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ARTICLE III.

WILL THE GRAND CONSUMMATION, GIVING THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD TO CHRIST, BE INTRODUCED UNDER THE DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT?

By Rev. Joseph Steele, Castleton, Vt.

WHAT question can be of greater practical importance to the church of Jesus Christ, at a time when so many signs proclaim the day near at hand. Already the millenarian sees it at the door, and concentrates his plans and efforts upon those duties which harmonize with such expectation. He feels dissatisfied with the tardy and far reaching plans of benevolence, and earnestly demands that the church give up her dreams of evangelizing the world, and hasten to gather in the last gleanings of the vintage. In all the aggressive movements of the day, and the success which has crowned them, he sees no cheering indications. In his view, the world is only waxing worse; the gospel is only a proclamation and not the power of God for the world's salvation; the good for which it was designed is nearly accomplished; and nothing great, nothing important, touching Zion's prosperity, is to be anticipated until the Redeemer shall come in person. On the contrary, a large portion of the church, adopting other views, and reading their duty in harmony with the expectation that, under the dispensation of the Spirit, the heathen are to be given to Christ for an inheritance, are laying plans and combining their energies to send the gospel to every creature; confident that the great harvest is yet to be gathered. In their view the cause is making progress, the signs betoken success, and the blessing of God upon their efforts is the seal of his approbation. They fancy that the systems of paganism are becoming decrepit, that the throne of Antichrist is tottering, and that the year of jubilee is near.

Views so widely dissimilar must exert widely different effects.

How far the Millenarian views, if generally adopted, would change the direction of the church, experience has not yet taught us; but it seems manifest to us, that the effect would be dispiriting and disastrous in the extreme. The influence of opposing views may fairly be estimated from the past. No era in the history of the church is more clearly marked, than that of modern missions, and the fact is well established, that the originators and most active promoters of them, held the doctrine, that the world would be subjugated to Christ under

the dispensation of the Spirit. The first appeal to the churches on the subject of a general concert made by ministers in Scotland, more than a century since, is founded upon this doctrine. President Edwards took up that appeal, and urged it with great force on the same ground. Fuller and his compeers, who actually established the Monthly Concert, out of which grew the work of missions, held the same sentiments and made them the spring of their enterprising zeal. It would be a deeply interesting work to trace the history of the missionary spirit as it grew and expanded in the minds of these devoted men, in connection with the great idea that the world is to be converted to Christ. They acted under a sense of responsibility for the accomplishment of this; they felt that the work depended upon the Holy Spirit; and they prayed that the Spirit might be poured from on high. An unusual spirit of prayer was gradually diffused in the churches. Christian benevolence and enterprise increased. From step to step the work advanced until it has become the wonder and glory of the age. Let any one ask the question, what would there be left if all which has evidently grown out of the missionary character of our times were blotted out, and he will readily perceive how much it has accomplished. Can it now be believed that such fruits have sprung from an error so important as that of mistaking the object of the present dispensation, and the great end of Christ's second appearing? We grant there is danger in judging either doctrines or practice by *immediate* results; but if the Saviour's rule has any value, it is safe to judge both by their fruits when the experience of a century has fairly proved of what kind they are.

Such views and the results which have followed are in admirable harmony with the general object and plan of redemption. We know that the dominion of Satan in our world is a usurped dominion. By seducing man to sin, the great deceiver found opportunity to mar the work of God. Changed from love of God to hatred, from loyalty to disobedience, man became the willing subject of Satan. This triumph Satan has maintained hitherto; and so successfully has the strong man armed kept his palace, that he is rightfully styled "the god of this world." Could he but *retain* this dominion, his triumph would be complete. This cannot be. The truth and honor of Jehovah are both engaged to trample Satan under foot, and give the heritage to his beloved Son. How is this to be accomplished? It is plain it might have been done by an exertion of almighty power, and in this way the holy angels may have expected to see it accomplished, when man fell. This however was not the method his wisdom chose; and in the first promise made to the fallen race, he declares that the usurped domin-

