

Of the Millennium, or Personal Reign of Christ With the Saints on the New Earth a Thousand Years.

by John Gill

The Millennium is the personal reign of Christ on earth, where he will rule with his saints for a thousand years, bringing glory and joy to the saints and preparing them for the ultimate glory.

Scripture: Revelation 20:4

Topics: "Hope of Resurrection", "Millennial Reign of Christ"

Description

John Gill preaches about the future personal reign of Christ with the saints on the new earth for a thousand years, emphasizing that this kingdom will be distinct from both the current world and the spiritual reign of Christ. He explains that this glorious and visible kingdom will commence after the resurrection of the just and the removal of all enemies, including Satan. Gill highlights that all saints will share in this reign, experiencing a transformed existence free from sin and death, and will reign with Christ in a state of glory and righteousness. He draws on various biblical prophecies to support the reality of this future kingdom, asserting that it will be established on a renewed earth where Christ will reign as King over all. The sermon concludes with the assurance that this kingdom will not only fulfill God's promises but will also be a time of perfect communion between Christ and His people.

Transcript

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity

Book 7--Chapter 8

Of the Millennium,

OR PERSONAL REIGN OF CHRIST WITH THE SAINTS

on the New Earth a Thousand Years

I have treated already of the kingly office of Christ, as executed by him in various dispensations, particularly under the gospel dispensation, and have observed, there are two branches of it yet to come; one called the "spiritual," the other the "personal reign;" the former has been considered, and this is a

proper place to treat of the latter; which I shall do by showing, 1. That Christ will have a special, peculiar, glorious, and visible kingdom, in which he will reign personally on earth. 1a.

I call it a special, peculiar kingdom, different from other kingdoms of Christ; from the kingdom of nature and providence, which lies in the government of this world; which he, as God, has an equal right to with his Father; but when this kingdom will take place, this present world will be at an end: and from his spiritual kingdom, which belongs to him as Mediator; which rule he has exercised in the hearts of his people from the beginning of the world; and which has been, under the gospel dispensation, more large and manifest; and will be more so in the latter day, when his spiritual reign will take place; but this is different from that. 1b.

It will be very glorious and visible; Christ's kingdom, in the spiritual reign, will be very glorious, when all the glorious things spoken of it, will be fulfilled; and it will be very visible, when exalted above all the mountains and hills, the kingdoms of this world: but this will be more so, since Christ will be in it; not only by his Spirit, and the effusions of his grace, but he will personally appear in all his glory, and reign gloriously before his ancients; hence his "appearing" and "kingdom," are put together, as contemporary (2 Tim. 4:1), he in person will appear, and his tabernacle be with men on earth. 1c.

This kingdom will be after all the enemies of Christ, and of his people, are removed out of the way. In his spiritual reign antichrist will be destroyed, "with the Spirit," or breath of Christ, his gospel; and with "the brightness of his coming," that clear light which will attend his coming, by the effusion of his Spirit;[1] which will be with such spiritual efficacy, as to dispel all darkness, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; and cause an universal reception of the gospel; which will open the way for the Christian princes, to carry their victorious arms every where, and seize upon, and possess all the antichristian states; and in this order things lie in the prophecy of Daniel (Dan. 7:1-28), where, after the vision of the "fourth" beast, of the judgment of it, of the slaying it, and burning its body, the Roman empire, and the remains of it, in antichrist, and the antichristian states; Daniel, had a vision of Christ, the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, and having an universal kingdom given him, which will not be succeeded by any other.

And in the same order things lie in the book of the Revelation 19:1-21 where the beast, antichrist, and the kings of the earth, the antichristian princes, are represented as gathering together, to make war with Christ, described as an illustrious Warrior; when the beast and false prophet, antichrist, in both his civil and ecclesiastic characters, are taken and destroyed, and the rest slain, by the sword of Christ's mouth: all which will be done, with the ruin of the Turk, the Eastern antichrist, at the beginning of the spiritual reign: but still there will remain a most potent enemy, Satan, with his principalities and powers; wherefore, in Revelation 20:1-15 an angel descends from heaven, who is no other than Christ, who will then personally descend from thence; described as having a great chain, and a key in his hand; the one to bind Satan and all his angels; the other to open the bottomless pit, and cast them in it, and lock it up; that they may neither deceive the nations, nor disturb the saints, for the space of a thousand years.[2] And all enemies being thus out of the way, follows the account of the Millennium, or personal reign of Christ. 1d.

This glorious and visible kingdom of Christ, will not take place till after the resurrection of the just, and the renovation of the world.[3] As soon as Christ personally appears, the dead in him will rise first; this is the first resurrection, which they that have a part in, shall reign with Christ a thousand years; as appears from the above place in the Revelation referred unto. These "children of the resurrection," as Christ calls them (Luke 20:35,36), and who will be worthy of "that world," the new world, in which Christ and they will reign, will be like the angels, die no more; nor will they eat and drink, in a corporal sense; nor marry and be given

in marriage; carnal appetites will not be indulged; nor carnal pleasures enjoyed: in this state, nothing but pure, refined, spiritual pleasures, will be had, suited to the bodies and souls of men, united in the resurrection state.

Our Lord, indeed, speaks of his disciples eating and drinking at his table, in his kingdom; and of his drinking new wine in his Father's kingdom, which is the same (Luke 22:30; Matthew 26:29), but then all this is to be understood of divine repasts, of spiritual joys and pleasures, they shall then partake of. The Jews, it seems, had very carnal notions of the kingdom of God, of a great affluence of meats and drinks in it, and of rich and delicious living; hence a certain person said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" (Luke 14:15), meaning, that shall live deliciously there.

And such gross and carnal conceptions, some that have bore the Christian name, have entertained of the millennium, as well ancient^[4] as modern writers, at least, as represented by their adversaries; and therefore it has been objected to them, as if their notion savored more of a Turkish paradise, than of a kingdom of Christ; and which has brought disgrace upon the doctrine of the kingdom, and given disgust to pious and spiritual minds; as it did to Austin,^[5] who had some light into it, and owned, that could it be restrained to spiritual delights and pleasures, it might be allowed: but now the manner in which I conceive it, clears it from such absurdities, and represents it as quite unclogged, and free from such an objection.

