

THE

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No. 1.

"THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN."*

MY YOUNG FRIENDS—On this occasion of assembling to resume our labors, a shade of sadness is cast over our meeting. A void has been made among us. It has pleased Him in whose hand are our times, to call away from his work in the church, your esteemed instructor, Rev. James M. Willson, D. D. The hope cherished at the close of last session, that the summer vacation would avail to restore his wasted strength, so that with renewed energy he might fill his place in the Seminary this session, has been disappointed. He is not, for God has taken him. His labors on earth are finished. No more will his presence cheer you, and his instructions aid you in your studies. To his family, to the seminary, and to the church, his removal is a loss. To himself, I doubt not, to die was gain.

He was well fitted for the place to which he was assigned by the church. Gifted with mental powers susceptible of high cultivation, he improved with diligence the favorable opportunities afforded him for that end. His literature was varied and substantial. He was a close and laborious student. He loved learning for its own sake. The exercise as well as the end of studying afforded him enjoyment. What came from his lips or from his pen, generally evinced earnest thought, sound judgment, and acquaintance with his subject. He possessed eminently the qualifications of a teacher. It was his delight to be among his students, and he was singularly successful in gaining their confidence and esteem. With you, my young friends, I sympathize in this visitation of Providence. Let us, however, remember that God has done it, and bow in resignation to his will, which though to us is mysterious, we are sure is wise. It gives me pleasure to state to you, that the Board of Superintendents have promptly made provision to fill for this session the vacant chair, by the appointment of the Rev. David Scott—a ripe scholar, a sound divine, and a tried and proved defender of the Covenanted Testimony.

* Introductory Lecture at the opening of the session of the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary, Allegheny, Nov. 6th, 1866, by Professor Sproull.

The condition of public affairs, while it affords some ground for congratulation and thanksgiving, is not without indications that produce apprehensions as to the future. The political cauldron is boiling with terrible violence. The minds of men are deeply agitated with regard to the result of the antagonism between the executive and the legislative departments of the government. Fears are entertained that the sword of civil strife will be again unsheathed. Confidence in public men is greatly weakened. The instability of human institutions is seen and acknowledged. The condition of affairs described by our Lord as signs of his coming, seems to indicate the nearness of that event. "Distress of nations, with perplexity. The sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory." Luke 21: 25-27.

To this promised advent of our Lord, the eyes of Christian patriots are turned in these times of national peril. When human agencies have shown themselves to be wholly unable to guide the ship of state through the storm that endangers its safety, it is a relief to know that there is One "who by his strength setteth fast the mountains, being guided with power; who stilleth the noise of the sea, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people." The animating words, so often sung to the praise of God, have now a most comforting significance:

"The Lord sits on the flood, the Lord sits King and ever shall;
The Lord will give his people strength, and with peace bless them all."

To the subject of the coming of Christ to establish his kingdom on earth at the millennium, I propose to direct your attention in this lecture. My plan is to show,

- I. *That his coming will not be literal in his human nature.*
- II. *That it will be metaphorical in displays of his power and glory.*

I. Christ will not come in his human nature to the earth, at the millennium. It is important to use the right terms to express the subject under consideration. On this point we object to the language generally employed by those who contend for a literal advent. They speak almost invariably of the *personal* coming and the *personal* reign of Christ. The word "personal" is here improperly used. As the principal term in the definition of the question, it either contains an error, or raises a false issue. If it is used to express simply the visible appearing of Christ in his human nature, then it ascribes personality to that nature, which is heresy. If it is used in its proper sense, then it is an implied assumption that those who reject the idea of his visible appearing, deny that he will reign personally on the earth. We believe and maintain that Christ will reign personally on the earth during the millennium; and we go further, we believe and maintain that he is reigning now personally on the earth, in the exercise of the authority to which he asserted his right before he ascended: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The presence of Christ, wherever he is, is a personal presence, his reign is a personal reign. It is the Mediator, who is a divine person, and is omnipresent, who reigns now, and who will continue to reign over all things. On the subject of the personal presence of Christ on earth, and his per-

sonal administration of the affairs of the world, properly understood, we have no controversy with its advocates.

That the advent of Christ at the millennium will not be literal in his human nature, will appear from the following considerations :

1. It is not demanded by the design and end of his coming. I am aware that to reason *a priori* in regard to any of the purposes of God and their accomplishment, is neither modest nor safe. It is this mode of reasoning that has led many of the votaries of “science falsely so called,” into the mazes of infidelity. If a fact or a doctrine is clearly established by Scripture testimony, it is arrogant in the extreme to use the *cui bono* argument against it. But as this very argument is employed on the other side in this controversy, and if I am not greatly mistaken, is the one that has been most successful in making converts, I may, without presumption, employ it in support of my position.