ion shall be recovered by the "Seed of the woman." So it has been up to this hour; all that has been recovered has been recovered by Christ. Not one subject has been regained since Adam fell, except through the work of redemption. So it will be, it is reasonable to conclude, with the whole promised dominion of Christ; and it is highly probable in itself that this dominion will extend over the whole earth. If Satan continue to the end, lord of this world, as he has been hitherto, how is he despoiled of his usurpation? If he hold his dominion as long as the world stands, will he not seem to have maintained his supremacy? Or if the gospel age shall terminate, and Christ appear in power and glory before he is dethroned, will it not be the *power of God*, not the *Seed of the woman*, which bruises his head? This thought becomes the more convincing when we consider what vast preparations are made in the gospel for the express end of man's recovery; and, though *designed* for the whole world, they have been made effectual hitherto only to a limited extent. The command to preach the gospel to every creature, with the promise that in it shall all the families of the earth be blessed, clearly indicates a glorious triumph. If now the success of the gospel continue to be limited, as it has been, will it not seem to be a failure? Will there not be an appearance, at least, of undertaking to build, and not being able to finish? Is it not most reasonable to suppose, after the Son of God has made a sacrifice of his life for the avowed purpose of destroying the works and the power of the devil, that he will, *by that sacrifice*, accomplish the end?

Is it not also to be expected that Jesus Christ, "who suffered shame and reproach in this world, and was condemned and put to death as a malefactor by man, should have this reproach removed in the sight of all men, and that the cause in which he suffered and died, should prevail and be victorious in this same world where he suffered and died, and he be exalted and extolled and be very high." The enemies of Christ have always hated and derided the cross, and have tried all means to overturn it. They even laugh it to scorn, and insultingly boast that Christ can never reign on the earth by means of the cross. Shall they not be disappointed, and their arrogant falsehood be made apparent? The great question now at issue is, not the supremacy of God, but the supremacy of the cross of Christ. With all his malice, Satan can aspire to nothing greater than to hinder the success and tarnish the glory of the cross. This is his great object. Can it be possible that he will prevail? Another of his cunning wiles is, to make it appear that Christianity is nothing better than any other system of religion, or any moral theory; and more than this, that it is

often evil and mischievous. How shall this artifice, which has so largely prevailed in every age, be overthrown, unless it be shown by experiment on a large scale, in the general spread of the gospel, that this, and this only can renovate the world. Thus will the long delay of the gospel triumph give full opportunity to manifest the insufficiency of all other means, and cover them with merited disgrace, and also render its final triumph much more illustrious. In this way, God will make foolish the wisdom of this world. It is said, all these ends will be attained by Christ's second coming — that when he appears "in the glory of his Father with all the holy angels," his enemies will be confounded and Christ be honored. Be it so; yet if it is accomplished by *the glory of the Father*, it is not done *by the cross*; nor can we conceive that the glory of the second coming should have any influence to take away the reproach that the cross is of none effect, or to make manifest that it is the power of God unto salvation.

The doctrine that the world will be subjugated to Christ under the dispensation of the Spirit, is also confirmed by the importance given to the work of redemption. This is the grand work of time. For it the world was created and man formed upon it. Its history, drawn by the pen of inspiration, shows that all events look to this as if it were the grand object; and designed, more than all things else, to advance the glory of God. Hence the angels look upon it with so great admiration, and are filled with exalted praises when they contemplate its mysteries. As it is the work of time, so time must last till it be complete. The results also must be commensurate with the importance of the work, and fully answer to what is said of the power of the gospel, which "is as the fire and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." To us it seems incredible, that a work which the Scriptures so delight to magnify, a work which has been introduced with such an array of preparation, and which gives promise of results so vast, should be brought to a sudden termination when it has scarcely made an impression upon this world of sin, and when the dominion and the greatness of it under the whole heaven is still in the hands of Satan. What becomes of the promise, "It shall bruise thy head," if Satan is forever the oppressor? Does not the Scripture view of the work of redemption carry us forward insensibly to the conclusion that it will make conquest of the world? The Scriptures indeed tell us of "the glory of his power, and the brightness of his appearing," not however as means for carrying on this work, but as results following from its completion. When the work is done, then shall the end be, and *then* will Christ "come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." We are aware that it may be said, that

the results are not small even on the present scale of success — the number who have been redeemed is already immensely great — and if in fact are reckoned in the number of the saved, we may fairly estimate the whole company of the redeemed as exceeding that of the lost. This does not in the least abate the force of the argument, because it does not alter the fact that the power and glory of this world *is* and *ever has been* in the hands of the usurper; and the cause of Christ is trodden down and oppressed. If all the oppression of Christ and his people in our world is only the bruising of his heel, we again ask, what becomes of the promise, "It shall bruise thy head?"

