earth, and men have been getting acquainted with the value of this inheritance. They have spread themselves abroad over its surface; they have noted the grandeur of its mountain heights, the beauty of its smiling valleys, the breadth of its seas, the course of its rivers; they have sought out its treasures of mine and of ocean; they have harnessed its forces of earth and of air; they have basked in its sunlight and tasted its fruits; and they have said, How glorious this inheritance, if only the curse of sin were removed and we could possess it forever!

While the race has thus been increasing and getting acquainted with the inheritance, which, though forfeited, has been redeemed, and shall be restored to them when they also are prepared to receive it, what has God been doing?

During these six days (six thousand years) God's overruling providence has been shaping human experiences for the accomplishment of his own wise ends. Though men have very generally chosen to forget God and to ignore his Word, and have pursued their own course regardless of his will, God, like a wise father, has been letting them do it to its bitter end, and allowing them to try

every experiment of their own imagination, until their folly in ignoring his counsel and despising his reproof is finally proven to them.

Consequently, as we look back over human history, what do we see? Truly every page of the volume is stained with blood and tears. Behold the rise of empires to-day, their fall to-morrow. Every imaginable experiment of government and of national and social institutions has been tried: none have brought the desired peace and happiness that all men crave; and baffled hope often finds expression in such words as those of Charles Mackay:—

“Tell me, ye winged winds, that 'round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot where mortals weep no more?

Where weary man may find the bliss for which he sighs,
Where sorrow never lives, and friendship never dies?

Is there no happy spot where mortals may be blessed,
Where grief may find a balm, and weariness a rest?”

While humanity at large has been plodding along under this discipline of experience, groaning under the heavy load which sin has imposed, God has also been preparing the instrumentalities for their future blessing. To this end, in the fulness of time, within these days, he sent his only-begotten Son to redeem the world. The great atoning sacrifice was made; and thus was finished the work which made salvation a legal possibility.

To this end also he sent into the world his Word of promise, and wherever faith received it into good and honest hearts, there the star of hope arose above the surrounding gloom, and a comparatively few wise men, following that star, were led to Jesus.

A goodly company from the past pursued this star of hope to the manger in Bethlehem and then said: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel"—and then laid down to "rest in hope" until the appointed times of restitution of all things. Luke 2:29, 32; Acts 2:25, 26; Psalms 16:8-11; Acts 3:21.

Then another company with the hearing of faith, catching the inspiration of the self-sacrificing love of Jesus, have, like him, taken up their cross and followed in his steps. These two great, yet comparatively small companies, God has been preparing for the future honor and service of his kingdom, to be associated with Christ in the great work of blessing "all the families of the earth." Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8, 29.

All of these mighty works God has been doing for a race in sin and in rebellion; and why? Because he "*so loved the world*," and is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come

to repentance." "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be *saved*" (John 3: 16, 17; 2 Pet. 3:9); and "God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5: 8.

Thus during these six days (six thousand years) God has been pursuing the course of a wise and benevolent Father in preparing for the appointed restitution work of the seventh day, while permitting man to take his own independent course and to learn his folly by bitter experience—a course that has brought only sorrow and sighing at every step, and which shall end, as foretold by the prophets, in "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." Dan. 12: 1; Matt. 24: 21.

Thus endeth the sixth day of this great week in the midst of clouds and darkness and gloom and tempest (Zeph. 1: 15; Joel 2: 1-11), but "the morning cometh"—the morning of the seventh day, and "the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." Isa. 21: 12; Mal. 4: 2.

When this last catastrophe of unparalleled tribulation, which shall shortly involve the whole world, shall forever seal the folly of all human endeavor to find peace, prosperity and happiness apart from and independent of God, then God will say, "Be still and know that I am God: I will be

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exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psa. 46:10. How will he say this? He will say it by the sudden appearing of his kingdom and glory. Mark 13:36; Titus 2:13.

THREE GREAT REVOLUTIONS.

There is also another subdivision of this great seven-thousand-year week of human probation into three periods, mentioned by the apostle Peter—2 Pet. 3:5-13. These periods mark three great revolutions in the world's history. Peter speaks of the order of things in each of these three periods as a distinct heaven and earth, using these terms, of course, in a symbolic sense, heaven signifying the ruling powers, and earth the masses of human society. Thus he tells of the world that was before the flood, the world that now is, and the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The world before the flood marks a period of rapid degeneration from the original perfection (Gen. 6:5), the last generation having only eight persons in harmony with God. 1 Pet. 3:20. Then the Lord's indignation brought a great revolution in human affairs, when all of the wicked were swept off the earth, with all that pertained to that order of things. Thus the first world—the heavens and the earth which were of old—being overflowed with water, "perished," and a new order

of things was established—a new heaven and a new earth. Since then there has never been such a complete revolution, involving the whole world; and God has set his bow of promise in the cloud to assure us that there never will be another such revolution by water. Gen. 9:8-17.

But, through his prophets and apostles, he warns us of another world-wide revolution to be accomplished by fire. Peter says, "The heavens and the earth which are now . . . are reserved unto *fire*. . . . The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." 2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 12. And yet, through all this burning, melting, disintegrating process, "the earth [literal] abideth forever" (Eccl. 1:4), just as it did when the first world—"heavens and earth"—"*perished*" (2 Pet. 3:6), leaving also here, as there, a suitable element in it prepared to enter into the new heavens and new earth which shall succeed it. 2 Pet. 3:13; Matt. 24:22. This fire evidently is symbolic, and the term is so employed to give us definite ideas of the great tribulation spoken of also by our Lord Jesus and by Daniel the prophet. Zephaniah calls it the fire of God's jealousy, and Malachi says that all the wicked shall be as stubble before it. See Zeph. 3:8; Mal. 4:1. It will burn to the consuming of every device of man, whether civil,

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social or religious, that is out of harmony with the principles of righteousness. This, of course, will involve the whole world—all the nations and all the institutions of this present order of things—as predicted by Daniel and by our Lord Jesus. Dan. 12: 1; 2: 44, 45; Matt. 24: 21, 22.

This great revolution has not yet come, but where is the statesman or the intelligent citizen that does not see it *coming*? The fire is already kindled and is mounting high in the far east, and ever and anon it breaks out in every land. The fuel is feeding it; the fanners are fanning it; the winds are carrying the burning fragments; and by and by the great conflagration will involve all nations: the heavens (ruling powers) shall be dissolved and the elements (of organized society) shall melt (disintegrate). Events follow each other in rapid succession in these days, and not without intervals of relief as foretold. 1 Thes. 5: 2, 3.

This depth of human extremity will be the point of divine opportunity, and above these ruins "the new heavens and the new earth" (2 Pet. 3: 13), the kingdom of Christ, will be established, to reign for a thousand years for the refreshing and restoring of all things.

Thus this week of seven thousand years spans three great periods: the first, from creation to the flood; the second, from the flood to the second advent of Christ; the third, from the second advent

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of Christ to the end of human probation—one thousand years. There also another great change occurs, when this temporary reconstruction government of Christ gives place to the dominion of the earth restored to mankind perfected and established in righteousness; when Satan and all his host are destroyed, and that eternal order of things is established to endure "throughout all ages, world without end" (Eph. 3:21), when Christ gives up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:24), whose will is then "done in earth even as it is done in heaven."

SERVICE OF THE PRESENT WITNESS TO ALL NATIONS.

But we must drop this interesting theme here and return to the inquiry, Of what avail is the witness of this gospel to all nations if it does not accomplish their conversion?

Perhaps the reader already sees the answer in the order and arrangement of God's plan—that God has been planning for the world's conversion in the coming day—the times of restitution of all things. That there will be a sudden turning to God on the part of all nations as the result of the great tribulation which shall overwhelm all, is clearly shown by the prophets, who say: "When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants

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of the world will learn righteousness." "For thus saith the Lord of hosts: . . . I will shake all nations, and *the desire of all nations* shall come"—the kingdom of God. "And all nations *shall flow unto it*. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and *we will walk in his paths*." "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and *all flesh* shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will save us; . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." See Isa. 26: 9; Hag. 2: 6, 7; Isa. 2: 2, 3; 40: 5; 25: 9.

In the very midst of the great tribulation with which this age will end comes the proclamation of "the everlasting gospel . . . to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14: 6, 7.

This everlasting gospel, be it observed, is no new gospel. It is the same "good tidings of great joy to all people" which the angels proclaimed at our Lord's first advent. But this proclamation of it comes with a very significant and emphatic command to worship God alone, as though the

true worship of God had in some sense degenerated into more or less idolatrous forms. How true is this to facts as we now see them. The numerous religious "isms" divide the *one* church which God established, and interfere with that united worship which belongs to him alone; and therefore, in the turmoil of these last days, the "isms" must go down, and God and his Word alone will command the reverence and obedience of all men.

Recognizing the fact that the day of Christ's millennial reign is the day of the world's judgment, just as this gospel age is the day of the church's judgment; that it is a period of probation—of instruction, correction, training and discipline—and that for the whole race, because all that are in the graves are to come forth to it, both the just and the unjust, it will be seen that "the everlasting gospel" then presented to the whole world will be recognized as the same gospel which before was preached unto them by the holy apostles and prophets. And though every individual of the world will not have heard of it, some in every land will remember the story of the cross, because it was testified to all nations.

