

MILLENIAL STATE No. 2.

BY ISAAC SHEEN,

A N D

THE WAY OF LIFE.

BY T. W. SMITH.

Concerning old Jerusalem and Zion, we read that Isaiah said: "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee." Isa. 60: 10. But concerning the New Jerusalem we read as follows:

"The city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal." Rev. 21: 16.

The height of the city is twelve thousand furlongs. It appears that old Jerusalem and Zion will be built up by "the sons of strangers," but the holy Jerusalem which will descend from God out of heaven, will be too high for them to build. The last mentioned city appears to be that which is spoken of in Heb. 11: 16. We there read concerning Abraham, that

"He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"

In reference to the "foundations" of the city, we read as follows:

"The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Rev. 21: 14.

When the Lord shall come He "shall suddenly come to His temple." In Malachi 3: 1, we read as follows:

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

It appears therefore that there will be a temple of the Lord during the Millennium, for if the Lord shall come suddenly to His temple, will He destroy that temple at that time? We read also that John the Revelator said:

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living foun-

tains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7: 15-17.

It is also foretold in the following texts, that a temple of the Lord will be built in the last days:—Isa. ii. 1, 2; Micah iv. 1, 2; Ezek. xli. and xliii. c.; Hag. i. 7-9; Zech. vi. 12, 13.

In the eternal state of the earth there will be no temple. We read that John the Revelator said concerning the holy Jerusalem:

"I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Rev. 21: 22.

In the Millennial state there will be mortal beings, as we read in Isa. 65: 17-23, as follows:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old: but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."

In the eternal state of the earth, all its people will be immortal.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. * * * So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. * * * For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15: 26, 42, 53, 54.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21: 4.

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."—Rev. 22: 3.

The beloved city of the millennial state, will be 4500 reeds square. A reed is ten feet, therefore the city will be a little more than eight miles square.

"The city shall be in the midst thereof. And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred."—Ezek. 48: 15, 16.

If the reader will read again my quotation from Rev. 7: 13-17, I think that he will perceive that in the Millennial state there will be "day and night." The following quotation also agrees therewith:

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain; nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."—Isa. 65: 22, 23.

In the eternal state there will be no need of the light of the sun and moon.

"The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."—Rev. 21: 23-25.

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. 22: 5.

The Way of Life.

The word of God clearly represents the Gentile world as being without God, and without hope in the world, strangers to the covenants of promise, and aliens to the commonwealth of Israel. A condition truly deplorable; but one now susceptible of improvement, of change, radical and effectual. Salvation is said to be of the Jews. To them belonged the covenants, the hope, the Messiah, and the kingdom, and God was their God and Father. But because of their transgression, of unfaithfulness, and unbelief, these blessed privileges and rights are now offered to those that were not accounted as a people, but may become the people of the living God. But how? By the blood of Christ which was shed for the remission of the sins of the world. Who has broken down the middle wall—or par-

tion between Jew and Gentile—destroying the distinction formerly existing between them, and recognizing all as His followers who obey His voice; constituting them members of His body, which is one body, and in Him there is no national, or political, or social distinctions, as Paul avers.

But are the blessings promised, bestowed unconditionally, and to all men, irrespective of merit or character?