This remarkable prophecy claims particular notice. It is the first on record, and contains the germ of the whole history of redemption. God says, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This enmity, and the fruits of it, in bruising the heel of Christ, are apparent in the suffering and dishonor which Satan has been instrumental in bringing upon him; and in the opposition he has made to the interest and church of Christ in the world. This determines the nature of the contest, and who are the conflicting parties. It is a war, not between God and Satan, but between the Redeemer and the seducer — the seed of the woman and the seed of Satan. The conflict dates from the day of the curse, and the history of the church is the history of its progress. What is the result thus far? Is the head of Satan yet bruised? This no one pretends. The most brilliant successes of the cross have been in the midst of the most powerful opposition of the Adversary; and the church has felt the bruising of the heel in persecutions, and opposing stratagems at every step of her progress. At no time has Satan's dominion in the world been broken. Past results then show us what is meant, by "bruising the heel." True criticism obliges us to interpret one part of this passage by the other — to make the war begun and carried on by the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, to be ended with them — and to look to have it continued and ended in the same state and by the same means that it has been thus far waged. It follows that this world is the battle-field, and the gospel and the cross are the means by which the victory is to be gained. "Bruising the head" must come in the same order of works with "bruising the heel," and it will come when all the cunning artifices of Satan are defeated, and Christ triumphs by means of the gospel. Can anything short of this answer to the language of his prophecy?

The promise to Abraham is to the same effect — "In them shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This promise, which the

apostle expressly applies to Christ, carries the blessing to all the kindreds of the earth. The nations of the earth can be blessed in Christ, only by being made subjects of his kingdom; and the promise cannot have its fulfilment unless the nations are subdued by the gospel, and by means of the gospel, Christ reigns over the earth. It is a miserable evasion of the argument from these and similar passages, to represent that this promise may be fulfilled by the destruction of the nations which are now upon the earth, and by peopling it again from the multitudes of the pious dead, with nations who receive Christ and are blessed in him. God is able "to raise up children to Abraham from the stones in the street," but had he done this, as being more simple and easy than to convert men by the Holy Ghost, would Christ have seen of the travail of his soul, even though the new creations had exceeded the sands of the sea? God is able to build "new heavens and a new earth," and to people it again with holy beings, but what has this to do with the promised *fruit* of Christ's sufferings and death? The promises we have been considering relate to the nature and results of the mediatorial work in this world; and it is absurd to trace their fulfilment in other worlds and by other agencies.

In John 12: 31, 32, we have a strong confirmation of the interpretation we have given to those passages. Then Christ, in anguish of soul prayed, "Father glorify thy Son;" then came a voice from heaven saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." As this voice was not understood by his disciples, though expressly designed for their instruction and benefit, Jesus condescends to explain its import. This he does by saying, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me;" thus teaching that the voice from heaven was the assurance of the Father, that by means of his sufferings and redemption work, the head of Satan should be bruised, and all the nations of the earth be blessed in him. "By his appearance in this world," says Prof. Tholuck in his Commentary, in loc. "by his last passion and death, Christ realizes the highest *ὕπακοή* (obedience) and in so doing he breaks down the dominion of sin; the kingdom of God comes in with power; the rejecting judgment of God against wickedness is fulfilled; and the Saviour beholds Satan like lightning fall from heaven. Luke 10: 8. For if the power of the kingdom of evil is broken down by that great fact of Redemption, then is the power of Satan, who is the ruler of this kingdom, broken with it." The casting out of Satan, and the drawing all men to himself clearly refer to the same event; the one looking more directly to the overthrow of hostile forces, and the other to the salutary effects

of Christ's own agency through the gospel. The drawing will be co-extensive with the breaking down of Satan's kingdom, and in this full accomplishment of both, the glory of the latter day will appear. Such we think must be the import of Christ's words. The whole tenor of Scripture in reference to the nature and ends of the mediatorial work, leads us irresistibly to the conclusion that the great conflict between Satan and the seed of the woman, will be settled under the dispensation of the Spirit. Its great design is to despoil the usurper and give the inheritance to the Redeemer. Hence when Christ appears, Satan falls like lightning from heaven.