The design of the coming of Christ at the millennium is to destroy the works of the devil, reclaim and recover the entire world from his usurpations, and restore peace and happiness to the human family by the removal of the curse entailed by the fall. The description given of the effect of his coming, in the prophecies of both the Old and the New Testaments, warrant the belief that it will produce a state of happiness greatly like that enjoyed in Paradise before the fall. In every respect, whether physical, moral or religious, man will be elevated to the highest point which he is capable of reaching in this state of being.

But in order to accomplish this, is the presence of the humanity of Christ necessary? To us it is clear that this question must be answered in the negative. The destruction of Satan’s kingdom cannot be done by a nature, but requires a person. It is not the work of humanity, but of divinity. Satan’s kingdom extends over the whole world, and demands for its overthrow an omnipresent power. It received its death-blow when our Lord, by his resurrection, was declared to be the Son of God with power. In his ascension he led captivity captive, “he spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly.” “The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” His manifestation in the flesh was necessary in order that he might make atonement for sin; but by his incarnation he received no increase of power to cope with and defeat his enemies. It is indeed the God-man Mediator, and as Mediator, that gains the victory; but it is not by human, but by divine power. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”

Nor will the visible presence of Christ be necessary to the happiness of the saints in the millennium. Their happiness then, as well as now, will be spiritual in its nature. The intercommunion between them and their Head will be through the Comforter, now in the church, and in the millennium given in measureless abundance. Visible communion with Christ when on earth was necessarily limited to the few who had access to his bodily presence. It was not till after he ascended, and the Comforter came, that the circle of fellowship was widened to embrace all who in every place call on his name. To know Christ since his ascension, after the flesh, would be no help, but a hindrance, to communion with him. This he taught to Mary, shortly after his resur-

rection: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." The condition of the presence of the Comforter on earth is the presence of Christ's humanity in heaven. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you." Through him, and not through sensible intercourse with the humanity of Christ, will the communion be carried on between the Head and the members. And to me it would seem to be nothing less than dishonor to the Comforter, to seek the blessedness of which he is the appointed channel of communication, by visible association with the humanity of Christ.

The opportunity of seeing and conversing with Christ, were he on earth, would be enjoyed by but comparatively few. As man he is not omnipresent. Of the countless millions who will people the earth in the millennium, the greatest number could not get to see him at all, and the visits of those who should enjoy the privilege must necessarily be few and far between. If to be in his bodily presence is that which shall give fullness of joy, with what unsatisfied longings will their souls be oppressed who can never approach him, and with what painful feelings will those who enjoy the privilege turn away from the beatific sight which they can never more expect to see again on earth. Suppose he makes Jerusalem the royal city, what better will it be to the inhabitants of this continent, who if they even could visit him, could not remain there, than if he were still in heaven? To them the change from spiritual to sensible intercourse with Christ, would be the closing of every avenue of enjoyment, and the overshadowing of their souls with impenetrable gloom. How different from this is the description of the millennium church, under the metaphor of "the holy Jerusalem that shall come down out of heaven from God." "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of those that are saved shall walk in the light of it." Rev. 21: 23, 24.

2. The terms by which the coming of Christ at the millennium is described, do not demand that it be literal in his human nature. This presents the precise point in controversy. We are here brought into direct issue with the advocates of a literal advent. On the terms by which Christ's presence and reign on earth are expressed, they are willing to rest the whole argument. If they are dislodged from this stronghold, their cause is lost.

The Greek word *parousia* is in several instances employed in the New Testament to express the presence of Christ at the millennium. It is generally rendered "coming" in our translation, but properly means "presence." The verb *pareimi*, from which it is derived, means not motion, but rest; literally, "to be with or beside." The noun should always be rendered "presence." It has been confidently asserted that this word, in connection with Christ's appearing at the millennium, always means his visible presence. This is just begging the question, and all that is needed to meet it is the assertion of the opposite with equal confidence.