The word of truth testifies otherwise. While Christ's blood procures the redemption of man, and the forgiveness of sins, yet, in order thereto, God has prescribed certain conditions, the fulfillment of which entitles us to the blessings. Such statements in scripture, that life and incorruptibility, glory, honor and immortality, the resurrection and the kingdom, etc., are received on account of faith and obedience; of patient continuance in well doing, in continuing in the faith, in abounding in the work of the Lord, etc., show conclusively the truth of the statement. Beside, the nature of the case demands it, as the disposition of the human heart is to strive for some object, which evolves the principle of hope, which is something desired or expected, creating an activity, an operation on the part of the believer of the same in accordance with the value of the object. "We are saved by hope," saith Paul. The great moving principle in the walk, or we might say the race of life, is that of hope. We are moved by it in every vocation of life. In fact, it is doubtful if anything of moment is performed that is not prompted by this principle. It led Moses to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than the pleasures of sin for a season, having had respect unto the recompense of reward. It prompted Abraham to leave his father's house, and go into a strange land. So of many others, they were actuated by the same power. And of Jesus it is said, that He endured the cross, despising the shame, for the joy set before Him. So God proposes to save men in the exercise of that principle. It is called "the hope of the gospel," "the hope of Israel," "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers." That is the hope presented by the gospel, or good news; or in other words, the good news is relative to the things hoped for; it describes the things that constitute the hope. "The hope of Israel," because the things promised pertained unto them. "The hope of the promise of God made unto the fathers," i. e., the promise God made to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, etc., of future blessings, even everlasting possessions and everlasting life.

Hope relies upon God's promises, feeds upon them; in fact depends upon them for its life.

But in the exercise of this hope, is seen the absolute necessity of another principle—indeed it is embraced in the very idea of hope—and that is *faith*, or belief of, and confidence in the things hoped for, and therefore the faith and hope are inseparable; and as that which is seen is not hope, therefore is it, that faith is predicated in the things promised of God yet unfulfilled. It seems scarcely necessary to ask, how is faith obtained? when it is said to be founded upon the things hoped for; as it is evident the thing hoped for, must be revealed—proclaimed or made known, and that of course produces faith—the things must be preached, and the belief and confidence of them is faith. And in harmony with this is the truth, that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, or the gospel. The preaching of the gospel (which gospel proclaims the things hoped for,) produces faith. So then, we learn that the order thus far is:

1st., Preaching; 2d., preaching the word of God; 3d., believing the word preached, or trusting in the hope.

The effect of faith is: 1st., Pleasing God, “for without faith it is impossible to please God.” 2d., Obtaining access to the Father; “for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, [or exists,] and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” 3d., The purification of the heart—or enlightenment of the mind—for Peter says that, “God a good while ago made choice among us,” that the Gentiles by his mouth, should hear the word of the gospel and believe, putting no difference between them and the Jews, “*purifying their hearts by faith;*” “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” 4th. It works by love toward God and the Lord Jesus—brought into exercise by belief on the mercies of God as variously manifested—works toward God, i. e., love of God moves the individual to do His will and to bring his life in conformity with His character—to change his actions, thoughts and feelings, causing regret or sorrow for sin committed against a good and merciful Being. Says Paul, “Know ye not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” So we find that thus far an individual is changed in heart, life, and purposes. Yet as God offers a tangible and visible kingdom for citizenship, as in all other kingdoms, aliens must become naturalized, i. e., throw off allegiance to all other powers, and take upon themselves the name of the kingdom of Israel—or the commonwealth of Israel; and the name of the King thereof.

Baptism, or immersion, is designed for this purpose. “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ,” and if any man be Christ’s he is Abraham’s seed, and heir according to the promise, which promise includes the kingdom.

Further, it is “for remission of sins” previously repented of, as Peter testifies, Acts 2: 38. And Jesus testifies that, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

Sins being remitted, the individual thus pardoned is prepared for adoption into the family of God, even by the Spirit of God; “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;” “For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.” “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” Now this Spirit is promised to all who believe, repent and are baptized, as Peter declares, for, saith he:

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

Now this promise belongs not to unbelievers of the gospel, or un-immersed believers of the gospel. For such are in the world, and Christ teaches that the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, “for it knoweth him not.” But to all who obey the gospel the promise belongs, and to our mind the only reason that it belongs not to any believer is because none are called, for it is to all whom the Lord shall call. Does He call any now?