Let us now turn to those prophetic promises which speak of what the church is to be. Her future glory is the theme of prophetic rapture in the Old Testament and in the New. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the hills." "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it." "The stone cut without hands" shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. These are a few out of many Scriptures which speak of the glory which is to come. Shall this be under the dispensation of the Spirit? We appeal to the Scriptures themselves for the answer. The question, be it remembered, concerns not the arithmetic of prophecy, but only the correct interpretation of the language itself; and our eyes are strangely holden, if this does teach us to expect the promised glory before the end of the present dispensation. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: 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; for *out of it* shall go forth the law, etc." We ask now of what age or dispensation does the prophet speak. The description and imagery is by no means suited to such a heavenly state as is supposed to succeed the destruction of this world; neither is it suited to any other age or dispensation. It is appropriate only to the present dispensation, and a time of great and general prosperity to the church. A time when men seek after knowledge, when the law goes forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, when the spirit of war gives place to love of peace, and when the gospel is made effectual to the nations by the Holy Ghost. The present dispensation is exactly fitted for such a time as this; what other dispensation is?

The time when "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," Isa. 40: 5, must be the time of the grand consummation; but the precursor of this renders it certain that it be-

longs to the dispensation of the Spirit. It is the voice of John, crying in the wilderness; it is preparing the way of the Lord; it is all the work of the gospel, and it all belongs to gospel times. In like manner "the stone cut without hands" makes its way to fill the whole earth, breaking in pieces and consuming all other kingdoms, showing the work to be progressive in its character, and also that it belongs to the *age* to which the kingdoms belong which are subdued by it. In the second Psalm we have the solemn decree of the Father that the heathen shall be given to the Son for an inheritance. By what means is this decree, which secures the glorious triumph, to be executed? The prophet tells us, "the king is set, or *poured out* — upon the holy hill of Zion," the well known figurative denomination of the Christian church. Does not this clearly indicate that the church is to be the instrument? Does not a king conquer by means of his subjects? The expression *I have poured out my king* — may be equivalent to — 'I have constituted my king by pouring out my Spirit;' and then it refers to the abundant and glorious out-pouring of the Spirit on the primitive disciples, and to those still more abundant effusions of the same Spirit, yet to be enjoyed, in which Christ "shall come down *like rain* upon the mown grass; as *showers* that water the earth. Are not these the means indicated by the prophet? But the grand condition of the performance of the decree is, asking. Though the decree is irreversible, it is not to be performed but upon this condition. Yet the prescribed *asking* is not to be made by the Messiah in his own person only; else how shall we account for the long delay? In himself has not the desire ever been as strong as it can be, and in this sense has he not long since asked in the fulness of his soul? But there is a constructive oneness between Christ and his people. As they are to be joint-heirs with him in this profession of the promised ascendancy, so they are united with him in the condition of fervent supplication. If then the church is joined with Christ in *the asking*, if he as king conquers by his own people, if the glory of his kingdom comes through the out-pouring of the Spirit; can it be doubted to what dispensation it belongs? We read in Ps. 82: 2. "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him." This will be the day of Zion's glory and triumph: and this day comes through the dispensation of the Spirit. What language could more clearly describe his effectual operations, causing guilty men to remember their former ways, and turn from them unto the Lord? And thus it is that the kingdoms of the world are given to Christ, and all the kindreds of the nations are made to worship before him. These passages may suffice to show what is the

general tenor of the Scriptures, when speaking of glory which awaits the church of Jesus Christ upon the earth, and the means by which it is to be brought about. This is the appearing of Christ in the abundant out-pouring of the divine Spirit, and in the glory of the redemptive work, — not his final appearing in the clouds of heaven.

There is a beautiful harmony between this view of the coming and those parables of Christ which speak of the progressive character of the gospel. The grain of mustard seed, from the smallest beginning, grows to the largest size. The leaven, by a sure but gradual process, leavens the whole lump. In both the process may be more rapid at one time than at another, owing to the increase of heat, or some other favoring circumstance, but the same principle remains, and advances to the end, when the *whole lump is leavened*. Did not the divine principle begin to operate when the Holy Ghost was poured out at the Pentecost? Will it not continue to operate till the *world* is renovated? Do not these parables absolutely exclude the idea of the breaking up of the present system before the glorious result shall appear? How can they be made to harmonize with the supposition that the *age of the Spirit* must end, and Christ appear in a new dispensation before the promised glory come?