All the prophecies of temporal blessings in the latter day, as length of life, a numerous offspring of the people of God, plenty of corporal food, an affluence of wealth and riches, will have their accomplishment in the spiritual reign, or latter day glory; when there will be such an effusion of the Spirit of God, as will be a counterbalance to such earthly enjoyments, that they will not do the hurt they would in the present circumstances of things; and even then, when the influences of the Spirit shall go off, and be withdrawn, that state will gradually sink into lukewarmness, pride, self-conceit, and carnality (Rev. 3:15,16).

But nothing of this kind will appear in the millennium. 1e. This kingdom of Christ will be bounded by two resurrections; by the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the just, at which it will begin; and by the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, at which it will end, or nearly; for it is expressly said, that "the rest of the dead," that is, the wicked, "lived not again until the thousand years were finished": now in the interval between the resurrection of the one, and the resurrection of the other, will be the millennium, or thousand years reign of Christ and his people together. 1f.

This kingdom will be before the general judgment, especially of the wicked. There is a particular judgment that passes on every man at death; "After death, judgment!" and there will be a virtual judgment immediately upon the appearance of Christ, who will come to judge both "quick" and "dead." Dead saints will be raised, and living saints changed, and both be with Christ; which will be virtually pronouncing them righteous; and as for the wicked, their bodies will be burnt in the conflagration of the earth, and their souls will be shut up with Satan and his angels in the bottomless pit; which will be virtually pronouncing them guilty: but the formal judgment will proceed afterwards.

Indeed, in the thousand years reign, will be the judgment of the saints, as will be seen hereafter; and some time after the close of the millennium, will come on the general judgment of the wicked; for John, after he had given an account of the former (Rev. 20:1-15), relates a vision of the latter. 1g. This glorious, visible kingdom of Christ, will be on earth, and not in heaven; and so is distinct from the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory: the souls of the martyrs, and others, said to reign with Christ a thousand years, cannot be understood of their reigning with him in heaven; for so they had reigned with him from the time of the

death of their bodies; and was their reigning with him in heaven meant, there would have been no need of binding Satan and his angels, and shutting them up in the bottomless pit; as not to deceive the nations, so not to molest them; since being in heaven, they were out of their reach, and could not be disturbed by them: but it is on earth they are to reign with Christ; of which the living creatures, and four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel churches, and the redeemed of the Lamb, express their strong faith; "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth;" meaning, no doubt, in the millennium; for they speak of it as future, saying, not "we do," but "we shall reign on earth;" and that the millennium reign will be there, is clear, since the Gog and Magog army, at the end of the thousand years, are said to go up "on the breadth of the earth," and "compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city;" the same with the saints before described as reigning with Christ, which therefore must be on the earth; and the same with the holy city John saw descending from God out of heaven, that is, on earth, with whom his tabernacle is said to be, and he to dwell with them (Rev. 20:4,6,8,9; 21:2,3).

But then this kingdom will not be upon this present earth, or upon this earth in its present circumstances; the present heavens and earth will be burnt up before this kingdom takes place; this world is not good enough for the second Adam, and his saints, to dwell in; the curse must be removed from it, and it must be refined, and new fitted up, for such inhabitants; and all the wicked of it be no more in it, as unfit to dwell where such persons do. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, nor never will be.

This has been the mistake of many, fancying that the millennium will be in the present earth; which have given the adversaries of this doctrine, an occasion to object unto it; as subversive of civil government, and as encouraging sedition and rebellion in commonwealths, and as giving just umbrage to the kings and princes of the earth, and to all civil magistrates. And, indeed, in the seventeenth century, in this nation, there were a set of men, called "fifth monarchy men," and who were levelers, and riotous persons, were for pulling down civil magistracy, and all order of civil government, and setting up what they called a kingdom of Christ; which brought the doctrine of the millennium into great contempt, and under which it has much lain ever since.

But putting it upon the footing I have, that this kingdom will not be in the present earth, the kings of it have nothing to fear from it; it will not interfere with theirs; civil government will not be hurt by it; for it will not be till that is no more, and the world itself at an end; and so can give no encouragement and countenance to persons of a riotous and seditious disposition. Indeed, in the spiritual reign, the dominion under the whole heaven, will be given to the people of the saints of the most High, which will last to the end of the world: but then there will be no alteration made in the order of civil government, much less will that be destroyed; it will only be translated into other hands; only Christian princes shall possess it; there will be no more pagan princes, nor papal kings, nor Mahometan emperors; only such who are not only nominal but truly Christian princes, according to Psalm 72:10,11; Isaiah 49:23; 60:3,10,16.

But as for the personal reign of Christ with his saints, that will be on the new earth, wherein will "dwell righteousness," and that only; that is, Christ, who is the Lord, the Righteousness of his people; and they who are made righteous by him (2 Pet. 3:13), so the new heavens and new earth John had a vision of, are, according to that vision, the seat of the new "Jerusalem," or church of God, and of Christ, who will there tabernacle with them (Rev. 21:1-3), and then the Lord will be King over all the earth; there will be no offset; there will be one Lord, and his name one (Zech. 14:9).

Having explained the nature of Christ's kingdom, I shall proceed to give the proof that there will be such a glorious, visible kingdom of Christ on earth: this proof, as it depends on prophesies of future things, cannot

be expected to be so full and clear in all respects, as a proof may be of things past or present; the prophecies respecting the first coming of Christ, doubtless, did not appear so clear and plain before their fulfillment, as since: so the prophecies of the second coming of Christ, and of his kingdom, may not be so evident as they will be, the nearer is the approach of it; or as when it will be.

Besides, the prophecies of the Old Testament are delivered in very general, concise, and comprehensive terms; and sometimes include both his first and second coming, and things that intervene between them; and therefore it should be no objection to a proof of Christ's second coming and kingdom, that there are some things in the context which respect his first coming; and others which respect the spiritual reign; but these are to be separated, and distinctly considered; and what belongs to the one, should be applied to that; and what belongs to another, should be appropriated to that.

Now the proof of this point, may be taken from various passages in the Psalms, in the Prophets, and in the books of the New Testament. 1g1. First, from some passages in the Psalms; and to begin with the Psalm 45:1-17, which was made "concerning the King," the King Messiah, who is called "the King," by way of eminence, the famous King; and who is described as a divine Person, as God, whose throne is for ever and ever; and as graceful, and full of grace, as Man and Mediator; and as a most potent Prince, riding in great majesty, and as a triumphant conqueror.

