

quently suffers. Hence by these joint effects the brain is gradually impaired; and imbecility, insanity, dilirium tremens, and other mental diseases induced.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

The Second Appearing and Personal Reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a Letter to a Friend.

VERY DEAR SIR,—In one of our late friendly colloquies, you kindly asked me to state the reasons why I believed the reign of our Lord Jesus to be a personal reign, and not merely a spiritual one. Having preached twice that day, with more than usual freedom, I do not know whether my mind was in a proper state to recall, and to arrange at once, the declarations of Holy Writ, on which that important doctrine rests, and by which, I am satisfied, it is clearly taught. I therefore beg permission to submit to you, in this manner, the following statements:—

1 Acts, ii. 29–31, “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”

You will recollect, my dear Sir, the antithesis between the flesh and the spirit, which is so frequently found in the Holy Scriptures: “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.” John iii. 6. “Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Rom. viii. 1. “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” Gal. v. 16.

We now ask, Is the reign of Christ, which is the subject of prophecy, to be according to the Spirit? that is *only* spiritual; or is it to be according to the flesh? that is personal. God himself answers the question: He has “sworn with an OATH to him, that of the fruit of his loins, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, he would raise up Christ to sit on his (David’s) throne.” This Divine purpose, thus solemnly announced, was declared by the angel to the virgin mother of our Lord. “Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give him,” what? not a spiritual throne merely in the hearts of his people; but the true, earthly, material “throne of his father David.” Exactly the same kind of throne, which David filled, must be given to his son according to the flesh; and as David sat upon that throne personally, bodily, and visibly, so must the Lord

Jesus sit personally, bodily, and visibly, upon the same seat of government, before the oath of the Father is fulfilled.

Let us take one case not easy to be misunderstood to illustrate the subject. In the order of Divine Providence, God has given the throne of his late Britannic Majesty, William IV, to his niece, Queen Victoria. How do we understand this matter? Why just in this way: As the late king sat personally upon the British throne, and exercised the functions of the British government, before his death; so in like manner does the present queen sit personally upon that throne, and exercise the functions of the same government. And as the Queen’s visits to the Isle of Wight and Balmoral, do not prevent her at the proper times, from sitting personally on that throne; so neither will our Lord’s temporary visit to his Father’s court, in another world, prevent him, at the proper time, from returning to this world, and taking actual possession of the throne, and the government, which are his, by the Father’s promise, and the Father’s OATH. And as the sitting of David on his throne was a proper personal sitting and reign; so will the sitting upon that throne, and the exercise of that government, by Christ, be properly personal also. Let me now direct your attention to a few passages of scripture, in which this truth is prominently set forth.

1 Chron. xvii. 11–14, “And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom, he shall build me an house; and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be his Father and he shall be my Son: and I will not take away my mercy from him, as I took it from him that was before thee. But I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever.”

Psal. lxxxix. 35–37, “Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.”

Psal. cxxii. 11, “The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.”

Isaiah. ix. 7, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever.”

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah

shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Zech. vi. 12, 13, “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.”

Zech. ix. 10, “And he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.”

Zech. xiv. 4, “And his feet shall stand on the mount of Olives. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.”—vers. 9, 17.

Now what is there in any of these passages that indicates a merely spiritual reign? When David reigned over the Israelites in personal and visible glory, many of them were the subjects of spiritual influence, and enjoyed the grace of God in their hearts. But his reign *over* them was one thing; and the grace of God *within* them was another; and no person of sound understanding would confound the two, or take the one for the other. In like manner the grace of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit, in the believer’s heart, is one thing; and the kingdom of Christ, for the enjoyment of which, that grace, and the work of the Spirit in the heart, prepare them, is another; and the two distinct things should not be confounded. They are clearly distinguished by our Lord, when he speaks of the New Birth, the work of the Spirit in the heart; and the divine kingdom, for the enjoyment of which, the New Birth prepares us.—John iii. 3, 5. He distinguishes between them again when he speaks of the mission of the Spirit into our world. He says, “I will send him;” and between sending another, and coming himself, there must be an essential difference. Again the mission of the Holy Spirit was to appropriate the benefits of atoning grace, in awakening, renewing, sanctifying, comforting, and endowing men with those divine gifts, which should qualify them for service and trial in this world, and prepare them for glory and felicity in that which is to come. But the coming of Christ in his kingdom will be to destroy impenitent sinners out of the earth; and to call men to an account for the improvement or non-improvement of the time, talents, and endowments with which they have been favoured, and to reward or punish them accordingly. In fact, in whatever light we view the subject, the doctrine of the kingdom is one thing, and that of the