The presence of Christ in some of the forms of its manifestation, is also expressed by a word that signifies motion. An instance of this is Matt. 16: 28, "There be some standing here that shall not taste of

death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” Did our Lord mean here his coming at the millennium? Torture itself could not wring this interpretation from his words in the connection in which they were uttered. That coming must have taken place within the lifetime of the persons of whom he spoke. It doubtless meant his coming by his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and may include his coming in his judgments on Jerusalem. There is here, then, a presumptive argument for our position. If a word that means motion, when applied to Christ expresses a manifestation and not a literal coming, may a word that does not mean motion, but rest, much more express not a literal but a manifestative presence.

There is a satisfactory reason why *parousia* should have a figurative meaning when applied to Christ. A mere man cannot be present in any other way than by his body. But Christ being a divine person, is everywhere present. His *parousia* is the manifestation of his personal presence. One mode of this manifestation was in human nature. “God was manifested in the flesh.” Wherever that nature is, there is the manifestation of his personal presence, for that nature is inseparably united to his person. But will any one say that the Son of God is not as really present where this nature is not, as where it is? Or will it be said that in no way but by his humanity will he manifest his divine presence? These assertions will hardly be made. He evinces his presence by his works of mercy and of judgment, by which he manages the affairs of his kingdom. Why then may we not, why should we not understand the coming of Christ at the millennium as meaning the manifestation of his presence and power in establishing his kingdom in the world?

The phrase “the coming of the Son of man,” is evidently taken from Daniel 7:13, “I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.” Words of similar import are employed by other prophets. Is. 26:21, “Behold the Lord cometh out of his place;” chap. 40:10, “Behold the Lord will come with a strong hand;” chap. 63:1, “Who is this that cometh from Edom?” Mal. 3:1, “The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.” These quotations are sufficient to show that the coming of the Lord was an event clearly predicted. It will hardly be contended that in all these instances a visible advent is meant. Such literal interpretation would make the prophecies a collection of absurdities. Now when our Lord spoke of his coming to establish his kingdom, he employed terms that were suggestive of these predictions, and pointed to their fulfillment. What they meant, he meant; otherwise in place of shedding light on the prophecies he obscured them. The coming of the Son of man is the fulfillment of the promises and predictions in the Old Testament of the manifestation of Messiah, in whatever way he is pleased to reveal himself.

In his discourse to his disciples, a short time before his death, our Lord spoke in plain terms respecting his coming. He had told them that there would not be left one stone on another of the temple they so much admired. The fulfillment of this prediction they were led to connect with his coming foretold by Old Testament prophets. Hence

the two inquiries which they propounded, "When will these things be? and what will be the sign of thy coming?" Matt. 24: 3. They had evidently very confused views of the subject, for as yet they were under the delusion that his mission was to set up a temporal kingdom. To correct their misapprehensions and instruct them in regard to the object of his advent, was the design of this discourse. He told them that his coming would be sudden as the lightning flashing from the east to the west; that it would be introduced by fearful judgments, and to no one was the time of it revealed. This last intimation was for the express purpose of stirring them up to watch for his coming. All this is easily understood on the hypothesis that his coming meant a manifestation of his presence in his providence, but utterly irreconcilable with the opinion that it meant his visible appearing at the millennium, many centuries after the persons addressed should have gone to their final resting place. On this interpretation, the exhortation, "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come," would present a groundless motive to urge an important duty. If the disciples understood that this coming would not take place till long after they were dead, then the motive had no weight; if they believed that it might take place in their lifetime, then they were deceived. If by his coming Christ meant his visible presence at the millennium, then he mocked his disciples by enforcing the duty of watching by a groundless reason. It is clear that both he and they understood that he meant a manifestation of his presence that might be made to them while on earth, and that would be made in an eminent manner to the world at a time far future. From this consideration it is clear that the terms in which the advent of Christ is expressed do not demand a literal, but do demand a figurative interpretation.

3. The tenor and teachings of Scripture are against a literal advent at the millennium. It is agreed on both sides that Christ will come in his human nature to this world. This was made known to his disciples just as he ascended to heaven. The two men in shining apparel who remained behind the heavenly convoy, cheered their hearts with this confiding assurance: "This same Jesus who is taken up from you, shall come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This coming will be to judge the world at the last day. To this announcement Paul evidently refers, Heb. 9: 28, "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." The coming of Christ at the judgment will be, in the manner of it, like his departure from the world. Christ in his ascent was accompanied by a glorious retinue of angels. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand—thousands of angels." "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive." Angels shall accompany him also when he comes to judge the quick and the dead. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, foretold this: "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints (holy ones), to execute judgment upon all." Our Lord distinctly asserts it: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." In these passages it is shown that the manner of Christ's coming to judgment will be like his ascent to heaven from Mount Olivet. This will be his second appearing on earth, in our

nature; and as it will be at the last day, it excludes the idea of the presence of his humanity on earth, after his ascension, until he comes to judge the world.