And though some things said of him may agree with the conquests of his grace, in the first and after ages of Christianity; yet they will have their full accomplishment at his second coming, when all his enemies shall be subdued by him. His court is represented in the Psalm as a very brilliant one; some in it have the name of queen, others are called honorable women, or maids of honour; and among those, kings daughters, and others the rich among the people; which may respect the different degrees of honour among the saints, in the resurrection and kingdom state, which will only obtain then; not in the ultimate glory.

The glory and purity of the church are strongly expressed; the "queen" is said to be at the King's right hand, "in gold of Ophir," her clothing of pure gold; which agrees with the new Jerusalem, on the new earth, a city of pure gold. The King's daughter, the same, is said to be "all glorious within," being perfectly pure and holy; such as the new Jerusalem will be, into which nothing sinful, defiling, and abominable, shall enter. The church is also, in the Psalm, represented as introduced into the King's presence, in a magnificent manner, "in raiment of needlework," as well as in "clothing of wrought gold;" which fitly agrees with the kingdom state, in which Christ will present his church to himself a glorious church, being as a bride adorned for her husband; not only having on the robe of his righteousness, but the shining garments of immortality and bliss.

Moreover, at this time he will make his people "princes in all the earth;" which shows that this his kingdom will be on earth, and agrees with the faith and expectation of his saints, that as they are made by him "kings and priests unto God," they shall "reign on earth." I take no notice of Psalm 72:1-20 for though it relates to Christ and his kingdom, yet to that branch of it, his spiritual reign, and expresses the prosperity, peace, glory, extensiveness, and duration of it.

But #Ps 96:1-13 must not be overlooked; which begins, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice!" which shows that the psalm respects the kingdom of Christ on earth; and which will take place at his coming to judge the world, as appears by its connection with the last verse of the preceding psalm; and which coming of his, as hereafter described, will be in the clouds of heaven, and with flames of fire, as has been

observed in a preceding chapter. The Psalm 145:1-21 treats of the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of it, and represents the saints as speaking to one another of it; of its glory, majesty, and duration (Ps. 145:11-13), which can suit no state so well as this; in which the saints will be employed in converse with each other, about the glory of their King, the glory of his coming to his kingdom, of his glorious acts done by him in it, and of the glorious things they enjoy therein. 1g2.

Secondly, from various passages in the prophets: and, 1g2a. From Isaiah 24:23. "Then the moon shall be confounded," &c. this glorious reign will take place after the punishment of the "kings of the earth upon the earth" (Isa. 24:21), by whom may be meant the beast and the false prophet, with the kings of the earth, the antichristian kings; who will make war with the Lamb, and be overcome and slain by him (Rev. 17:14; 19:20,21), and whose army may be called "the host of the high ones that are on high;" being in high places, and in great power and dignity; and may be also very well applied to Satan, and his principalities and powers, those "spiritual wickednesses in high places;" and what is said in Isaiah 24:22 of the shutting of them up and confining them as in a prison, and then after many days visiting them, very aptly agrees with the binding of Satan and his angels, and the shutting of them up in the bottomless pit; and then after a thousand years letting them loose for a short time, which will issue in their everlasting punishment; see Revelation 20:2,3.

Moreover this reign will not take place until the utter dissolution of the earth, when it shall fall and not rise again in the form it now is (Isa. 24:19,20), the person reigning is the Lord of hosts, the Lord of the armies of the heavens, the angels, and of the inhabitants of the earth, the greatest among them; who is King of kings and Lord of lords; all which is true of Christ, who reigns now in the kingdom of providence as God, and the Creator of all things; and in the kingdom of grace, as Mediator in the hearts of his people; and in his churches, where he will reign more illustriously in the latter day; but this is still a more glorious reign that is here spoken of: the place where he will reign is in Zion and Jerusalem, which may be literally understood of that spot of ground where these cities were, which may be the chief residence of Christ in this his kingdom; or mystically of that Zion where he and the one hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name on their foreheads, stood; and the new Jerusalem, that will come down from heaven, among whom his tabernacle will be (Rev. 14:1; 21:2,3).

The persons "before" whom, and in whose sight he will reign, for this kingdom will be visible, are his ancients; not his ancient people the Jews only, but all his elect that have been from the beginning of the world; Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New; and the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel churches; and even all those ancient ones whom God has loved with an everlasting love, chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, called the "ancient people" (Isa. 44:7), with these Christ will reign "gloriously," or "in glory;" he will appear in glory, in the glory of his deity, and in the glory of his human nature, and in the glory of his kingly office; and such will be his lustre and splendour, that the "sun" and "moon" will be "ashamed" and "confounded;" they will blush and withdraw their light, as it were, or that will not be comparable to his; and that city, the new Jerusalem, where he will reign, will stand in no need of their light, for the Lamb will be the light of it (Rev. 21:23). 1g2b.

With this agrees another prophecy in Isaiah 30:26. "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun," &c. this prophecy will not be fulfilled until "the day of the great slaughter is over," the great slaughter of the antichristian kings, captains, and mighty men; which carnage of them is called the supper of the great God, to which the fowls of the air are invited to prey upon (Rev. 19:17,18), "when the towers fall," when the city of Babylon or Rome, with its towers, and the cities of the nations, of the antichristian

nations, with their towers, will fall (Rev. 16:19), nor will it be fully accomplished until "the name of the Lord," or the Lord himself, comes "with the flame of a devouring fire," to burn up the world, and all things in it (Isa. 30:27,30), and so much respect the second coming of Christ, which will be from heaven with flames of fire: and another criterion of the fulfillment of this prophecy is, that it will be when the Lord will "bind" up and "heal" the "wounds" of "his people;" that is, forgive their iniquities, which in the kingdom state will be publicly and completely done; the sins of God's people will be so fully blotted out, that they shall not be seen by themselves, nor by others, any more; see Acts 3:19-21, and though great will be the light and knowledge of men in the spiritual reign, the first branch of Christ's kingdom; yet this sevenfold light, which is expressive of a perfection of it, best agrees with that state, the light whereof exceeds that of the sun and moon; and when the Lord shall be the everlasting light of his people, and their God their glory (Isa. 60:19,20), a prophecy which respects the same thing. 1g2c.