Thus the Christ upon the throne will be identified with the Christ of Calvary; and those reigning with him will be identified as those who formerly suffered with him. Thus the exalted rulers will be recognized as those touched with the feeling of

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human infirmities, and eminently fitted, both by past experience and by present exaltation, for their kingly and priestly office. And the resurrection of the dead, the establishment of the kingdom, the subduing of the nations, and even their conversion to God, so long foretold, will then be recognized as accomplished facts. Thus, "with power and great glory," will the great work of the new day *start*, and thus it will progress to its glorious finish.

So this gospel of the kingdom *has been* preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations; and now, what next?

"AND THEN SHALL THE END COME"— THE HARVEST.

The end of what? Not the end of the seventh day of this great week, but the end of the sixth day; not the end of "the world that was" before the flood, nor the end of "the world to come," but the end of "this present evil world;" and not the end of the Jewish age, but of this gospel age, for the Jewish age was closing when these words were spoken, and the gospel church was commissioned to bear this gospel to all the nations of the world. Our Lord gives us further instruction about this "end" in his parable of the wheat and tares and its explanation (Matt. 13: 38, 39), where he says:

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; . . . *the harvest is the end of the world*"—the end of this age.

Then the "end" is not merely a *point* of time, but a period of time within which a particular work is to be accomplished, which is here called harvest work. The term is very suggestive. Harvest time presents the matured fruitage of springtime's sowing and summertime's cultivating. So we should expect to see in the world now the maturing fruitage of the age of sowing and cultivating, which began when this gospel of the kingdom first went forth in the days of our Lord's first advent.

Both the good seed and the bad thus mature, and so, in the symbolic language of Scripture, both wheat and tares are to be harvested. The wheat, the righteous, are to be garnered in the heavenly kingdom, while the tares have part in the great fire of tribulation with which the harvest period ends: "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

The same conditions are again shown under the figure of two vines. There is the true vine, which is Christ, of which all the righteous are branches. God's care and blessing are upon this vine, in whose fruitage he is glorified. John 15:1-8. The

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other is "the vine of the earth" which is to be "cast into the winepress of the wrath of God"—another reference to the great tribulation with which this age will end. Rev. 14: 15-20.

Reader, are you a branch in the heavenly vine? or do you belong to the vine of the earth which shall be cast into the winepress of the wrath of God? Consider, in view of the evidence submitted, and which the intelligent reader of the daily press will observe is continually augmenting, that the end, the harvest of the age, is now here; that we are living in the midst of its telling events; that the dread climax of these events—the reaping of the vine of the earth—is the foretold catastrophe of the near future; that so terrible will be its experiences, according to the sure word of prophecy, that, except for divine interposition finally, there would be no flesh saved. Matt. 24: 22. Remember, too, that it comes stealthily, surely, suddenly; "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thes. 5: 3.

Consider, in view of all these things, that the end of the present order of things is surely at hand. These are the signs; and if so, then know also that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" for God, who so loved the world, notwithstanding all its sin and sorrow, as to give his only begotten Son to redeem

it, will again interpose his providence on behalf of men, though they must first feel the rod of his correction; and it will fall upon them as the fruitage of their own folly.

Men have chosen to forget God, to ignore his testimonies, to take their own course in life, to leave the life to come out of sight in their reckonings, to grasp for the passing things of this present life, to seize its treasures of gold and silver without respect to the principles of righteousness; and, in their greed for gain, they have despised justice and treasured the gains of oppression. They have done it, not only individually, but also corporately, as companies and as nations. They have done it often on such gigantic scales that, in the great organizations—corporations, trusts, etc.—they seem to think their individuality will not be discovered, even by the eye of the Almighty. It has even become a proverb among them that "Corporations have no souls," while, with the numerous hands of these supposed soulless corporations, the individuals that compose them gather in the gains of oppression.

But not so does God regard them, for, in his reckoning, corporations have just as many souls as the individuals that compose them, all of whom are individually accountable for the doings of the organizations with which they are associated; and the only way to escape such liability is, either

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to reform the organization, or else get out of it; and that with clean hands and a pure heart. Isa. 33:14-16; Psa. 15.

We have an illustration of such individual responsibility in the nation of Israel. Christ and his gospel was preached to that nation first of all, and with a power that reached every individual. Yet he was rejected, despised, put to death by the rulers, his gospel was opposed and his disciples were persecuted. Multitudes in the nation tried to be neutral, did not like to incur the displeasure of the rulers by espousing the unpopular cause, though convinced that never man spake like this man, or did such mighty works, or lived so pure a life.

And when the noisy rabble, incited by the rulers to murderous hate, cried, "Crucify him! His blood be upon us and upon our children!" they were silent, and probably the next Sabbath day found them in the synagogues as usual, heedless of the curse that had been invoked upon them, and which rested upon them, because they raised no voice and entered no act of protest. God took these men at their word, and the penalty of that awful crime came upon *the whole guilty nation*—neutrals (?) and all; and to this day, do they not suffer it? And so it must continue until their blindness is turned away. Rom. 11:25.

In matters where principles of truth and righteousness are concerned there is no such thing as neutral ground, for Jesus says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Matt. 12:30. Thus, whether by a presumed neutrality or by active coöperation with evil principles, whether individually or corporately, the whole world stands to-day *against* Christ and in opposition to the principles of his kingdom. For though there have been and are some noble and godly men in places of national authority and power, none of them, as representatives of the nation, can lift the nation to the level of righteousness in all things, nor do more than to exert their personal influence for righteousness, and so enroll themselves on the Lord's side and do what they can. Not one, however godly or active and efficient, can control the greed of men, or abolish the evils of intemperance or national hatred, revenge, etc.

Therefore God will allow men to reap the harvest of their own sowing in this time of harvest. The despotic nation may expect the harvest of revolution; the more liberal government may escape that national calamity; but the money kings and the great and oppressive corporations which flourish in every land, and which no government can control, must reap the harvest of which they are distinctly forewarned.

Hear the word of the Lord! "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them that have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts."

"Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house, and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows, and it is ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion. Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar?" "Behold, his soul, which is lifted up, is not upright in him. . . . He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell

[Hebrew *sheol*, the grave], and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, though he gather unto him all nations, and assemble unto him all peoples. Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with a burden of guilt!

"Shall not they rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee? and thou shalt be for booties unto them. . . . Woe to him that obtaineth an evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!"

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts." See Luke 6:24-26; Jas. 5:1-4; Jer. 22:13-15; Hab. 2:4-13; Mal. 3:5.

How this will operate by and by can be distinctly foreseen by the observing; for just as race-hatred beats against the Jew to-day in riotous outrage and massacre, so the class-hatred, nourished by the same element and organizing and defying control in every land, will by and by beat with merciless and uncontrollable fury against the hated

rich. And God will not interpose on their behalf, because this condition of things will be the harvest of their own sowing, and the hour of his judgment is come. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7.

Nor will the wicked fury of this anarchist element go unpunished; for though they will constitute the rod of God's wrath to many, they in turn shall share the same. "In the same day, also, will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit." . . . "And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." Zeph. 1:9, 17, 18. Thus shall there be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation—a trouble that shall involve all nations and institutions. And while it is prophetically declared of this time, "The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come" (Rev. 11:18), the indications, both of prophecy, as above quoted, and of the signs of the times, are that this final clash of battle will not be between nation and nation in solid phalanx facing one another as patriot against patriot, but between class and class

in every nation, the antagonism springing up in the midst of all, and defying all national authority, just as we see it begun in Russia to-day.

Such will be the events attending the harvesting of "the vine of the earth" at this time of God's judgments on men as nations, corporations, etc., involving, of course, individual penalties upon the individuals composing them. But bear in mind that the final judgment of men as individuals, individually on trial for eternal life, belongs to the millennial day of judgment, and culminates at its close, as we have seen. It is in this national or corporate sense that the grapes of this vine of the earth are said to be fully ripe. Rev. 14: 18. The individuals who fall in this judgment of nations will, in God's appointed order, be brought back for their individual trial; for there shall be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

The harvesting of the heavenly vine presents quite a different picture. Its ripened fruitage must be gathered within this same harvest period. But all of its fruit is not yet ripened. To use another illustration, all who are in Christ, truly, are his *disciples*—pupils in the school of Christ. The first term of this school is this gospel age, the period from our Lord's first advent to his second advent; and it ends in this harvest which is "the end of the age."

As in every other school, so in this school for character building, training and discipline, there are some who make rapid advancement and some who develop slowly. The latter never turn back, they are not unfaithful; but they do not develop rapidly enough to finish their course within this term, even though there is the prize offered, to those who do so, of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom. The former class, who so run as to obtain the prize, cheerfully submitting to the necessarily severe discipline and applying their hearts to all the hard lessons, are called "overcomers." These constitute the graduating class of this *first term*, to whom belong the exceeding riches of divine grace. These correspond to the first-ripe fruit of the vine in the other illustration, and, as an exalted company, they will constitute the bride of Christ. These shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The others, too, will be honored and blessed, but are not yet ready for their place, which we will observe later.