His coming at the millennium will be in a different manner, and for a different end. He will come then, not as judge to settle forever the destinies of angels and men, but as a conqueror to crush a rebellion and reduce to subjection a revolted province. Answerable to this are the terms in which that event is described in Scripture. I cite two passages, one from the Old and the other from the New Testament. In Isaiah 63:1-3, there is a mental panorama of this sublime scene. The church is the spectator, and she describes what she sees in wondering inquiry, “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?” The response is, “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” And to the further inquiry, “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments as one that treadeth in the winefat?” he answers, “I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me, for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.”

No one will contend for a literal interpretation of this passage. As a figurative representation it most forcibly describes the work of the exalted Mediator in subduing the world and establishing his kingdom in it. The same scene is described by John, Rev. 19:11-16, “I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on it was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, clear and white. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

The whole connection of this grand description shows that it is intended to represent Christ's victory over his enemies at the millennium. It is not his coming to judgment, but his coming to a conquest and triumph. Will there be a literal exemplification of this vision? Shall human eyes ever behold this sight of unsurpassed grandeur? Desirable as this might be, we are constrained to say no. But results of which this is but a faint description, will be accomplished by Christ when he comes to make all his enemies his footstool.

The advent of Christ at the millennium is nowhere called his second coming. That designation is used expressly for his coming to judgment. When the period fixed in the eternal decree for the duration of the present order of affairs shall come to an end, then will he come in like manner as he went up into heaven. Then to them that look for him he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation. That will be “the time of the restitution of all things, which he hath spoken by

the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began,' Acts 3:21; and until then the heavens must receive and retain him in his human nature. And the scenes by which these respective advents will be followed evince that they are highly different in their times, their manner, and their end. When at the millennium Christ shall take to him his great power and reign, the kingdoms of the world shall become his by voluntary submission, and he shall dispense to them for a thousand years the richest blessings. But when the grand assize shall have ended, the result is expressed in the graphic sentence, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

Remainder in next No.

THE FOREIGN MISSION.

A CORRECT account of any great public enterprise, that has for its object the promoting of the welfare of man, must be, to every attentive reader, both interesting and profitable. Interesting, as it reveals the first origin, unfolds the inner life, and marks the outward growth of that which as successful is much admired, and whose influence is widely felt. Profitable, as it supplies new evidence that means feeble in themselves, and agents weak in number, when accompanied and supported by the divine blessing, are potent for good, and so furnishes a powerful incentive to engage in and prosecute to the end every good work with zeal and confidence. The pity is that generally all such movements attain so much importance before public attention is directed to them, that it is almost impossible to obtain a full and entirely correct account of their early history. The persons engaged are so much in earnest that they have neither time nor inclination to collect materials for the future chronicler. Others are not willing to notice with favor or in any way lend a helping hand, until the experiment has been tried and proved a success. Then it is too late to go very far back and write fully and correctly the origin. Of all great benevolent enterprises of modern times, none lies nearer the heart of the Christian, or is regarded with more favor by him, than the "Foreign Mission." None at first encountered greater opposition or at last accomplished greater results. The success thus far, all believe, is only the beginning. The few blades that already have sprung up, are but to prepare us for the great harvest soon to be gathered. It is by the "Foreign Mission" the world is to be evangelized.

With propriety and in strict truth, it is called a "modern enterprise."

The apostles, it is true, were the pioneers in the work. They were the most zealous of all missionaries. For many years, even for centuries, their successors labored in the same cause, and not without effect, for, as the result, many in all parts of the civilized world embraced Christianity. Whole nations were at least nominally converted. The word "had free course." This zeal, however, did not continue long in the church. A cold formalism came over her. Practical religion be-

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II. THE advent of Christ will be figurative, in displays of his power and glory. He will manifest his presence at the millennium,

1. By the infliction of terrible judgments. God is said to come down from heaven when he is about to call men to account for their crimes. This language is employed to express his dealings with the rebels in the plain of Shinar. "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the children of men builded." Gen. 11:5. The meaning of such language is, that he manifests his presence by special displays, of his justice and power in punishing sin. "The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth." Ps. 9:16. The Egyptian magicians pronounced concerning the plague of lice, that they could not counterfeit. "This is the finger of God."