There is another prophecy which seems to belong to this glorious kingdom of Christ on earth in Jeremiah 23:5,6. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch," &c.; there can be no doubt but Christ is here meant, who is the Lord our righteousness, the author of righteousness to his people; he is the man whose name is the Branch, and is raised up to David as such, and a righteous one he is; a King that shall reign in righteousness, and so prosper as to be king over all the earth; and on the earth this his reign will be, since it is "in the earth" he will execute judgment and justice: and though his saints, who are meant by Judah and Israel, are always safe under his protection, being in his hands, and kept by his power; yet what state or period can be named wherein they will dwell in more safety, and in such freedom from the oppression and molestation of their enemies, as in the millennium? when all their enemies will be no more, and even Satan and his angels will be bound and shut up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and so during that time can give them no disturbance. 1g2d.

There are some passages in Ezekiel which seem to have respect to this kingdom state; as in Ezekiel 21:27. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it him;" which may be understood not only of the overturnings in the Jewish state before the first coming of Christ, but also of the overturnings of empires before his second coming; and being expressed three times, may denote the overturning of the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan empires, which when overturned will be no more; and after Christ will come, who is heir of all things, and by the designation of his Father, will be king over all the earth.

In Ezekiel 48:1-35 there is a prophecy of a city, the dimensions of which are such as cannot agree with any city on earth literally taken; but must be understood either of the gospel church state; or it may be rather of the city of the new Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21:1-27 in which Christ will reign, and his saints with him, in a most glorious manner; and the rather this may be meant, since the name of the city is "Jehovah shammah," the Lord is there (Ezek. 48:35), and in the new Jerusalem will be the tabernacle of Christ with men on earth, where he is said to be with his saints, and dwell with them (Rev. 21:3). 1g2e.

There are some prophecies in Daniel which respect the kingdom of Christ, as in Daniel 2:1-49 the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream is explained by Daniel as an emblem of the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; and in Daniel 2:44 it is said, "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c. that is, after these kings have reigned, and their kingdoms are ended, as Junius[6] interprets it; for this kingdom could not be set up in the days of them all, since their kingdoms were successive.

Nebuchadnezzar also saw in his dream, "a stone cut out without hands, which smote the image, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth;" which must be understood of Christ, both in his human nature, which is a tabernacle not made with hands; and which God pitched, and not man; and in his kingdom, which was very small in its first beginning, but by degrees increased, and will still more increase, and become a great mountain, a mighty kingdom, and fill the whole earth, and so jostle out all other kingdoms: this will be, in part, fulfilled in the spiritual reign of Christ, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his; but most completely in the millennium, when he shall be King over all the earth.

There is a prophecy of the same kind in Daniel 7:1-28 where Daniel had a vision of four beasts coming up out of the sea; which design the same four monarchies rising up successively in the world: and after this, he had a vision of a judicial process, issuing in the slaying of the fourth beast, the destruction of the Roman monarchy; and the burning of the body of the beast, the remains of that monarchy, antichrist, and the antichristian states: after which he has a vision of Christ, the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven; and so it must respect the second coming of Christ, and of his then having a dominion, and glorious kingdom given him, which is an everlasting one, that is, which shall not be left to another people, as in Daniel 2:1-49 nor be succeeded by another kingdom; but shall continue until the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory, takes place; and this kingdom will not be in heaven, but "under the whole heaven;" as in Daniel 2:27. 1g2f.

There is a passage which has been frequently referred to, and belongs to this kingdom state, in Zechariah 14:9. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." This kingdom will be on earth; and will be when there is no other; and when the homage and worship paid to Christ, this King, will be universally the same. And though there may be some passages in this chapter which belong to the spiritual reign, the first branch of Christ's kingdom; yet there are others, as well as this, which can only agree with his personal reign, upon his second coming; for it is expressly said, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee;" which will be fulfilled, and not before, when Christ shall descend from heaven, and bring all his saints with him (1 Th 3:13; 4:14,16).

And this reign of Christ over all the earth, will be when the saints are in a perfect state; and so not before his second coming, and the resurrection of the just. Holiness will now be so universal, that, proverbially speaking, it will be written on "the bells of the horses;" and every member in the new Jerusalem church state, into which nothing defiling shall enter, meant by "every pot in Jerusalem and Judah, shall be holiness to the Lord," or be completely holy; and there shall be "no Canaanite," neither a profane sinner, nor a carnal professor, in the house and church of God; nor any sinful lust in any of its inhabitants. 1g3.

Thirdly, The proof of this glorious kingdom of Christ, may be given from various passages in the New Testament; and, 1g3a. From Matthew 6:10. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." To this, as a proof, it may be objected, at first sight, that this is the kingdom of the Father; since it is "Our Father which art in heaven," the petitions are directed to. To which it may be replied, that the same kingdom may be called, the kingdom of the Father, and the kingdom of Christ, as it is certain this kingdom we are treating of is so called; as appears by comparing Matthew 26:29 with Luke 22:30 and there is a good reason to be given for it; because this kingdom is a kingdom which the Father had appointed to Christ, and which will be given him by him (Luke 22:29; Dan. 7:14), and for the same reason the Father calls him his King, because appointed and set by him as king over his holy hill of Zion (Ps 2:6), this kingdom may be called his.

Now this is a kingdom yet to come, and is prayed for as being future; and so cannot design neither the kingdom of providence, nor the kingdom of grace, nor the gospel dispensation; and though it may include the spiritual reign, the first branch of Christ's kingdom, yet will not be fulfilled in that; since it respects a perfect state, when the will of God will be done on earth by men, as it is in heaven by the angels; the saints, in the kingdom state, will serve Christ their king constantly and incessantly, and so perfectly; and this will be a kingdom on earth, where the will of God will be perfectly done, as it is in heaven, and so is a distinct state from that.

To all which may be added, that the coming of this kingdom is to be prayed for;[7] not only the first branch of it, in the spiritual reign, as in Isaiah 62:6,7 but the second coming of Christ, to take possession of his kingdom personally, saving, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" and this may, and should be a prayer of faith; for since he has directed his people to pray daily for the coming of this kingdom, it may be assured that it certainly will come; for Christ would not direct his saints to pray for that which never will be. 1g3b.