Truly, He is calling many by the gospel of His grace, taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name. None deny that by the gospel souls are called to-day, and all that heed that call—hearken to His voice—obey His commands; can claim the gift of the Holy Spirit. So then, in harmony with this is the fact that God gives to His saints the Holy Spirit, that they may be adopted as sons, be led thereby into all truth—comforting their hearts, dwelling in them, will quicken their bodies at the last day. But is this all? Nay, but all who have thus believed, obeyed and received the Spirit of God, (by the laying on of hands of the apostles or elders,) are members of the body of Christ, that beautiful, symmetrical, organized body, called the church. Not a disjointed, inharmonious body, as is presented by the so-called church, composed of the religious parties of the present day: but an earnest living body, animated by the Spirit of God, without which it has died—and will die. The body of a man is dead without the spirit, so the body of Christ is dead without the Spirit—losing the life flowing from the vine, it becomes a dead branch. God organized the church in days long since past, and in it placed certain officers, members thereof, and called them apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. And again, He placed in the

church beside apostles, prophets and teachers—gifts, helps, governments and tongues—and for a purpose—even the production of a unit faith—a perfect ministry, and an edified body. The Spirit manifested itself variously at various times and to different persons. But it may be contended that these officers and gifts were only for the establishment of the church. But certainly they were essential to the complete organization of the church—God seemed to think that they were necessary for this end. So He placed them in the body—forming various parts and joints of the building—and every part needed, not only to form the building entire, but to sustain some other part which would be useless without it. And so curiously and beautifully has the Great Architect fashioned this building, that the loss of one part creates a disrapture—a disjointing—a danger to the whole, and defaces its beauty, affects its symmetry. One part or one member cannot say to another I have no need of you, although some do pretend to say so, but not by the word of the Lord do they speak. Yes, but were not these gifts to cease? Yes, when that which is perfect is come. Why do men deny the privilege of spiritual gifts now? Because they know that they have no authority to lay hands upon the believer that the Spirit may be given; for if this is claimed, then the authority to preach and baptize is also to be claimed, and the apostolic commission is also in force—and then that other work—shall we speak it? Signs following them that believe. And to escape the necessity of manifesting these evidences of authority, men admit that they preach—because the gospel must be preached—and as they can preach—they have a right to preach that gospel, and as a consequence, people believe, and desire to be baptized—as they cannot baptize themselves therefore as an evidence of friendship, and as an act of neighborly kindness the preacher baptizes them. By authority? Oh no, except the authority of custom, and the necessity of the case. But “who hath required this at your hands?” may be an enquiry in the last day. Many shall say in that day, Lord, Lord, open unto us, for we have preached in thy name, baptized in thy name, and have done many wonderful works in thy name, but to such will this response be given, “I never knew you”—or recognized you.

It is said that these gifts were given to confirm the word. Truly. But they were given to the church also. And for what purpose? To edify, strengthen and comfort the body. They did not need to have the word confirmed; for having the presence of apostles, prophets, etc., and having witnessed their miraculous powers—it certainly cannot be that the manifestations of the Spirit would be still needed to continually put them in mind that the word of

God is true. They certainly did not need to be kept in the faith, by witnessing these gifts of healing, of wisdom, speaking in tongues, prophesying, etc. Yet they were in the church, as were also all the other offices. And what for? The upbuilding of the temple or building of God, the edifying of the body of Christ, and for the perfection of the saints, and for the work of the ministry. And truly the church, collectively and individually, the ministry or work of service needs such helps to-day. As God placed these things in the church and the body was to be benefitted in various ways thereby. If these things were necessary once, to edify the church, to complete the work of service, and to bring in a unity of the faith, to produce the measure of the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus, or the stature of the *age* of Christ. This time has not yet come nor will it until the coming of the Lord, Jesus to reign on His Father's throne. If the church of Jesus Christ exists to-day, it is an organized body, a fully organized body, even after the ancient pattern. If God once thought apostles, prophets, teachers, gifts of various kinds, helps, governments, etc., were requisite to the formation of the body of Christ, why say the religious world, that it can exist and please God, yet shorn of its beauty, defaced, deformed, and without vitality? in other words, without the members of the body that God seemed to think so essential to the existence thereof. It must exist in its strength and completeness when the Lord comes, or He will have no church at all.

T. W. SMITH.

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