That calamities of special severity will be sent on the world at the beginning of the millennium is what the condition of things demands, and the Scripture clearly teaches. Then will the world's long rebellion against its Maker be brought to an end. Then will the usurper who claimed the earth as his kingdom, and the whole human family as his subjects, be expelled. But will this be accomplished without a struggle? Will the prince of this world surrender, until he is conquered? He will fight it out to the last. Knowing that he has but a short time, he marshals all his hosts, and puts forth the most desperate efforts. The nations of the earth all along deceived by him, remain faithful to the last, and lend their aid to perpetuate his kingdom. It is meet and proper that the Captain of the Lord's hosts should take the field and get glory to his name in overcoming his enemy. Besides, a manifestation of his presence in the judgments with which he will destroy Satan's kingdom will be needed to support and cheer his faithful subjects in the trials to which they will be subjected. In the decisive battle, the commander-in-chief leads the army, that he may receive the honor of the victory.

The final conflict for the government of the world is in prophecy

called "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:14. That is the time when the nobleman having returned from receiving his kingdom will reckon with his servants for the trust committed to them. And then will be executed the terrible threatenings pronounced on the citizens who said, "We will not have this man to rule over us." "Those mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me." Luke 19:12; 14:27.

It is when performing this work of judgment that Christ presents himself to the wondering view of the church as described, Isa 63:1. At first she fails to recognize him, and inquires, Who is this? And when he assures her that he is her Saviour and Lord, she with adoring admiration continues her inquiry, and learns more of his doings. This presence of Christ in his judgments is the fulfillment of another announcement by the same prophet. "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. 26:21.

We are taught moreover in prophecy to expect a change of procedure by the Mediator when about to assert his right to govern the world. Daniel in his vision of the four beasts saw at a certain juncture, "one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people and nations should serve him." Dan. 7:13, 14. It is clear from the place that this occupies in the vision that it is a description, not of Christ's ascension to heaven, but of his entering on his work of subduing the world to himself, and it warrants us to expect a display of his power in the work that will evince his presence as clearly to the faith of his people, as was the presence of one like the Son of man to the view of Daniel in the vision. By the severity of his judgments, and by the manifest retribution inflicted by them, it will be seen that he is about to cut short his work in righteousness. And this is the feature of the administration that attracts the attention of the four and twenty elders when they celebrate his victory. "We give thee thanks, Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." Rev. 11:17. And in another vision relating to the same glorious event, John saw the mediatorial angel standing in the sun, summoning with a loud voice all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven to the supper of the great God; that they might eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all free and bound, small and great." The whole imagery of this grand symbolical representation exhibits most clearly the Mediator as the central figure working out the grand problem of redemption to his people in the destruction of their enemies.

2. By the abundant outpouring of his Spirit. The Holy Spirit, a distinct person from the Son in essential relation, identifies with him in economic work. What the Spirit of Christ does, Christ does; and where the Spirit of Christ is, there Christ is. There is a difference between Christ's omnipresence and his gracious presence. In his essential presence he is everywhere, in his gracious presence he is only where

he is manifested by his Spirit. "If Christ be in you, the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom. 8:16.

The manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was the accomplishment of prophecy. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2:28. It was also the fulfillment of Christ's promise to his disciples, "If I go away I will send the Comforter unto you." John 16:7. And while it is true that in every gracious work of the Spirit Christ is present, he especially discovers himself to his people when he blesses the appointed means for the conversion of multitudes. This was the case on the day of Pentecost, which was itself but a partial fulfillment of the comprehensive and far-reaching promise, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." What was then limited to Jerusalem shall at the millennium be witnessed throughout the world. When by the diffusion of his word and the infliction of his judgments, Christ shall have prepared the world for rejecting Satan's dominion, and declaring its allegiance to himself, he will send forth his quickening Spirit, who will at once effect the mighty change. This will be as sudden as the work on the day of Pentecost. And in this will be seen the point of our Lord's comparison. "As the lightning cometh out of the east and showeth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." As the flash leaps from the bosom of the cloud, illuminating the entire field of the beholder's vision, so will the omnipresent energy of the Spirit dispel moral darkness, and reveal Christ in his power and grace. "Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

In the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, this work of the Spirit is presented to view by most expressive imagery. The prophet saw a valley filled with human bones, dry and bleached. This represented the condition of the world on the eve of a great revival. The resuscitation of bodies from these bones and the communication of life by the instrumentality of the prophet, represent the power of the word by the blessing of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of the world. Thus it is explained, ver. 13,14, "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and shall put my Spirit in you and ye shall live." In the resurrection of the two witnesses, Rev. 11, the same divine agency is employed, and for the same end: "The Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." Called by a voice from heaven, they ascend up in a cloud. The testimony of Jesus, maintained by a few amidst scorn and persecution, will then be publicly and everywhere believed. When the "Spirit is poured out from on high, the wilderness will become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the peacefold. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."