From Matthew 20:21-23. "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, desiring that her two sons may sit the one on Christ's right hand, and the other on the left, in his kingdom." The same request is made by the two sons themselves (Mark 10:35-40). Now though these petitioners were tinctured with the national notion of the Messiah setting up a temporal kingdom on earth, at the time of his first coming; and with which all the apostles seem, more or less, tinctured, until the Spirit was poured down upon them on the day of Pentecost; yet our Lord does not deny, but rather owns, there would be a kingdom of his, in which distinctions of honour would be made, and peculiar privileges, and marks of respect, bestowed on some; but that these would only be given to such for whom they were prepared by his Father: he blames them for their pride and ambition, in affecting to have preeminence above their brethren; and suggests, that their petition was an unseasonable one; it was not a time to think of, and expect honours and preferments, they being now in a suffering state, and must expect sufferings for his sake; yea, that he himself must drink of a bitter cup, and be baptized with a bloody baptism, before he entered into his kingdom and glory; and this would also be their case: this glorious kingdom of Christ, and honours in it, are not to be expected in a militant suffering state; the saints must suffer with Christ first, before they reign and are glorified together with him; the crown of righteousness will not be given, till the good fight of faith is fought; and not before the glorious appearing of Christ, and only to them that love that: this cannot be understood of the kingdom of heaven, or a kingdom there, because there is no sitting at Christ's right hand there; he is set down indeed in his Father's throne, and sits at his right hand, where no creatures, angels nor men, are admitted: but in the kingdom state, he will have a throne distinct from his Father, in which his saints will sit with him (Rev. 3:21), on his right and left; and in which state will be thrones, whereon some will sit, being distinguished from others, with some matins of honour and esteem; for such there will be in this kingdom of Christ, though what they will be is not easy to say; they are signified by one being a ruler over ten cities, and another a ruler over live cities; which is not to be understood literally, but of some posts of honour, and distinctive marks of respect some will have; for as one star differs from another star in glory, so will be the resurrection of the dead; or such a distinction be in the resurrection state----in this glorious kingdom of Christ.

In Mark 10:37 instead of, "In thy kingdom," it is, "In thy glory." 1g3c. From Luke 1:32,33. "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end!" These words were spoken by the angel to the virgin, concerning her son, who should be great, and be called, "the Son of the Highest;" and which respects him, not in his incarnate state on earth, for then he appeared; not great, but mean; and his kingdom was not with

observation: but hereafter, in the latter day, when his name should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same (Mal. 1:11), and especially at his second coming, which will be with power and great glory; and he will appear, as the Son of the Highest, as the great God, and our Saviour; and whereas he was the Son of David, according to the flesh, it is foretold, that he should have the throne of his father David, not literally, but mystically; which will have its accomplishment, in part, at the conversion of the Jews in the last day, when they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, the true Messiah, and yield subjection to him; but more fully when all the elect of God are gathered in, both Jews and Gentiles, over whom he will reign, even over the house of Jacob, that Jacob, the Lord has chosen for himself; and this his kingdom will be for ever; it will not give way to, nor be succeeded by another; in the same sense as in the prophecy of Daniel, it is said to be an everlasting kingdom; there will be no end of it; for when Christ has reigned with his people on earth a thousand years, he will reign with them, and they with him, in heaven, to all eternity; see Micah 4:7. 1g3d.

From Luke 22:29,30. "As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom," &c. Here is a special and peculiar kingdom of Christ, which he calls, "my kingdom;" and which he has by the designation and appointment of his Father; and which was yet to come, as well as that he appointed to his followers; in which kingdom there will be a table, at which all Christ's people will sit, and eat and drink; not temporally, but spiritually, and shall feed upon a divine repast, suited to their resurrection state; for at this table shall sit Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and multitudes from divers parts, and who have lived in the several periods of time; and here will be thrones placed, on which the saints shall sit; for they will now be "kings and priests unto God," and shall reign as such, and have judgment given them, and on some distinct honours will be conferred. 1g3e.

From Luke 23:42,43. "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" The light and faith the penitent thief had in the kingdom of Christ, and in his future coming to it, were very great; for though Christ appeared now very mean and despicable, suffering a shameful death, and lying under the greatest reproach and ignominy; yet he believed that he would come again, and take possession of a kingdom that belonged to him; and desires that he might be remembered by him at his appearing and kingdom: to which an answer is returned; "And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, today shall thou be with me in paradise": signifying, that he should not stay so long without partaking of his favors; for that day he should be with him in the third heaven, and continue with him till his second coming; and then he, with all his saints, should come with him, and share in the glories of his kingdom. 1g3f.

From Acts 1:6. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?" The sceptre, according to ancient prophecy, was now departed from Judah, and Judea was become a province to the Roman empire; now the Jews had a notion, that when the Messiah came, he would restore the kingdom, and redeem them from the Roman yoke, and make them a happy people, as to temporal things; and with this notion, the disciples themselves were tinctured; and as they believed that Jesus was the Messiah, they had raised expectations of this matter; but when he was dead, their hopes seem to be almost quite gone (Luke 24:21), but Christ being raised from the dead, their hopes revived: and it was a notion that prevailed with the Jews, and does to this day, that the coming of the king Messiah, to deliver them, and the resurrection of the dead, will be at the same time: and, indeed, Christ's personal reign will take place after the resurrection of the just.

And now there having been a resurrection of many of the saints (Matthew 27:52,53), and especially Christ himself being risen, and also had spoken to his disciples of things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Matthew 27:3), they might hope that this was the time the kingdom would be restored. Now though they

had very obscure and carnal notions of the kingdom; yet Christ does not deny that there would be a kingdom hereafter he should enjoy, and which should be restored to Israel; only blames them for their curiosity in inquiring into the time of it (Matthew 27:7), and which shows that this kingdom will not be till Christ comes to judge the quick and dead, which time none knows but the Father only (Matthew 24:36), and exactly agrees with this passage. 1g3g.

From 2 Timothy 4:1. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and his kingdom." This appearing of Christ cannot be meant of his first appearing in human nature, that was past, this future; that was not to judge the world, this will be: nor did his kingdom then appear, now it will: but of his appearing a second time to those that look for him (Heb.. 9:28), and then his personal reign, and glorious kingdom will take place, he now personally appearing in his glory; and when he will judge both quick and dead, will virtually judge, as has been before observed, the dead and living saints, by raising the one and changing the other, when he shall descend from heaven, and thus appear; and the wicked also, by burning their bodies in the general conflagration which now will be, and by shutting up their souls with Satan, in the bottomless pit.