The triumphant reign of Christ upon the earth is abundantly established by the prophecies both of the Old and the New Testament. Daniel, in the vision of "the great image," speaks of this kingdom, as "a stone cut without hands, which became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." Again in the vision of the "four beasts," he describes it as the kingdom given to the Son of man and to the saints of the Most High, which is to supercede all other kingdoms. In the Revelation the same glorious kingdom is represented in three distinct visions. The first is at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (chap. 11: 15,) when "there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Again, in the first verse of the 19th chap. the same thing is described by the marriage of the Lamb, consequent upon the fall of Babylon and the judgment of the great whore. In the first verse of the 20th chap. it is again mentioned, as consequent to the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and the binding of Satan, which follows upon the destruction of the last of his allies. That these all refer to the same event is evident, from the resemblance of the things described, and from the inapplicability of either to any other predicted event. Whatever is meant by the prophets of old in their descriptions of the glory which is to come; the same is meant by "the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdom

of Christ;" by the "marriage of the Lamb;" and by the saints "reigning with Christ a thousand years." The difference in the descriptions is only the difference resulting from different points of observation. The question which concerns the present discussion is, do these refer to the second personal advent of Christ? As there are other passages which speak of this advent about which there is no dispute, and which are very explicit; we must learn from these what this advent is to be. Passages of doubtful import are to be determined by those which are plain.¹ "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go up into heaven." "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God. . . . And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God,—And when he shall come to be glorified in his saints. Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all. And as it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." See also 2 Pet. 5: 7—10.

These Scriptures, we think, establish the following points beyond all controversy, viz. that Christ will personally appear in our world but once more;—that the great object of that appearing is the general judgment including both the righteous and the wicked,—that all the dead will then be raised, and all be judged; "for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,"—that the world will then be burned up, the righteous be taken to heaven, and the wicked be cast into hell forever. Now if such be the design and ends of Christ's coming, the prophecies referred to can have no reference to it; for they clearly indicate that this world is to continue after the event of which they speak; and John expressly informs us that it will be followed by the battle of Gog and Magog, and that again by the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment (Rev. 20: 7—15). The resurrection and the judgment here described are general in the fullest sense. The dead small and great are raised, the books are opened,

¹ Acts 1: 11. Matt. 24: 30, 31. 1 Thess. 4: 16. 2 Thess. 1: 7, 9. Jude 14. Heb. 9: 27, 28.

and the book of life also, proving the judgment of the *righteous* as well as the *wicked*. It is idle therefore to pretend that this describes the resurrection and judgment of the wicked *only*. No description of a general judgment in the Bible is more explicit. Besides, there is not one passage in the visions of Daniel, or of John above referred to, which contains any such mention of the second advent, or of the general judgment as appears in the passages we have cited; not one from which it would be possible to *prove* the doctrine of the second advent. Daniel has been thought to refer to this, when he "saw one like the Son of Man come with the clouds of heaven, and come to the Ancient of Days—and then sees given him dominion and glory and a kingdom." But it should be observed that the coming here spoken of, is not to *this earth*, but to *the Ancient of Days*; that is, to the throne of God in heaven; and this was fulfilled when Christ *ascended in the clouds of heaven, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*.

In the visions of John there is no proof of the second advent. We look in vain for such proof at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, or in the vision of the marriage of the Lamb, or of the binding of Satan. It is said that the appearance of Christ and of the armies of heaven, in the vision of the destruction of the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 19: 11) is proof that this refers to a personal advent, because Christ can be a symbol of no one but himself. But we find an appearance of the same Person in the same characters essentially, in the vision which precedes the letters to the churches of Asia. The argument therefore proves a personal advent at that time as really as at the time here referred to, which is not true. Much stress has been laid upon the 20th chapter of the Revelation. But there is nothing here indicative of the second coming. The vision represents the old serpent bound by a strong angel, and cast into the bottomless pit, the saints seated upon thrones, and the souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus living and reigning with him a thousand years. This is the whole of the vision, unless we consider what is said respecting *the rest of the dead* as a part of it. Here it is certain that the binding of Satan with a *chain* cannot be understood literally, but must refer to some effectual restraint put upon him. In like manner the reigning of the saints, sitting upon *thrones*, is not to be understood literally, but as having reference to their great power and dignity and prosperity when Satan is restrained. The souls of the martyrs living with Christ, has no fitness to symbolize the resurrection of their bodies, but is the appropriate representation of such a state of prosperity as if all the martyrs had come back to the earth, to live in triumph and to pervade the earth with their spirits. The coming Saviour forms no part of the