3. By the establishment of righteousness on the earth. "In the second petition, which is, Thy kingdom come, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced." The petition presented so often shall receive an abundant answer. By his judgments the Mediator will utterly break down all combinations against his authority. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him."

The transition through which society is destined to pass, is from chaos to order. Worldly institutions shall be demolished, that divine institutions may be established in their stead. When "men's hearts are failing for fear and for looking after these things that are coming on the earth," then "shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Man's extremity is God's opportunity. When God shakes not only the earth, but also heaven, it is that he may establish a kingdom that cannot be moved. When the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, then, according to the promise, he will create new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

One grand feature of the political change that shall take place, will be the administration of national affairs by the saints. The world is now, and has been almost always, governed by the wicked. The spectacle, inconsistent and unsightly, of the enemies of Christ in the possession of power, is exhibited in our own country. And this not for the reason that Christians have failed to elect God-fearing men, but for the reason that they have failed to attempt even to secure by constitutional provision, that none but such should be eligible. Vile men are exalted and the wicked walk on every side.

In this regard the change will be thorough and radical, when Christ takes to him his great power and reigns. On this point the testimony of Scripture is explicit. Daniel 7:18, "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever." Verse 27, "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Rev. 20:4, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Luke 22:28-30, "Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father has appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The Son of man will appear in power and glory at the millennium in manifest retribution on all nations that reject his authority, in the abundant outpouring of his Spirit for the conversion of the world, and in the establishment of national institutions on the foundation of righteousness. "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

And now, ere I close, let me suggest the practical lessons that this subject inculcates:

1. It is not safe to have mistaken views of the presence of Christ at the millennium. Error is never safe. On this subject some think that the idea of a literal presence might be tolerated as a harmless and pleasing thing. But if it tends, as it undoubtedly does, to divert the mind from the true end of the manifestation of Christ, and thus take away the motives to labor for the introduction of his spiritual kingdom, it is

hurtful and pernicious. Mistaken views of the manner and end of his advent, when he came into the world in our nature, led to his rejection by the Jews. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." The glare with which excited minds invest a literal advent, leaves his coming in its true character without attraction. To this, as one cause, we may ascribe the indifference, if not opposition, with which attempts to have Christ acknowledged in the constitution are met in evangelical churches. Learn, then, from the word of God, the truth, and embrace and defend it.

2. The church and the world have trials of no ordinary severity to undergo. God will shake both the heavens and the earth. He is shaking them even now. The churches and the nations are agitated to their foundations. And this process will go on until all things that can be shaken are removed. Nothing will remain but the things that cannot be shaken. Let no one indulge the delusive hope that the time of tribulation is at an end. In the impending danger there is only one place of safety. "Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, and hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

3. There is a present duty to which all are imperatively called. The Son of man is on his way. "Rehold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." This is no time to slumber. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he shall return from the wedding. As the witnesses of Christ, contend for his rights. Urge on the nation his claims to be recognized as its Lord. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

4. A glorious prospect opens to the church and the world. The coming of the Son of man is the great event that will introduce the long expected season of peace and happiness. Soon shall he bless the world with the benefits of his benign and righteous government. He is even now approaching. He is coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah. He is traveling in the greatness of his strength among the nations of the earth. The blood of the oppressor in both continents is sprinkled on his garments and stains his raiment. Soon may he be expected in the effusion of his Spirit, when he shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. Then shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace shall be on the earth. And soon, too, shall the new heavens and the new earth, where dwelleth righteousness, come out of the chaos, by his plastic power. In view of all this, how appropriate the new song which all the world is called on to sing to the Lord:

"Let heaven be glad before the Lord,
And let the earth rejoice;
Let seas and all there is therein,
Cry out and make a noise.
Let fields rejoice, and every thing
That springeth from the earth,
Then wood and every tree shall ring
With gladness and with mirth
Before the Lord; because he comes,
To judge the world comes he,
He 'll judge the world with righteousness,
The people faithfully."