And moreover, the actual judgment, both of the righteous and the wicked, will follow on this appearing of his kingdom; the judgment of the saints will be at the beginning of it, and in it, and the judgment of the wicked at the end of it. 1g3h. From Hebrews 2:5. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak;" though the "world to come," may be understood of the gospel dispensation the apostle had been speaking of in the preceding verses, in distinction from the legal, or Jewish dispensation, angels had a concern in; whereas they have none in the ministry of the gospel.

And the Jewish dispensation is sometimes called "the world," the end of which fell upon the times of Christ and his apostles (Heb. 9:26; 1 Cor 10:11), and with respect to which, the gospel dispensation may be called "the world to come," it being usual with the Jews, to call the days of the Messiah by this name; which may take in the whole time between the first and second coming of Christ. But though the apostle may have respect to what he was speaking of in the preceding verses, yet so as to include what he was going on to speak of in the following verses, concerning the second Adam's world; for the proof of which he refers to the eighth Psalm; which is spoken, not of the first Adam, not even in his state of innocence; the name of the Lord was not then so excellent in all the earth as it has been since, and especially will be; nor were there then babes and sucklings, out of whose mouth strength, or praise, could be ordained; nor was Satan, the enemy and avenger, stilled, he soon got the advantage over Adam; nor could Adam be called then Enosh, a frail mortal man, as that word is thought to signify; nor was he a son of man; nor were the works of God's hands so universally put under him as is said, not the angels: but Christ, the second Adam, is meant, with whom everything agrees; though, as yet, all things, in the fullest sense, are not in subjection to him, nor will be, till his second coming, till after the binding of Satan, and the resurrection of the dead; and then the last enemy, death, will be destroyed, and his glorious kingdom take place, which angels will have no concern in; they will be employed at the beginning of it, in gathering together the risen saints; and at the end of it, in casting the wicked into hell; but not in the kingdom itself; nor will they be needed.

Moreover, this world to come, seems to include the new world, the new heavens and the new earth, the apostle Peter speaks of; for his beloved brother Paul, he says, had wrote and spoke of those to the same persons the apostle Peter wrote unto; now he wrote to the converted Jews, scattered abroad in various places, and therefore must refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, written by the apostle Paul; and where, in that epistle, can he be thought to speak of this new world, the heavens and the earth, but in this passage

under consideration? and which may be very well rendered, as it is by Dr.

Burnets,[8] "the habitable earth to come;" which will be the seat of Christ's personal reign. I take no notice now of the proof from the passages Revelation 5:10 20:4-6 which are very plain, because I have already made mention of them, and shall have occasion to make more use of them; though Socinus[9] thinks this kingdom cannot be proved from Revelation 20:1-15 since the whole place, he says, must be taken and explained in an allegorical way; but he owns, that should he be asked, what is the allegorical interpretation of it, he is not ashamed to confess his ignorance of it.

But that it is to be taken in a literal sense, will appear hereafter. I go on, 2. To show, that in this glorious, visible, and personal reign of Christ, all the saints will have a share; they will "reign with him" (Rev. 20:4,6). I shall not dwell long on the proof of this; because those scriptures which speak of Christ's kingdom, give plain and clear hints of the reign of his saints in it. 2a. First, there are various passages of scripture, which give plain intimations of the reign of the saints with Christ in his kingdom; these are they which he will then "make princes in all the earth" (Ps 45:16), these, however mean in their original, are, through his grace, set among princes, and shall inherit the throne of glory; and these princes are altogether kings; and being such, shall reign with Christ on earth; for when he, the King, shall "reign in righteousness," these are the "princes" that shall "rule in judgment" (Isa. 32:1).

In the same prophecy of Daniel, which speaks of the kingdom that shall be given to Christ, upon his coming in the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7:14), it is also said (Dan. 7:27). "And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom;" all which is expressive of a glorious kingdom under the whole heaven; and so not a kingdom in heaven, but under it, on earth, and which will extend to all the earth. Such a kingdom "shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High;" to the people and saints of Christ, who is Jehovah, the most High in all the earth; such a kingdom they never had yet, nor never will have, till the Son of man comes in the clouds of heaven; "Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey him": which shows, that this kingdom is of the same nature, extent, and duration, with Christ's (Dan. 7:14), and in which the saints will share with him.

Brenius[10] thinks, that by one "like the Son of man" (Dan. 7:13), is not meant Christ personally, but his glorious kingdom in the latter day; that as the four preceding monarchies are represented by beasts, for their fierceness, cruelty, and tyranny; his by a man, for the mildness, gentleness, lenity, and humanity of it: and that coming in the clouds of heaven, denotes the divine and heavenly original of it not rising out of the sea, or earth, as the other kingdoms: and he supposes the Son of man, and the people of the saints of the most High (Dan. 7:27), to be the same to whom the dominion will be given.

There is a passage in Micah 4:7,8 which plainly intimates, that when Christ reigns, his church and people shall reign also; "The Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever;" to which reference seems to be had by the angel, in Luke 1:32 and then it follows; "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion;" which may be understood of Christ, the tower and strong hold of his people: "Unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion;" he shall have the first, the chief, the principal share in this reign; yet also, "the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem," the church of God, the new Jerusalem, the holy city of the saints.

Our Lord tells his disciples, "That ye which have followed me," who had embraced him as the Messiah, and received his doctrines, and submitted to his ordinances: here should be a stop, and then another clause begin: "in the regeneration;" meaning, not the grace of regeneration, or the new birth; but a new

state of things, the resurrection state:[11] the word paliggenesia, is used by Greek writers, both philosophers and the Christian fathers,[12] for the renovation of the world; and the Syriac version of it here, is, "in the new world," that is, the new heavens and the new earth, the apostle Peter speaks of; in which new state, the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, reign in it before his ancients gloriously; and then "also," adds he, "ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" should have posts and places of honour in the church of God (Matthew 19:28), similar to this, is what Christ says to them in Luke 22:29,30 that as his Father had appointed him a kingdom, so he appointed one to them, in which they should "eat and drink at his table, and sit on thrones," &c. which is expressive of great nearness to him, communion with him in his kingdom, and of great honour conferred upon them.

The saying of Christ, in Luke 20:35 refers to this state; where he speaks of some that "shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead;" by which is meant the world to come, in distinction from this present world (Luke 22:34), even the new world, the apostle Peter's new heavens and new earth, which will take place upon the resurrection of the dead; and they that are worthy of the first resurrection, through the grace of Christ, those shall obtain, possess, inherit, and dwell in the new world, and reign with Christ in it.