Suffice it here to say that, in the storm of divine indignation to come upon the whole world, these shall have special protection. Their trust and confidence will be in God; and while they will say to each other, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready," God will say to them, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers ["the

secret place of the Most High"—Psa. 91: 1; 27: 5] and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, 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." Isa. 26: 20, 21.

Under the genial rays of the risen "Sun of righteousness," this fruit will ripen fast; and the vine, which is Christ, shall continue to bud and blossom and bring forth to perfection new fruit in the coming age as the chastened and converted nations are given individually to Christ.

THE KINGDOM AT HAND.

In view of these things, what is the duty of the present hour?—my duty and your duty, my friend, whether you be a Christian or a man or woman of the world. Did not John indicate it when he said, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Matt. 3: 2.

Do not these things appeal to us by every consideration of true wisdom to make ready for the things to come, and just at hand?—to see to it that we are in harmony with the incoming powers that shall lay judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet?

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Should not the wise man at once begin to reckon up his accounts and to adjust them in harmony with these principles? "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2: 2, 3. And "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear [in your high and responsible positions], and [if in present seeming security] rejoice with trembling [for the hour of judgment is come]. Kiss the Son [honor the appointed King of the whole earth], lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that [whether "kings" or "judges" or great men or small, who, having respect to the principles of righteousness, and honoring God in their lives, can] put their trust in him." Psa. 2: 10-12.

And you specially that are in Christ, apply your hearts unto instruction in righteousness and discipline in character: it may be you will ripen in time for the gathering of first-fruits. "Let us fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Heb. 4: 1. For "in the last days perilous times shall come," when the outward forms of godliness will be sadly lacking in the real power thereof. 2 Tim. 3: 1-5. The "overcomers" under present conditions of trial and danger must possess high moral courage, unfaltering faith and patient

endurance; for "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6: 12.

"But," says one, "the kingdom of heaven was said to be at hand away back in the days of John the Baptist; and now, after nearly two thousand years, you still tell us it is only at hand. I believe that *the church* is the kingdom of heaven, and that it is not merely at hand, but that it is here, and has been here for nearly two thousand years."

Yes, that is all very true: the reference undoubtedly was to the Christian church then about to be formed under the ministry of Jesus. This was, and still is, the kingdom of heaven in some sense. And Jesus made this fact the basis of several very instructive parables, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a field sowed with good seed by the owner and with bad seed by an enemy; it is like a mustard tree in which the fowls of the air roost; it is like leaven; it is like a net cast into the sea, catching fish of every kind; it is like ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, etc. But all of these illustrations, which truly point to the gospel church as it is throughout the gospel age, certainly point to it as the kingdom of heaven in some sense *inferior* to that of which the prophets speak, and to which the Lord and the apostles refer as coming

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in majesty and glory and power. If John pointed to the coming of the gospel church of this age—and he certainly did—he was pointing to the church *militant*, not to the church triumphant in glory; to the church in its humiliation and cross-bearing. And in these parables, Jesus was foretelling its actual conditions during the gospel age.

Thus Jesus indicated that the church, with its very small beginning in the early days, would by and by become a great institution in the world; that it would shoot out its branches in all directions, just as it has done; and that, when numbers and worldly riches would increase, the birds of the air (apt symbols of those who live in the atmosphere of the prince of this world) would come into it. And so the real church and the baptized world would seem to be in a hopeless tangle, like a wheat field sown with tares which no human power could separate and which must therefore grow together until the appointed harvest time, the end of the age. Nor has it been possible for the wheat class always to discern the tares and to keep them out, for wherever the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord, Satan comes also among them. Job 1:6.

In fact, the tares have vastly outnumbered the wheat, and have threatened to choke it altogether. It is from this tare element in the church that the wheat has always suffered perse-

cution. Thus the true and the false grow together until the harvest. But the separating work of harvest will clearly distinguish between the true and the false. Why? Because the coming of the kingdom in glory and in power is at hand, and God does not propose to glorify the professed kingdom, the church, just as it stands before the world. It is not the tangled, confused mass of wheat and tares, but only the wheat class, that inherits the kingdom.

Thus the kingdom of heaven, the gospel church, was at hand in John's day only in its formative sense; but at this end of the age it is at hand in its glory and power. In John's day, the true kingdom was indeed coming, but it was coming in its humiliation. It was coming as its King first came, to take up its cross and follow in his steps. It was coming to suffer with him, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to fight the good fight of faith, to war a good warfare, and thus to lay hold upon eternal life.

If this was all, how then, do you inquire, could John call *this* good news? We answer, It was good news for the whole world, if they would only believe it, because the establishment of the kingdom by and by in glory and in power is for the blessing of the whole world. After subduing all nations its mission is to bind up the broken-hearted, to give liberty to the captives of sin and to open the prison doors of the grave. But before

the time for the world's blessing it is good news to all of God's believing people. Unto them that mourn over sin and folly, it gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord—the present privilege of now being joint-sacrificers and finally joint-heirs with Christ. Isa. 61: 1-3. It was good news to Israel, because it was the offer to them, first, thus to become heirs of the glory *to follow*. The way of the cross was the way to the crown. The open door of the church militant was their opportunity to enter the pathway to the church triumphant, the kingdom in glory. And therefore it was indeed good news to them, had they been, as only a few were, in condition of heart to appreciate it. Later, when Israel in general despised the way of the cross and thereby forfeited the crown, the same was offered to the Gentiles, of whom, also, only a few have appreciated the opportunity and entered in, counting it a privilege to take up their cross daily and follow Christ. Jesus did this "for the joy set before him," and his true followers do it in the same spirit, and for the privilege of entering into his joy. To them it is good news because faith discerns and enters into the purpose of God.

Thus the good news of the kingdom at hand was proclaimed in the days of our Lord's first advent; and now, since this gospel of the kingdom has been

preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and the end, the harvest of the age, has come, the kingdom of heaven is again at hand; but not in the former sense, of its humiliation, but of its exaltation, power and great glory. And if the former was good news, then surely the latter is. And therefore, to those who have learned to live by faith, to walk with God, and who, from him, have learned the secret of overcoming the world, Jesus says, When you see the signs of the approaching kingdom, then look up, and lift up *your* heads, for *your* deliverance draweth nigh.

A CLOSER VIEW.

In this view of it let us now scan this gospel of the kingdom a little more closely. Tidings of the coming kingdom of God were not new to Israel in the days of John the Baptist; for, as students of the law and the prophets, which foretold its coming and glory, they had long been in expectation of it. But that which was really news, and good news to Israel, was that this long promised kingdom was then "at hand," "nigh," "even at the doors."

This good news was not due in the days of preceding prophets, however much they had to say of the character, extent and glory of the kingdom. This message was *first* due in the days of John the Baptist. Jesus distinctly calls attention to this,

saying, "The law and the prophets were [were delivering their message of a coming kingdom] until John: since that time, the kingdom of God is *proclaimed*." Luke 16: 16.

We have noted its first proclamation by John—Matt. 3: 2, 3. Note it again in our Lord's teaching from the very first to the end of his earthly ministry:—"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God is *at hand*: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Mark 1: 14, 15. Compare also Matt. 4: 1, 12, 17, 23, which very particularly mark the time, saying, "*From that time* Jesus began to preach, . . . the kingdom of heaven is *at hand*," etc.

Observe again that, when Jesus commissioned his twelve apostles, and afterward seventy other disciples, and sent them out to preach, it was the very same message he gave to them, saying, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." And if Israel should fail to receive the message, the messengers were told to wipe off the very dust of their feet for a testimony against them, saying, "Notwithstanding, *be ye sure of this*, that the kingdom of heaven *is come nigh unto you*." Matt. 10: 7; Luke 9: 2; 10: 9-11.

In declaring his message, John refers to the prophet Isaiah, who foretold his coming as the

introducer of the new King and kingdom, saying, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. . . . And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 40: 3-5. See also Isa. 32: 1. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment." In reference to this theme of the kingdom, we might cite all the prophets, yet none of them declare it *at hand* until John.

And when Jesus claimed to be the King sent of God and foretold by the prophets, and as such presented himself to the Jewish nation, declaring *the time fulfilled* for the coming of his kingdom, it was for this very claim that the envious Scribes and Pharisees arraigned and condemned him to death, while above his cross was inscribed, in derision, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." John 12: 12-16; 19: 14-22.

There, apparently, was the complete failure of all the kingdom claims, particularly of that declaring the kingdom nigh, even at the door. But really there was no failure, for, as we have seen, in a very distinct sense, the kingdom of God was at hand in the days of John the Baptist. There the King was anointed with the holy spirit to be a Prince and a Savior. See Acts 10: 38; 5: 31; Matt.

3:16, 17; Isa. 61:1. And God gave him to be the Head and King over a collective body of those destined to be, with him, kings and priests unto God. Eph. 1:22, 23; Rev. 1:6. And very shortly the members of that body began to be united to the Head by faith and consecration to God.