vision. Could a feature so important have been omitted, or overlooked by the prophet, if it had formed a part of the event described? Moreover, this vision does not embrace the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment, both of which are *inseparable* from the second advent. John expressly informs us (vs. 7—15) that the resurrection and final judgment will both take place *after the thousand years* are expired. What John saw in this vision is called a *resurrection*, indeed, and so is the recovery of lost sinners called a resurrection (see Luke 2:34 in the Greek). True it is called a "*first resurrection*," which implies a *second*; as much as a "*second death*" implies a *first*; but as the first and second *deaths* are different in their nature, so may the first and second *resurrections* be. There surely is no *proof* here that the bodies of any of the saints will be raised previous to the millennium; and without the aid of other Scriptures, not even the great fact of Christ's second coming would be established. The obvious design of these visions seems to be, to exhibit the providence and grace of God moving on with increasing majesty and power to the *final conquest*; in the destruction of Babylon and the great whore; of the beast and the false prophet; and of all the allies and resources of Satan; and as the last act in "bruising his head," fitly introduced when his power is utterly broken, he himself is taken and shut up. Then is Christ's conquest complete; his kingdom appears in glory, his saints are exalted and blessed; and the "bruised heel" is recovered in restoring the memory of those who have been slain for Christ, and in making them to live in the general prevalence of their spirit and power upon the earth. Thus will all the prophecies be fulfilled which describe the prosperity of the church in the latter days. But how or when are they to be fulfilled on the supposition that the end of time immediately follows the destruction of the antichristian system? What existence has the church upon the present earth but in the wilderness? How shall we reconcile the idea of Christ's second coming at a thousand years' distance from the last judgment, or, as some will have it, 360,000 years, with those Scriptures which make them inseparable; which teach us that the wicked "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; WHEN HE SHALL COME TO BE GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS, and to be admired in all them that believe IN THAT DAY? How can the account of Satan's being loosed after a thousand years' restraint, and going forth to deceive the nations, and to gather together the armies of Gog and Magog, be made to comport with a state of immortality, or with the condition of men after their resurrection? Will the sea and the grave give up their dead to become followers of Satan in a new enter-

prise, and not rather that they may "be judged every man according to his works?"

Many of the prophecies relating to the Jews furnish the strongest evidence that the day of Millennial glory will come through the dispensation of the Spirit. What else can be the import of Hos. 3: 4, 5? The children of Israel are now and have been since the destruction of their city, in the condition described by the prophet, "without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim." As the first part is fulfilled and fulfilling, so must the remainder yet be fulfilled. "Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." This remains to be accomplished by the operations of the divine Spirit. For it is his peculiar work to cause men to *return and seek the Lord their God*. Nothing short of their conversion to God can be a fulfilment of this prophecy.

In the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul teaches with great clearness, that there is to be a general conversion of the Jews, which is to be in some way consequent upon the conversion of the Gentiles, and attended with the most important and desirable results for the rest of the world. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" We have seen the *casting away* of the Jews, but not the *receiving of them*. This event is not to take place till after the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; that is, after the conversion of multitudes of them. According to the apostle, the event of receiving the Jews is to come *through the mercy shown to the Gentiles*, not as the result of the crisis of estrangement; and the Gentiles therefore are to be instrumental in the restoration, through the blessing of God upon the gospel. Nothing is said of the restoration being sudden, or effected by miracle, or consequent upon the second advent. If these things belong to the event, it must be learned from other parts of the Scripture. It is not taught by the apostle, as might be expected, if such were the fact; for no one of the New Testament writers refers more often, or with greater animation, to the second coming. As if to cut off the possibility of mistake, Paul tells *how* the event is to be brought about: "And so all Israel shall be saved." That the Jewish people are meant by Israel, is certain from the context. How, then, are they to be saved? Just in the way in which the prophets had foretold. "Then shall come *OUT OF ZION* the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. As for me, this my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my Spirit, which is upon them, and my

words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." How was it possible for Paul more clearly to have fixed the event to the dispensation of the Spirit? How strangely at variance with this is the theory which makes the recovery of the Jew to result from Christ's second coming, at the crisis of the world's degeneracy! and not from the lifting of the veil from their heart by the Holy Ghost, and the Deliverer coming out of Zion; — the church so long perpetuated by Gentile converts.