The kingdom to be restored to Israel (Acts 1:6), which Christ seems to allow will be, is what will be restored and given to the mystical Israel, even the whole Israel of God, all his elect, consisting of Jews and Gentiles. When the apostle Paul speaks of saints that suffer with Christ, being "glorified together" (Rom. 8:17), he elsewhere expresses, by their "reigning with him" (2 Tim. 2:12), and to this reigning together with Christ, he may well be thought to have respect in 1 Corinthians 4:8.

"Ye have reigned as kings without us;" treating him, and his fellow ministers, with some degree of contempt, as if they were below them, and they stood in no need of them: and adds, "I would to God that you did reign," in the best sense, and in the highest degree, even with Christ, in his personal reign; "that we also might reign with you;" in which state the saints will all reign together. Once more, Christ promises (Rev. 3:21). "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne": this promise will be made good to every overcomer; to everyone that is made more than a conqueror through Christ; and will be fulfilled in the kingdom state, when he will have a throne of his own; now he sits on his Father's throne with him; then he will sit on his own throne, and this will be large enough for all his saints to sit upon with him; which is as strongly expressive of reigning with him, as words can possibly be.

To all which may be added, the relations and characters the saints bear in scripture, which will strengthen the proof of their sharing with Christ in the glories of his kingdom. "They are," and will then appear to be, "the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36), as Christ was declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead; so they will be declared also to be the sons of God, by their resurrection from the dead; "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

Christ is heir of all things, and they are joint heirs with him; he is heir of the world, and the world is theirs, Christ being theirs; not the present world, in which they have but a small share; but the world to come, the new world, the world that Abraham was heir of, through the righteousness of faith; as are also all his spiritual seed, even they that are Christ's; and these are heirs according to the promise, and shall inherit the new earth, and reign with Christ in it.

The church and people of God, stand in the relation of a bride to Christ, being espoused to him; hence as he is king, the church is queen; and not only stands at his right hand in gold of Ophir, but sits on the same throne with him; and as she bears the same name with him (Jer. 23:5,6; 33:16), she shares in his honour, dignity, and glory. The saints have the character of kings, being made so by Christ to God; and they have the regalia of kings, have thrones to sit on, crowns on their heads, and shall not want a kingdom; being kings, they shall reign on earth, and reign with Christ there (Rev. 1:6; 3:21 4:4; 5:10; 20:4). 2b.

Secondly, all the saints will share in the glories of Christ's kingdom; though some will have distinguished honours, yet all will reign with Christ. Some think only the martyrs will rise first, and reign; and, according to the opinion of some, not on earth neither; but shall ascend to heaven, and reign there, while the other saints, during the millennium, are on earth; and which is grounded on a passage in Revelation 20:4. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them," those next described; "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God -- and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

That these were martyrs, no doubt is to be made; they suffered death for the testimony they bore to Jesus and his gospel; and by the manner of their death, beheading, it appears that such are designed who suffered under the persecutions of the Roman pagan emperors, this being a Roman punishment; hence the axe used to be carried before the Roman magistrates; and this one sort of death is put for all others that Christians, in those times, were put to: and these souls seem to be the same with those in Revelation 6:9,10 such, indeed, who have been slain in the cause of Christ, shall "live," that is, live again; their bodies shall be raised and united to their souls, and "reign with Christ" in their whole person, body, and soul: but not a word is here said, or elsewhere, of their ascension to heaven, and reigning there; but, on the contrary, those who are said to dwell with Christ, and he with them, are said to come down from God out of heaven (Rev. 21:2,3), and that there should be two sorts of persons in the millennium, one in heaven and the other on earth; or, as others imagine, that there shall be on earth some in an immortal, perfect state, and others in a mortal and imperfect one; some having the word and ordinances among them, and others not, are mere chimeras, for which there is no foundation: and what communion can saints have with each other, who are either at such a distance from one another, or in such different circumstances? and as to the martyrs, it is certain, there are others besides them who shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years: and who are mentioned in the same text; for it follows, "And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they," as well as the martyrs before described, "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years;" these are not represented as sufferers for Christ, only as confessors and professors of his name; who bore their testimony against the papacy, in every shape of it, and did not yield unto it, neither by word nor deed; and may include all such persons, who, in every age and period of time, abstain from all corrupt worship, false doctrines, and ordinances of men.

The reason why such who suffered under Rome pagan, and those who submitted not to Rome papal, are particularly pointed at and described, is, because the book of the Revelation is chiefly concerned with the state of the church, from the resurrection of Christ to his second coming. Otherwise, all the Old Testament saints, as well as new, will have a part in the first resurrection, and share in the millennium reign; even all the saints that have been from the beginning of the world, now are, or shall be, to the end of it; for, 2b1.

All the saints will come with Christ, who have departed this life, when he comes a second time; this is asserted both in the Old and New Testament (Zech. 14:5; 1 Thess. 3:13 4:14). 2b2. All that are Christ's shall rise from the dead at his coming (1 Cor. 15:23), and, in consequence of their resurrection, shall reign

with him. Now all the people of God, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, all true believers in Christ, are his, belong to him; he has an interest in them, and they in him; and when he comes a second time, they will rise first; and having a part in the first resurrection, shall reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4,6). 2b3.

All the elect of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb, are kings and priests; and being such, shall reign on earth; those that are a "chosen generation," or who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," are a "royal priesthood," or are kings and priests (1 Pet. 1:2 2:9), and all that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, "out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, are made unto God kings and priests," and "shall reign on earth," on the new earth, with Christ, a thousand years; even all of them, all that are chosen, all that are redeemed (Rev. 5:9,10; 20:6). 2b4.

The whole church of God, and the members of it, in every dispensation, shall have a share in the kingdom of Christ. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, will have a seat in it, and multitudes from all parts of the world, and who have lived in different ages, shall come and sit down with them (Matthew 8:11 Luke 11:28,29). The four and twenty elders, the representatives of the gospel church, under the New Testament dispensation, being redeemed out of every nation, and being kings and priests, declare their strong faith that they shall reign on earth; and accordingly, are sometimes represented as having on their heads crowns of gold, as well as clothed in white, the raiment of priests and princes (Rev. 4:4; 5:9,10).