Thus the gospel church, with Christ Jesus, its Head, its King—the kingdom of God on earth—was at hand, and actually began its existence in the days of John and of Jesus at his first advent. It was not, however, until after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Majesty on high, that this King and kingdom were formally recognized of God as such. There the previously anointed Jesus *was exalted* to be a Prince and a Savior; and there, on the day of Pentecost, his body, the church, was sealed with the holy spirit of promise; and that sealing or anointing has descended upon every true member of the church from that day to this. All, therefore, from then till now, who truly accept of Christ as their Savior and Lord, being united to him by a living faith and having received the anointing of the holy spirit, are collectively termed the kingdom of God and the church of the living God. Eph. 1:13.

The remnant gathered out of Israel in the end of the Jewish age and the dawn of the gospel age formed the nucleus of the gospel church, the

kingdom of God, to which, all through this gospel age, has been added a similar class from among the Gentiles of every nation. To this end *in part* was this gospel of the kingdom sent to all nations, to take out from among the Gentiles a people for his name (Acts 15:14), as well as to be a witness unto all nations. Matt. 24:14.

THE EMBRYO KINGDOM—NOMINAL AND REAL.

But the kingdom which began to form thus in the beginning of this age, and which has been increasing from then till now, is not the kingdom established in glory and power and dominion, as foretold by the prophets, although its power was shadowed forth on the day of Pentecost by the divine recognition and endowment, and on the mount of the transfiguration. Acts 2:1-18; Mark 9:1-9. It is now the kingdom in process of development, the kingdom in embryo, the kingdom in its formative period. It is the kingdom on probation, enduring hardship and facing danger and, in this discipline, developing its heavenly character.

As Jesus foretold in his parable of the wheat and tares and elsewhere, a foreign element has associated itself by mere profession, and in great numbers, with the true people of God. In the eyes of the world, all together, the true and the false, pass for the church, the kingdom; yet

"the Lord knoweth them that are his." He clearly distinguishes between the church *nominal* and the church *real*.

It is from this foreign element within the professed church that trials and persecutions come to the true and faithful few. Numbers and worldly means give to them controlling power. By them the standards of righteousness are lowered to gain numbers, wealth and power, and to accommodate their worldly desires; and the true ones must bear this reproach before the world, and often many afflictions and persecutions. Thus it is clear that not all who are *nominally* of the church or kingdom in this, its probationary state, are *really* of it; and no organization on earth can truly claim a monopoly of the wheat nor exemption from the tare element and its pernicious influence. Both classes are everywhere found in both pews and pulpits.

While, therefore, it is still true, that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3: 12), it is also true, that all who faithfully endure the discipline of this period of probation, following in the footprints of their Lord and Head even unto death, the end of *their* probation, will be counted worthy to continue in the kingdom when the time is fulfilled for its final establishment in power and great glory; while all that offend, and that work iniquity, will be gathered out of it in the separating time of the

harvest. "*Then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

It was in the probationary sense alone that the kingdom of heaven was at hand in the days of John the Baptist, although it was not so understood at the time. Nor did our Lord deem it expedient then to explain. In this sense only was our Lord's claim true, that the time was fulfilled, his reference being to the prophecy of Daniel 9: 25-27, which pointed out the exact time when the Messiah should be cut off, and stated that God's covenant of special favor to Israel, giving them the *first* opportunity to be of the kingdom class (Acts 3: 25, 26; Matt. 10: 5, 6; Luke 24: 47), while it would be despised by the nation as a whole, should, nevertheless, be confirmed to the remnant in Israel who would receive it to the full end of the appointed time. Rom. 11: 1-5; 9: 27, 28.

Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus explained that his kingdom, referring to it as completed, established and glorified, was not of this world—this present order of things. John 18: 36. But he was not understood then; and to this day, even the people of God but dimly comprehend this blessed gospel of the kingdom; for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." But if the spirit of God dwelling in you prompts you to search all

things, yea, even the deep things of God, that you may know more of him, you will find that God hath revealed these things through his holy apostles and prophets; and his spirit will take of these things and show them unto you. 1 Cor. 2:9-12.

Those thus acquainting themselves with God, and by faith walking in his ways, will by and by be granted an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 1:11. They shall live and reign with Christ as kings and priests unto God. Rev. 20:6; Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23. Then, Fellow Christian, while bearing the cross and enduring the pain which comes to your lot now as a member of the probationary heavenly kingdom, if you comprehend these things, forget not that your afflictions, heavy though they seem, are light, and really unworthy of consideration, in comparison with the glory to be revealed in you; and that the time of affliction, however long, is but a moment in comparison with the ages of glory to follow.

So the apostle Paul reckoned (2 Cor. 4:17, 18), and he warned the church against a disposition which was appearing, even in that early day, among believers, to seek to escape the cross-bearing and suffering incident to this probationary state, by compromising with the spirit of this world and courting its favor and emoluments. This was the beginning of that *anti-Christian* spirit which

so rapidly developed, and which by and by grasped great power, and misused it, to the oppression and persecution of the few who dared to be true and to keep the narrow way of toil and cross-bearing. See Paul's rebuke of this spirit—1 Cor. 4:8-14.

Let us not forget that the opportunity of taking up the cross and following Christ now is our privilege thus to make our calling and election sure—our high calling, which is of God, in Christ Jesus. This was the great favor offered to Israel *first* by John the Baptist and by Jesus and his disciples, which, in the blindness of their perversity in some cases, and of their negligence in others, they rejected and despised, and which, therefore, passing forever from them, has been offered to us who are of the Gentiles.

Thus their cutting off from this favor of constituting the kingdom class to reign with Christ has been our riches. Rom. 11. Let us therefore not be blind to our privileges, as they were, and, like them, fail to comprehend, and consequently to attain to our high calling. If we truly value it, it will be our desire and endeavor to catch the inspiration of these exceeding great and precious promises, that so we may be fortified to run with patience the race set before us, thus to make our calling and election sure.

There is no plainer teaching in the Word of God than that the listless and lukewarm shall have no place in the kingdom established—the church glorified. All such will be rudely awakened from their lethargy by and by; yet, though they will suffer the loss of this, the chief favor of God, as Israel did, God will deal with them in mercy, even as cast-off Israel will be mercifully gathered again, brought to humiliation and repentance and then blessed with a lesser blessing under the beneficent reign of the established kingdom. See Paul's strong affirmation of this in Rom. 11.

Since the church of Christ, as known to the world by its listed membership, is a mixed company, as Jesus said it would be to the end of the age, and as we must admit it is—composed of the true and the false, "the children of the kingdom" and "the children of the wicked one"—it is manifest that its present organization, however fair or complete it may appear in the esteem of men, cannot survive the harvest period of this age, and so become the glorified kingdom of the incoming age. For Jesus says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21, 22), and that he will "gather out of his kingdom [his professed kingdom, the church as it now is] all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Matt. 13:41.

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Thus it will be seen that the great religious organizations, as well as the national and business organizations, of this present order of things, come into judgment within this harvest period. This may sound strange, at first, to some zealous Christians who cannot see how God can carry on his great work without the present machinery of church organization. So thought many zealous Israelites in the end of the Jewish age; and even the disciples of Jesus came to him to point out the glory of the earthly temple and the great and divinely appointed religious system that had grown up around it. But, nevertheless, the astonishing prophetic statement of Jesus was that not one stone should be left upon another, and that, in the harvest of that age, a complete separation of the true and the false—the wheat and the chaff—would be made. Matt. 24:1, 2; Luke 19:41-46; Matt. 3:12.

And what happened when, after the rejection of Messiah, God gathered out of his typical kingdom, Israel, all things that offended him, and them that worked iniquity? Behold! the whole religious system went down—the Romans came and took away their place and nation; the temple and the city of their solemnities were laid in ruins; and the people, scattered through all lands, could never again reorganize as a nation or reinstate the ancient worship, its priesthood, its sacrifices and

all its ceremonial, its Sabbaths, its holy days, its jubilees, etc., all of which were inseparably connected with the land and the temple—and the true heirs of the kingdom proved to be but a comparative handful in numbers. Who would have thought it? So if a similar weeding out of present religious systems should occur: if a thousand fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand (Psa. 91:7), we should not fear, for, as truly now as then, God is working out his deep designs. And if it results that the true vine, which is Christ and all who are truly his (John 15:5), whether as ripened or as yet unripened fruit, is but a minority of those who compose the great nominal church of to-day, it should be no matter of very great surprise. It would be but a repetition of the proportions of true and false in the end of the Jewish age.

Nor can any true lover of righteousness reflect upon the wisdom of the great Judge of all the earth, whose prophetic word shows that even so it shall be; for all such are the mourners in Zion (Isa. 61:3; Matt. 5:4) who have long realized the hindrance of the tares to the spiritual advancement of the church, and who will therefore be comforted in the Lord's judgments, even though the great religious systems, as such, are as completely thrown down as were the Pharisaism and

the Sadduceeism and the whole religious formula of the Jewish church which had stood for fifteen hundred years.