Every reader of the Bible has noticed those numerous Scriptures which speak of a *great general outpouring of the Spirit in the latter days*. The views which we have advanced make these intelligible and precious; every other theory makes them difficult, and tends to divest them of interest. Christ taught that the descent of the Spirit was more important than his bodily presence, a truth which seems to be overlooked by those who see nothing important or decisive accomplished till he appear again. The predictions relating to the Holy Spirit are in agreement with Christ's teaching. They magnify the work of the Spirit and the results of his agency. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses." "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh, etc." The apostle Peter has assured us that this prophecy of Joel related to events which were to happen under the Christian dispensation, and that the scenes of Pentecost were a specimen of what would be abundantly displayed. They could not have been a full accomplishment of the prophecy, because the few thousands affected on that day will by no means answer to the expression "all flesh." Neither was there a complete fulfilment of the prophecy in the success of the gospel in the apostles' day, which, though great, did in fact reach but a small proportion of the world. "All flesh," does not necessarily mean every person; but it surely indicates more than a mere fraction. Can it mean less than that the Spirit, in power and fulness, will be to the whole church what it was to the primitive disciples, and to the whole world what it was to the multitudes on the day of Pentecost? Do not this and other predictions of the abundant outpouring of the Spirit, look forward to the times when "the watchmen shall lift up the voice together — when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb — when the Lord shall extend peace to his church like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream?" Do they not refer

mainly to that last great onset in the mighty conflict, which is to be followed by voices in heaven, saying, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever?"

God has put large honor upon the Holy Spirit in the prophecies. To leave these unexplained, or to enfeeble them by limiting the results to the rescue of a few captives, here and there, out of Satan's wide dominions, is to degrade the Divine Spirit from the place where prophets in their visions beheld him. The triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom depends upon the *abundance* of the Spirit. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." "My kingdom is not of this world." It wants no central government established upon this earth; it wants not the pomp of this world; for "the Lord God himself will be the glory in the midst of it." It is a spiritual kingdom, and needs only that the Spirit "come down like showers upon the mown grass," to cause "the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose," and the glory of the Lord so to be revealed, *that all flesh shall see it together.*

We frankly confess we have no sympathy with those views of prophecy which shut out the glorious advent of the Spirit, and which give to the militant church no place on earth except in the wilderness: or else so blend the heavenly with the earthly as to join her with the holy dead raised with spiritual bodies to take part in a monarchy which belongs neither to this world nor the next. This is to confound the Millennium with the New Jerusalem which follows it. All our feelings are in harmony with the command of Christ, "*Go ye into all the world,*" is still binding; and the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway even to the end of the world," is the cheering watchword which cannot fail till the gospel is preached to every creature. We love the doctrine of Christ's second coming, — coming as the conqueror who *has subdued* all his and our enemies. We believe "God is not slack concerning his promise," but that he is preparing all things as fast as possible for the judgment of the great day, "when the Lord himself shall descend, and *all* that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." An important part of this preparation is the triumph of the seed of the woman by the complete overthrow of Satan and his cause. We see not how the way is prepared for God to vindicate his own character, or for Christ to enjoy his triumph, till every obstacle to the spread of the gospel has been surmounted, till every strong hold of sin has been demolished, till every opposing power has been routed, and Satan himself bound and shut up. The letting loose of Satan for a little season, after the thousand years are ended will only

serve to show that his evil disposition is unchanged, and that it is fit he should be cast into the lake of fire, to go no more out forever.

We are confident that this view of the kingdom of Christ is suited to excite and support the faith and patience of Christians, and give fervency to the prayer, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Such effects have appeared during the last fifty years, and they will be more apparent as the church comes more fully to understand that the day of prosperity shall come. Days of degeneracy and trial will only strengthen the confidence of the faithful that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet shortly." We know not what commotions and fearful judgments shall be upon the earth; nor what the present shaking of the nations betokens; yet are we assured that Providence will unite with the agency of the Spirit to give the result. "Our Redeemer is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name. Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand." Whose heart does not kindle with gratitude and zeal while he contemplates the work to be done and the glory that shall follow? Who will not cry,

"Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

"Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy!"