In a word, the whole body of the elect, and redeemed of the Lamb, the church universal, consisting of all its members, not one wanting; and so a bride, completely prepared and adorned for her husband; even the holy city and new Jerusalem, will descend from God, out of heaven, on earth; and the tabernacle of God, of Immanuel, will be with them; and he will dwell and reign with them, and they with him (Rev. 21:2,3), compared with Revelation 20:9. 2c. Thirdly, in what sense the saints, even all the saints, will reign with Christ, may be next considered.

This will not be after the manner of his spiritual reign among his saints; that is a reign in them, this is a reigning "with" them, and of them with him. His reign of grace takes place at the conversion of men, when, as King, he sets up his throne in their hearts, and reigns there; and such a reign has been from the beginning of the world, as soon as the first man was called by grace; and has continued ever since, more or less, in every dispensation, and will continue until the last man is converted.

Nor does this reign we are treating of, take place in the separate state of the soul in heaven, before the resurrection: that state is expressed, by a "being with Christ" (Luke 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23), but never, as I remember, by "reigning with him." This reign will not be until the resurrection, till soul and body are reunited; for there can be no proper reigning while the body is under the power of death and the grave, at least not fully and completely: the saints will first "live," that is, live again in their bodies, have a part in the first resurrection, and then reign with Christ, soul and body, a thousand years (Rev. 20:4,6).

And so, 2c1. This will be a reign "with Christ" personally and visibly; he will appear in person, and be visible by them; and they shall appear with him, in a most glorious manner, in soul and body; and will be "like him," being glorified, and reigning together with him; and shall see him as he is, personally and visibly, in the glory of his person, as God man, reigning before his ancients gloriously; see Colossians 3:4 and 1 John 3:2. 2c2. This reigning with Christ, implies some kind of share with him in the glories of his kingdom; hence "thrones" are said to be set for them to sit upon; and "judgment given them," which denotes regal power to be exercised by them; yea, they are said to sit on the same throne with Christ, on

"his throne," and to "eat and drink at his table, in his kingdom": all which expresses a great share of honour and dignity, and of large enjoyments; see Revelation 20:4; 3:21; Luke 22:30. 2c3.

This supposes dominion over all their enemies; as Christ will now have all enemies put under his feet, being subdued by him; so all enemies will be put under the feet of the saints, and they will have dominion over them. "Sin" will now be no more troublesome to them. Their power over sin, in the present state, is expressed rather negatively, by sin "not having dominion over them;" than affirmatively, by their having dominion over sin; nay, they are sometimes so far from it, that they are brought "into captivity by it": but now the straggle for dominion will be over, the warfare will be accomplished, and an entire victory obtained over sin, which will be no more.

Satan, and his principalities and powers, though spoiled and bruised by Christ, and triumphed over by him, yet there is a wrestling and combat between the saints and them in the present life; and though the devil cannot devour and destroy them, yet he greatly disturbs and distresses them; but now he will be bruised under their feet also; when he, and his angels, shall be shut up in the bottomless pit, where they will remain during the thousand years Christ and his saints shall reign together in the world, in which the saints have now so much tribulation; and the "wicked" men of it, from whom they meet with so much persecution, in one shape or another, shall be trodden down by them, and be ashes under the soles of their feet, their bodies being burnt up in the general conflagration; and their souls in no capacity to hurt or molest them, being shut up with Satan in the bottomless pit.

The last enemy, "death," will now be destroyed, being "swallowed up in victory," by the resurrection of the dead; so that the risen saints, reigning with Christ say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" and, indeed of this, and every other enemy, they may say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!" 1 Corinthians 15:26,54,55,57. 3. The description of the persons that shall thus reign with Christ, as given Revelation 20:6. 3a.

First, they are such who have "part in the first resurrection;" which, what that is, must be inquired into. 3a1. First, this cannot be understood of a spiritual resurrection, or of a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, which men are made partakers of at regeneration; such a resurrection cannot be intended here; for, 3a1a. As this was a vision of something future, that John saw, be it afterwards when it may, it could never be the first resurrection of this sort; since there had been thousands of instances of this, from the beginning of the world to the times of John; and therefore could be nothing uncommon, rare, and wonderful, to be shown him, if this was the case. 3a1b.

This can never be the first resurrection, with respect to the persons themselves raised; for they are such who had been raised in this sense before; since they are the souls of such who had suffered for Christ and his gospel, and had bore a testimony against antichrist in every shape; and had refused obedience to him by word or deed: and can it be thought that such persons had not been quickened by the grace of God; or were not raised from the death of sin, before they suffered for the sake of Christ, or professed his name? 3a1c.

Persons once raised in this sense, never die again; nor stand in need of being raised a second time; he that lives, and believes in Christ, never dies a spiritual death; grace in him is immortal and incorruptible: and could this possibly be their case, it would not be the first, but a second resurrection. 3a1d. There is no such resurrection after death. Those persons are represented in the vision, as having been slain for their faithful testimony; or as having departed this life, either under Rome pagan or papal; and as they stood in

no need of such a resurrection, so if they had, they could not have had it; if a man dies in his sins, he remains in them; if he dies impenitent, and an unbeliever, so he continues; neither faith nor repentance any grace, are given after death. 3a1e.

Persons who have been quickened in this sense, or have been spiritually raised from the death of sin, and have lived, never lived corporeally a thousand years; not any of the saints in the patriarchal state, partakers of a spiritual resurrection, even those that lived the longest, not Adam, nor Methuselah, lived to such an age; nor any afterwards to the times of John; nor any since; nor is there any reason to expect that any will in the present state. 3a1f. There will be none to be raised in this sense at the coming of Christ in the last day; the Jews will have been converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; all that God meant should come to repentance, will now have been brought to it; and when everyone of them is effectually called, or, in other words, raised from a death of sin to a life of grace, then will the day of the Lord come, and the general conflagration take place, in which all the wicked of the earth will be burnt up; and the whole election of grace being gathered in, and the whole church of God completely prepared for Christ her husband, there will remain none to be the subjects of a spiritual resurrection. 3a1g.

If this living again before the reign, or at the beginning of the reign of the thousand years, is to be understood of a spiritual resurrection, then the living of the rest of the dead, that is, of the wicked, at the end of the thousand years, must be understood in the same sense, that they shall live a life of grace, being raised from the death of sin; for it is expressly said, "The rest of the dead lived not again until th

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