Nor has the true Christian any more reason to fear the consequences of such an overthrow of present systems than had the disciples then, for the Lord's work will not be left subject to confusion, or without organization for active duty; for when present imperfect organizations go down, the new organization—the true kingdom glorified, with Christ Jesus in the midst—will stand in its place; and “*unto him* shall the gathering of the people be,” and not unto some other man-made institution. Gen. 49: 10; Rev. 14: 6, 7.

We cannot diverge here to prove, by all the evidence at hand, that we are now living in the harvest period of this gospel age. Suffice it to say that so clear are the evidences of the ending of this age and the proximity of the promised kingdom of God in its glory and power, that it is very generally admitted by intelligent Christians. When John, in a measure of perplexity and discouragement, sent word to Jesus inquiring, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?” Jesus might have called up all the testimony of the prophets showing that the time and the circumstances, all the signs of the times, united in one testimony that this was the long-promised Messiah whose presence was due in the

end or harvest of that age. But Jesus evidently deemed the partial testimony of the signs of the times, to which he referred, as sufficient and conclusive evidence of these facts. So he replied, "Go, tell John what things ye have seen and heard . . . and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." Luke 7:19-23.

So we may briefly say now—Go, tell the inquirer the things that ye see and hear in fulfilment of the prophetic word: how this gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then the end, the harvest, is due. Remind them, too, that our Lord was looking down to the very end of this age, when he said to his disciples—to all of them, from then till now—"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves. . . . But he that endureth to the end shall be saved. . . . Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." Matt. 10:16-23.

The reference could not have been to his first advent, for he was then here, but was manifestly to his second advent in the glory of his kingdom. And the statement indicates how closely the time of the end follows the preparatory work of witnessing to all nations; for the cities of Israel were evidently used here in a typical sense to symbolize

all the nations of the world. It was parallel then to the other statement—This gospel must be preached in all the world, unto all nations, and then the end—and gives additional assurance that the end, the harvest, must immediately follow. Compare also Dan. 12:1, 4; Matt. 24:21, 22; Luke 21:25-27, 35, and mark in fulfilment the running to and fro and the increase of knowledge in these last days and the gathering clouds that indicate the approach of the tribulation so clearly foretold. These are prominent signs, sufficient of themselves, when observed as prophetic fulfilments, to mark the end of the age.

Granted, then, on the testimony that all may readily see, that we are in "the end," the harvest time of the Christian dispensation, it follows that the kingdom of heaven is *again at hand*, that the time is about fulfilled, and it is nigh, even at the doors. As it was in the end of the Jewish age, so now in the end of this gospel age, the special message to God's people everywhere is, "The kingdom of heaven is come nigh unto you:" not this time in the embryo sense, but in the sense of its completeness and its final establishment in glory and in power.

GOD'S TIMES AND SEASONS.

That may all be very true, says some one, but have we any right to pry into the times and seasons which God hath kept in his own power? No, we

have not: almost the last words of our risen Lord to his assembled disciples, just before his ascension, were, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 1:4-7. This was in reply to their inquiry concerning the time for the establishment of the kingdom—"Wilt thou *at this time* restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The question shows that they did not comprehend the sense in which the kingdom was really at hand. They were thinking only of the nearness of its triumph and glory; and of that glory they then had no higher conception than their release as a nation from the Roman yoke. And Jesus would not burden their minds with the knowledge of the long and weary march of the church militant to its then far distant triumph. It was better that they should not know, that so, in watchful anticipation, they might have courage to go bravely forward to the end.

It was for Israel to know that the time of the kingdom was then near; and this announcement should have found them, as students of the prophets, in glad anticipation, discerning the time from the prophetic indications; or, at least, in such attitude of heart as would promptly recognize the announcement to be in harmony with the sure word of prophecy. Here the nation at large failed: they were paying little heed to the

prophets, and, occupied with the things of the present life, they were neglecting what was both their duty and their privilege in this respect; and so that day came upon them unawares.

The same word of prophecy also showed that the King and all the heirs of the kingdom must come *first* in humiliation, and *afterward* in glory; but there is no indication that any of the disciples had understood this. Providentially, it would seem, their eyes were holden, that buoyant hope might assert itself, and that gradually they might become accustomed to the way of the cross with the crown in inspiring view.

So, in the end of this age, it is our duty and our privilege, as it was the duty and privilege of Israel then, to discern the times and the seasons when God's time has come for revealing them in fulfilment of the prophetic word before our eyes. It was for the neglect of this duty, and the consequent decline of vital godliness, that the wrath of God came upon the Jewish nation, as Jesus foresaw and foretold, and it was this that brought tears to the eyes of their rejected Lord.

The company of his believing disciples, even dimly discerning the time, caught its inspiration of praise and thanksgiving and "began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice . . . saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and glory in the

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highest." This outburst of praise seemed ridiculous to the unbelieving, self-conscious Pharisees, who said, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." But Jesus said, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city [Jerusalem—the city so loved and favored of God, so replete with hallowed memories, yet so unfaithful, so unbelieving], and wept over it, saying, *If thou hadst known*, even thou, *AT LEAST in this thy day*, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; *because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*" Luke 19:37-44.

To our similar duty in this respect Paul refers in 1 Thes. 5:1-9. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night: for when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. [Blindness to revealed truth and intoxication of the spirit of the world mark such as children of the night and not of the day.] But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is only this reverent, careful, watchful class that our Lord seems to indicate as worthy of his kingdom and glory, saying, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36. There is a crown reserved unto that day for all who love his appearing. 2 Tim. 4:8.

Moses says, "The *secret things* belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are *revealed* belong unto us and to our children forever," and, in his own time, says Daniel, "He revealeth the deep and secret things." Deut. 29:29; Dan. 2:22. All prophecy is in a measure secret at the time of

its utterance and cannot be fully comprehended until God either causes it to be fulfilled or else, through other inspired writers—prophets and apostles—sheds light upon it. When it is so revealed all who have faith in his word may read it, and should then remember that it was foretold. It then belongs to us because he has revealed it.

Therefore Peter says, "We have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye *do well* that ye *take heed*, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn [the millennial day of Christ] and the day star arise in your hearts [the day star of hope kindled by this very discernment that the time is at hand, the culmination of the glorious hope of the church]: knowing this first [before we begin to study any prophecy], that no prophecy of scripture is of its own solution." 2 Pet. 1:19, 20, *Emphatic Diaglott*. Even the prophets, holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit, did not understand the things they foretold, though they searched diligently, "unto whom it was revealed that *not unto themselves*, but *unto us* they did minister." 1 Pet. 1:10-13.

God gives and withholds according to our needs. Full knowledge in the past would have been discouraging to his people; but the reverse is true now. The glory of the established kingdom could have been seen then only across the vista of many

long centuries. In the dawn of this gospel age only the warfare of the kingdom was beginning; but now her warfare is nearly accomplished. The long waiting season will soon be over, and the weeping of the night will soon be changed to the joy of the glorious morning.

We may know, by clear and satisfactory evidence, that the day of Jehovah, "the day of his preparation" (Nahum 2:3-5), is come, and we may see his hand in foretold events transpiring, and, by these signs, discern what they were intended to teach—that the kingdom is near, at hand, even at the doors; but of the day and hour when it will be fully established in glory and in power, no man may know until it is an accomplished fact. And then every man will know it; for "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 40:5.

THE SECRET HARVESTING.

But bear in mind this fact, that when the kingdom established is thus revealed, all of the faithful *overcoming* church—the ripened fruit of the heavenly vine, the graduating class of this term of the school of Christ—will all have been *previously* gathered into it; for, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear *with him* in glory." Col. 3:4.

This gathering into the heavenly garner will have been done secretly, in a manner entirely unknown to the world. It is the work of the angel reapers gradually accomplished within the harvest period, and is under the direct supervision of the Lord of the harvest, whose unobserved presence prior to the appearing of his kingdom and glory is described as "like a thief." Matt. 24: 43, 44.

Within this harvest period "the dead in Christ"—those members of the overcoming church who died previous to the harvest period—"shall rise first." 1 Thes. 4: 16, 17. But their resurrection, not being to visible human conditions, will not be known to the world, for they will be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Phil. 3: 21. This accomplished thus secretly, without the slightest intimation to the world, the living ones in Christ, the overcomers now living who are counted worthy of the kingdom, shall all be changed, they also being made like unto Christ's glorious body. Yet in no spectacular way will this change be accomplished, for only in the instant of death will this mortal put on immortality. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall *all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. Previous to this harvest time all the dead in Christ must wait for a resurrection at the appearing of Jesus Christ (John 6: 40, 44, 54; 2 Tim. 4: 8), but

within this period there is no need of further waiting; so that for any of this class to die now is to experience the glorious change in that very instant.

Thus, stealthily, will this part of the harvest work be accomplished. The true, overcoming, victorious church will be silently and invisibly gathered together into the heavenly garner, while yet the church nominal stands in its accustomed place before the world, some saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;" and others saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming," etc. 2 Pet. 3:4; Matt. 24:48, 49. Thus will the Lord appear by and by to the world, and *all his saints with him* in the glory of his kingdom. Jude 14; Zech. 14:5. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints."

Since there will be nothing visible to mark the change and gathering of the elect church until the entire work is accomplished, it is clear that when the kingdom appears to the world, and when listless, drowsy Christians awake to a realization of the fact, it will then be too late for any others to enter into it. The door will be shut, the bride of Christ will be complete and glorified, and only those who so loved the Lord's appearing as to be watching and ready for it will be included in that happy company. 2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:11-15.

It was in view of this test of continual readiness for his sudden appearing that the church was so constantly urged to watchfulness and prayer: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness [intoxication of the spirit of this world], and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—Jesus. Luke 21: 34-36; Matt. 24: 42.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."—Paul. 1 Cor. 16: 13; 1 Thes. 5: 4-6.

"The end of all things [pertaining to this present age] is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."—Peter. 1 Pet. 4: 7.

But, thank God, when the door to this heavenly kingdom, this joint-heirship with Christ, is thus shut, and no more can be added to its elect num-

ber of reigning kings and priests, the door of God's mercy is not shut. No, "his mercy endureth forever," and from the newly established throne will be heard the voice of the spirit and of the bride: "And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22: 17.

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gal. 3: 16, 29; Gen. 28: 14. Thus the exaltation of this spiritual seed of Abraham to kingdom power is for the blessing of the world, the removal of the curse of sin and the establishment of righteousness and peace in the earth.

Discerning, then, as we now may, and as multitudes of Christians do, that we are living in the last days, the end, the harvest of this gospel age, it is now the blessed privilege of God's people everywhere to lift up their heads and rejoice, for their deliverance draweth nigh. Luke 21: 28.

Coupled with the message of the kingdom to Israel was the exhortation to repentance of sins, to that harmony of mind and heart which would secure its blessings. So here are similar exhortations, not only to the church, urging alertness and diligence to make their calling and election sure, and watchfulness against the encroachments of

sin, the temptations to evil and to unbelief and the deceptions of iniquity, but also to the world. For if the unbelieving world could realize the immense advantage that would accrue to them in proportion to their readiness to fall in line with the new and righteous order of things to be established in the earth, they might avert the necessity of the ruling of the iron rod that otherwise must dash to pieces as a potter's vessel the existing unrighteous order of things. Even the world is not left without prophetic warning of this:—"Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth." Psa. 2: 10-12.

The work of harvest, supervised by the Lord himself (Rev. 14: 14), will be accomplished with unerring precision, so that not one of the overcoming people of God will be overlooked, and not one of those who fall short of overcoming will be gathered into the heavenly garner:—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Rev. 3: 21; Heb. 4: 1.

This gathering of the Lord's elect will be immediately followed by the harvesting of the vine of the earth in the great tribulation such as never was since there was a nation. See Rev. 14: 18, 19; Matt. 24: 21, 22; Dan. 12: 1.

THE REAPERS AND THE GARNER.

That the important work of this harvest is not committed to human hands, we are clearly assured by our Lord in his parable of the wheat and the tares, prophetically showing the character and growth of the probationary kingdom in this age and the harvest with which it terminates. See Matt. 13: 24-30 and our Lord's interpretation of it in verses 36-43. Here we are told that the field is world-wide. It is not the idolatrous heathen world, but the now world-wide church or kingdom. Verses 24-38. It is stated that the good seed are the children of the kingdom, the seed sown by the Son of man; that the tares are the children of the wicked one, the seed sown by the enemy, Satan, at times when the church slept—when it forgot its duty of promptly purging out the leaven of iniquity and of watching that no evil seed should take root (1 Cor. 5: 6, 7); that the harvest is the end of the world (Greek *aionos*, age), and the reapers are *the angels*.

The parable, it will be seen, covers the entire gospel age. When, by and by, it is observed that everywhere the tares have sprung up and are flourishing and threatening even to choke the wheat, the question is raised by those solicitous for the welfare of the wheat—What shall we do about it? Though the wicked one has sown this

bad seed while we slept, can we not now double our diligence and root them out? (Verse 28.) To this inquiry Jesus answers, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest [I will attend to the separating] I will say to the reapers," etc.

Who will these reapers be, then? He answers, "The reapers are the angels." And in verses 41, 42, the reaping is shown to be a work of discriminating character and executing judgment.

As this is a work to be accomplished within the professed kingdom of heaven, the now world-wide church, and all are therefore professedly Christian, it is clear that the workers of iniquity among them cloak their iniquity with outward professions, and often with deceiving works. They are a hypocritical class, and this judgment is to the condemnation and punishment of all such. "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."

Again, in the parable of the net cast into the sea, gathering fish of every kind, which are finally pulled to shore and sorted, the same lesson is taught, and the angels are shown to be commissioned to sever the wicked from among the just and to cast them into the furnace of fire,

where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 13: 47-50. No human being is capable of performing such a work of discriminating judgment, and we are clearly forbidden to attempt it. Matt. 13: 28-30. Words cannot tell us more plainly that human instrumentalities in the separating work of harvest are rejected as incompetent. To admit such a claim on the part of any is to open wide the door to pretenders and persecutors.

Nor is there any intimation here that the separation is to be effected on doctrinal lines. While it is all-important that the people of God should hold fast the doctrine of Christ as learned from his Word, and this fidelity to divine truth must enter largely into the Christian character, the separations of the harvest are to be made on character lines—between the good and the bad, the workers of righteousness and the workers of iniquity, the children of God and the children of the wicked one.

So the sharp sickle in the hand of the Chief Reaper (Rev. 14:15) cannot be some form of newly discovered doctrine, the acceptance and promulgation of which by professed Christians will mark and seal the true sons of God, and the rejection of which will discover the long cloaked children of the devil. The test is clearly shown to be one of character, which arrays the workers

of iniquity, whatever may be their professions of faith, on one side, and the workers of righteousness on the other. In their righteousness, however, a living faith in Christ must figure; for out of Christ there is none righteous; no, not one. The real sons of God truly will all be sealed; not, however, with any human instrumentality, but with the holy spirit of promise. Eph. 1:13.

Observe, too, that the garner into which the wheat is gathered in this harvest-time is not some other visible organization, but it is the glorified kingdom of God:—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun *in the kingdom of their Father.*" Verse 43.

In considering this harvest work, a distinction must be borne in mind between the harvest of this age, described in Matt. 13, and that of the Jewish age, described in John 4:35-38. In the time of the Jewish harvest Jesus said, "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men [the prophets and others of their day] labored, and ye are entered into their labors."

There, the field was only the Jewish nation. Both the sowing and the reaping were confined to them; and not until they, as a nation, finally rejected their privileges in Christ, was this gospel sent to the Gentiles. Matt. 10: 5, 6; 15: 24; Acts 3: 26; 10: 1-48; 13: 45-48.

Our Lord, then present in the flesh, was the chief reaper; and his disciples also were reapers under his direction—first the twelve, afterward the seventy, and still more laborers were needed and sought. Luke 9: 1; 10: 1-20.

The garner into which the wheat of that age was gathered was the gospel church, the embryo kingdom then at hand. And the chaff was fanned away—the cast-off nation was scattered to the ends of the earth, and they went into that unquenchable fire of tribulation which has burned against that nation ever since. This, John foretold, saying, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." Luke 3: 17.

How unquenchable the fire of that tribulation has been upon that nation ever since they rejected and crucified their Lord, all the world knows. If for a time it is extinguished in one locality, it is only to break out in fury in another. And so it will be until the fire of God's anger shall have consumed their dross, as he declares by the prophet

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Isaiah (1:25), "And I will turn my hand upon thee and purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin." Then, in his great mercy, he will gather them again according to his promise. Verses 26, 27.

The harvest in the end of the Jewish age was on a smaller scale in every way than that in the end of this age; and if the reapers there, the disciples of Jesus, needed to be specially and miraculously empowered, as they were, for that work (see Luke 9:1, 2; 10:1, 17, 19, 20), how much more would the greater work of this harvest require special and miraculous power if the reapers were men; for the reaping here is the final gathering of the elect heirs into the glorious kingdom, the heavenly garner, and the burning of the tares in the fire of the great tribulation foretold by the Lord and the prophets.

THE ORDER AND OFFICE OF THE ESTABLISHED KINGDOM.

Thus far we have considered the kingdom of God in the sense only of its development during the gospel age and its subsequent glorious reign. While this has been the all-important theme of this age because of the work to be done here, yet our Lord and the prophets show that a similar work was accomplished in the ages preceding this, and that the coming kingdom is to appear in

two phases, one spiritual, the other human; the former selected during this gospel age, the latter during the preceding ages. When the kingdom is fully established these two parts will be in active communication and coöperation in the one great work of the incoming age—the restitution of all things.

The chief, the spiritual phase of the kingdom, will consist of Christ Jesus and his then complete and glorified church, whose higher exaltation will be for a wider field of service. Referring to this overcoming church, Paul says, "*We shall all be changed.*" 1 Cor. 15:51. John says, "When he [Christ] shall appear, *we shall be like him.*" 1 John 3:2. And concerning this likeness, Paul tells us that he is the brightness of Jehovah's glory "and the express image of his person." Heb. 1:3. And Peter tells us plainly that these exceeding great and precious promises, of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom, are to the end that we shall be made "*partakers of the divine nature.*" 2 Pet. 1:4. That is what "*like him*" means. That is what we are to be *changed to*. That is what it will be to put on *immortality*. 1 Cor. 15:53; 1 Tim. 6:14-16.

The very suggestion of such a height of glory truly staggers faith; but have we not read that "God, who is rich in mercy, *for his great love wherewith he loved us*, even when we were dead in

sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus"? Eph. 2:4-7. We now have this heirship with Christ by faith. By faith, we hold the pledge of it in the gift of the holy spirit, witnessing with our spirits "that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and *joint-heirs* with Christ, *if* so be that we *suffer with him*, that we may be also *glorified together*." Rom. 8:16, 17.

And does not Jesus confirm these statements of the apostles when he says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne"? Rev. 3:21. Does not Paul say that when Christ had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high? Heb. 1:3; 8:1. Did not Jesus again say to his disciples, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God"? John 20:17. And did not he who knew the mind of his Father, and who never asked anything that was not according to his will, pray, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me"?

Yes, and more: Does he not add, "That the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me"? John 17:23, 24. O wondrous love!

Fellow Christian, as you thus adjust the telescope of God's Word, do you not catch a glimpse of the dazzling glory of your high calling? of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory that shall reward your faithfulness in taking up your cross and following Christ, and *Christ alone*.

Consider further that these promises also point to a wider dominion than that of earth, and to a longer reign than the thousand years on earth. They plainly show a universal dominion, a dominion without end; for the throne of the Majesty on high is the throne of the universe, and has to do with the interests of the whole creation. In harmony with this teaching is the suggestion of Paul, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. 6:3.

Thus viewed, the purposes of Jehovah are wider even than the plan of human salvation; for, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times"—when the previous dispensations of his grace shall have accomplished their work and the time is fully ripe—he will "gather together in one all things in Christ, *both* which are *in heaven*, and which are *on earth*." Eph. 1:10. Then the millennial reign of the church on earth is not the full compass of the dominion to which we are

called; for it is written, "Unto the Son he saith Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," and his church is to reign with him. Heb. 1: 8, 9; Psal. 45: 6, 7; Rev. 3: 21.

Hear further how Paul tells us that the victorious church is to share this honor with her Lord:—"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance," etc. Then he prays that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of his calling—to be seated with Christ *in the heavenly places*. Eph. 1: 10-12, 17-22.

While this inheritance with Christ of all things, even to sit with him in the throne of universal dominion forever, as his bride and joint-heir, is the ultimate destiny of the victorious gospel church selected from among men since this gospel of the kingdom began to be preached in the days of John the Baptist, her more immediate work is the great reconstruction period on earth, the reign of a thousand years. Rev. 20: 4.

Since the work of the Christ—Head and body—goes so far beyond this, the reason will be seen for their change of nature from the human to the divine. Nothing short of the promised divine nature would be equal to the requirements of wisdom and power for the great work of universal dominion, or even for the great reconstruction work of the times of restitution of all things.

While it truly is a matter of great surprise that God would call any being, even his only begotten Son, to such an office, we are reminded of the fact that the Son was associated with the Father in the work of creation; for "without him was not any thing made that was made." John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16, 17. And so also God will honor him in the work of dominion. Thus our exalted Head is enthroned in glory: and if ye be Christ's, then are ye *heirs together with him*. Yet in all things he is to have *the preëminence*, as our Lord and Head. Col 1:18.

THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE KINGDOM.

While such is the nature and work, the high calling, of the victorious gospel church, the spiritual phase of the coming kingdom, it must, of necessity, be invisible to men. If it were not so, what happened to Saul of Tarsus when, on the way to Damascus, he caught a glimpse of his glorious Lord, arrayed in light above the brightness of the noonday sun, would surely happen to all men. They would be overcome and blinded by the view. In kindness and in mercy to men, that glory will be veiled.

Yet it is written that every eye shall see him and that all the heirs of the kingdom shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom. How can this

be? True, as yet, we can see these things only as through a glass darkly (1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 3:18); but it is our privilege to look through the glass. Paul has shown us that the whole law dispensation, under which Israel lived from the time of Moses to that of Christ, was a shadow of good things to come; and, as a wise scribe instructed of God, he brought forth from that storehouse the old things of that typical dispensation, to illustrate the new things pertaining to this gospel of the kingdom. See Col. 2:16, 17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1; Gal. 4:24; Matt. 13:52. So let us look through this same glass.

Moses, we are clearly told, was a type of Christ:—"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like *unto me*; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you." Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15. The typical kingdom of Israel was the kingdom of God on earth. 1 Chron. 28:5; 29:1, 23. God himself was the invisible, overruling King, and Moses, a type of Christ, was his representative—under God, a king and a priest to Israel.

Now how did God set up his typical kingdom and establish the authority of Moses as king and priest over that people? If God had spoken to Moses only, and Moses had declared his word to the people, they would not have believed nor

obeyed him. But God did more than this. Read *Exod.* 19:20; *Deut.* 4:7-13; 5:4-33; *Heb.* 12:18-21, 26, and mentally take your stand among that people when God was about to organize them as a nation under Moses.

Two days of preparation are given, when every family in the camp is making ready to appear before God. The bounds of Sinai are fixed; the orderly arrangement of the tribes about the mount is indicated, and in the morning of the appointed day, at the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, every man, woman and child assembles at the appointed place, waiting to see the glory of God appear and hearkening for his voice. Then the earth quakes and a great darkness falls upon the assembled host that seems to say: "Be still, and know that I am God." Infant arms entwine more closely about the mother's neck, and wives and children seek the shelter of manly strength; and as the thunders of Sinai peal and the vivid lightnings flash, strong men tremble; "And so terrible was the sight that [even] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." *Heb.* 12:21. Then the voice of God is heard out of the midst of the fire, from the heights of Sinai, saying, "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other Gods before me," etc.; and all Israel hears the divine law proclaimed by God

himself: "These words the Lord spake unto *all your assembly* in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more." Deut. 5: 22.

Then there is silence: and by and by there are suppressed whisperings throughout the awe-inspired host, and a delegation of the elders of Israel comes to Moses urging him to present their petition to God that he should no more speak to them directly, but that he should appoint Moses his mouthpiece to them, and promising obedience to his word as expressed through Moses. Then God accepted their petition and the authority of Moses was established. And not only was it established, but it was maintained to the end. Under this authority the nation was organized, the divine law and its rewards and penalties were clearly set forth, the divine worship was instituted, and under this arrangement Israel lived until the advent of Christ.

Now all this was a "*shadow* of good things to come"—of a better kingdom and of better promises. For God will set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and not only Israel, but all nations, shall honor and obey him. How will he do it? "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1: 7. So God came to Israel: and every eye saw—what? They saw the glory of God, the glory of awe-inspiring, supernatural

demonstrations of his presence and power. Exod. 24:17. And they saw Moses radiant with a glory which they could not look upon, so that Moses had to veil his face when he talked with them. Exod. 34:33-35. Thus, in this typical glass, we see the glory of Christ revealed, yet veiled in some sense, and the glory of the kingdom revealed to all flesh.

If it was important that the authority of Moses should be established in Israel by supernatural demonstrations to the whole people, who will say that no supernatural demonstrations to the whole world will be needed here to establish the authority of Christ? All the testimony of the Word indicates a sudden and marvelous appearing of the kingdom and glory of Christ, and a clear and positive recognition of his presence and authority and power by all men. They will be as fully convinced of these things as was Israel when the pillar of cloud and fire led them through the wilderness, and when the divine law went forth from Mount Sinai, and when the divine rewards and penalties were a constant experience. But beyond these indications it is unwise to speculate; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts and ways higher than ours. We can safely follow only where he leads.

THE EARTHLY PHASE OF THE KINGDOM.

But, as we have stated, there is to be another phase of the kingdom which will be visible and human. The manifest object in the establishment of this phase of the kingdom is its personal, visible contact with men and the affairs of men, and its privilege of direct communication with the higher spiritual phase of the kingdom.

This earthly phase of the kingdom will be composed of the overcoming people of God who lived and died prior to the first advent of Christ—all of those who faithfully walked with God and so made their calling and election sure. Heb. 11. The resurrection of this class also is due within this harvest period. It was so stated to the prophet Daniel, a representative of all of this class, when the angel from God said to him, 'Go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest [in the grave] and stand in thy lot [have a resurrection and reward] at the end of the days.' Dan. 12:13.

But it is nowhere stated that this class is to experience a change of nature in the resurrection, that they are to be made partakers of the divine nature and like unto Christ's glorious body. These promises were made exclusively to the gospel church, while the ancient worthies have

a part to act in the benevolent plan of our God which will require perfect human nature; and that, with all the honors of the visible kingdom, will be their satisfying portion and exceeding great reward.

These will receive their appointments in the kingdom from Christ, to whom it is said, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." *Psa. 45: 16.* Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, were the fathers of Christ according to the flesh, but in the new dispensation Christ is the everlasting Father (*Isa. 9: 6*), and they, brought to life again by his divine power, will be the children. And being worthy children, proved loyal and faithful in their day of trial past, they will be ready for the high offices that await them in the new order of things.

Looking again to the establishment of the typical kingdom, this visible phase of the kingdom seems to correspond to the elders of Israel who were permitted to go part way up into the mount with Moses, and of whom it is said, "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God and did eat and drink." *Exod. 24: 9-11.* Evidently this was a vision of God corresponding to that of *Isa. 6: 1-5*

and Ezek. 1:26-28, also Rev. 4:2-5, and was given to those elders to prefigure the nearness to God and the privilege and glory of the earthly phase of the coming kingdom. But Moses, who typified Christ, ascended to the top of the mount and abode in the divine presence. Exod. 24:12-18.

In harmony with this, too, is the prophecy of Job, another of the ancient worthies, who says, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:26, 27.

The distinction of these two phases of the kingdom is clearly marked by our Lord in his reference to them separately. It was to the higher, the spiritual phase of the kingdom exclusively, that Jesus referred in Luke 7:28, saying, "Among those that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he that is least in *the kingdom of God* is greater than he." Again, in reference to the *earthly phase of the kingdom*, he says to a certain unworthy class, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Luke 13:28. Thus all the ancient worthies, all who lived and died and made their calling and

election sure, all the overcomers prior to the first advent of Christ, are shown as belonging to the earthly, visible phase of the kingdom, and not to the higher spiritual phase of it. And attention is very clearly drawn to the great preëminence of the latter in the statement that the least one in it is greater than the greatest in the former.

How great, then, is the privilege of those in Christ in this age, when the purpose of God in the selection of the heirs of this higher phase of the kingdom is being accomplished! How great the privilege of running the race set before us, of pressing toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, the like of which was never offered before, and never will be again when the door to it is once shut! How great the incentive to diligence in the school of Christ, that we may pass the final examination and graduate from its discipline into the glory of the kingdom! How precious the thought of being the first ripe fruit of the "vine" so highly prized by our Heavenly Father, and so gloriously displayed as the subjects of his most abounding grace. Eph. 2:7. Yes, it is all of grace—abounding, yes, amazing grace! for there is no intrinsic worthiness in the creature to command such favor. "Let God do what he will with his own," will be the language of every *loyal* heart, each one taking his assigned and privileged place in that divine order in which the whole creation shall rejoice and be glad.

A GREAT AND REJOICING MULTITUDE.

But now, perhaps the reader's thought again recurs to that fruit in the vine which is Christ, which is not yet ripened when the time has come for his appearing and kingdom; those who, though not ready in time to be of the spiritual phase of the kingdom, and who are not therefore counted worthy to escape those things that shall come to pass (Luke 21:34-36), are nevertheless protected in the storm of divine indignation that shall punish the inhabitants of the earth. Isa. 26:20, 21. Where shall they appear when the glory of the kingdom is thus manifested to all flesh?

Jesus answers our question, saying, "They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." Luke 13:29. Observe how this will be: Of all flesh that remains after the kingdom in its two phases is thus established, we see still standing the professed Christian church and the unbelieving world, all equally surprised and taken unawares. Luke 21:35; Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Thes. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15. In the professed Christian church there are still two classes, the true and the false; the former being branches in the true vine which is Christ; the latter

professing the same, but not so recognized of God because their hearts are not right, as their unrighteous works prove. From the true vine only the ripe fruit, the overcomers, are gathered: the unripe still remains and the true and the false still grow together.

So when the kingdom is established we see one of these classes rejoicing, even in the midst of the tribulation, and the other weeping and wailing. Those in the former class realize that they were not sufficiently advanced in the school of Christ to be ready in time for the high office of the exalted kingdom, but they have no complaint to enter against God on that account. They rejoice in the unfolding of his gracious purposes, even though they realize that his good work in them is not yet completed. They are truly in Christ, and their faith now taking a firmer hold on his precious promises, their grateful attitude is, Now, Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do? How can I help on this glorious work of the world's reformation, for which the kingdom is established?

Then they are shown their privilege of coöperation with the established earthly rulers. And lo! they come from all quarters of the now world-wide field—from north and south and east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the visible earthly kingdom; not, like

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them, as "princes in all the earth," but as zealous co-workers with them, under their direction. See also Rev. 7: 9-17.

A WEEPING AND WAILING MULTITUDE.

Those in the other class are in very different mood. They covet the honor and prestige of the now reigning kings and priests unto God, and, failing to acknowledge their unfitness for it, they demand admission to the kingdom, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." And when the Lord declares that he never did recognize them because their hearts were not right and their lives were not consistent with their professions, they urge their former acquaintance with him. But the answer comes, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth the will* of my Father which is in heaven." "Many," he says, "will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Such, he shows, have built their hopes upon the sand and not upon the rock. Matt. 7: 17-27; Luke 6: 46-49; 12: 45-48.

Both of these classes, it should be observed, are classes within the professed Christian church; for the heathen world never had any such hope, and therefore cannot be of either. And both of these classes will include, not only a multitude of those who are living at the time of the appearing of the kingdom, but later also a multitude who shall come forth in the resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust.

THE CITY WHICH HATH FOUNDATIONS.

That the higher, the spiritual phase of the kingdom, will be set up first is clearly shown by Paul's statement in Heb. 11:39, 40. After enumerating a representative list of the ancient worthies prior to our Lord's first advent, he says: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us [this spiritual phase of the kingdom], that they without us should not be made perfect."

They did not, then, go to their reward at their death. When they finished their course they "received not the promise," but, nevertheless, it was secured to them by their faithfulness and their faith. It was this gospel of the kingdom, though not of the kingdom at hand, that was

preached before unto Abraham (Gal. 3: 8), which led Abraham to look for a city—the new Jerusalem, the heavenly kingdom (Rev. 21: 2)—which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heb. 11: 10.

But neither Abraham nor any of the ancient worthies could know anything of God's spiritual phase of the kingdom. This was not then revealed; for even the prophets who wrote concerning it were told that "not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister." 1 Pet. 1: 10-12. The features of this gospel of the kingdom which Abraham and his class did understand to some extent were those features relating to their inheritance in it, which will be earthly and human.

Their glory will be the "terrestrial," the earthly glory—the glory of a perfect humanity, and with all the honors of the kingdom added to it. Hear how earthly was the promise made to Abraham:—"And the Lord said unto Abraham, . . . Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all *the land which thou seest*, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. *Arise, walk through the land*, in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Gen. 13: 14-17.

Now hear Stephen say, "And God gave Abraham none inheritance in the land; *no, not so much as to set his foot on*; yet he promised that he would give it to *him* for a possession, and to *his seed* after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7:5. And Paul assures us that Abraham died in full faith in that promise of God. Heb. 11:8-10, 13.

Mark, the promise was not only to the posterity of Abraham, but to Abraham himself as well. What is the conclusion? Evidently *Abraham is coming back to get that land*; to get it for *himself* and for *his posterity*. It will be an earthly possession surely; and when the kingdom is established and its blessings begin to be realized, then "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Micah 4:4.

COÖPERATION OF THE TWO PHASES OF THE KINGDOM.

As the city of Jerusalem included more territory than Mount Zion, which was within it, so the kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem, will include more than the gospel church, the spiritual kingdom. It includes the kingdom in both its phases, Mount Zion, in this view of it, typically representing

the higher, the spiritual phase, and Jerusalem its earthly phase. These two parts will be in active communication and coöperation, the law going forth from Mount Zion, the glorified spiritual kingdom, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, the literal seat of the earthly kingdom. See Isa. 2: 3; Micah 4: 2.

A volume might be written on this line, showing the earthly inheritance and the perfect earthly rulers under the guidance of the higher powers in the "times of restitution of all things," and with a "Thus saith the Lord" on every page; but space forbids enlargement here.

This view of the kingdom presupposes the recognition by faith of the promised resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, and that the incoming age, the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth, is the great reconstruction period, the "times of restitution of all things," within which sin and sinners are to be dealt with, and the issue of which is to be the full establishment of righteousness in all the earth.

Indeed, nothing short of this should be expected by the church, which, through all the period of her existence, has voiced the prayer taught by her Lord, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done *in earth, even as it is done in heaven*;" and in view also of God's explicit declaration—"As the rain

cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55:10-13.

Fellow Christian, if these pages have enabled you to catch a glimpse of the glorious, benevolent purposes of our God in the coming establishment of his kingdom, then, as you repeat this prayer of our Lord from day to day—"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—do it *in faith*; for these are not empty words, and your soul will catch the inspiration of this glorious gospel of the kingdom, and your Bible will tell you, as never before, what God has in reservation for them that love him, and how wise and just and benevolent are his plans for the salvation of the world. We have here but lightly touched upon this vast subject, only to send you more eagerly to your Bibles, that the inspired eloquence of prophets and apostles may the more fully instruct you. So may this little cup of the water of life send you again and again to the fountain which *alone* can *satisfy* the thirsty soul. And so, refreshed from that inexhaustible fountain, may your grateful heart respond with

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the beloved John to this good news of the glorious kingdom *at hand*—to the blessed assurance of Jesus, "Surely I come *quickly*"—"Amen. Even so, come, Lord, Jesus."

"When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?
Can ye come out to meet me, whate'er the cost be,
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?"

