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## Doctrine and Duty.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

### UNFULFILLED PROPHECY, No. VI. THE KINGDOM.

Christ is a king, as well as a prophet and a priest; and the Scriptures frequently speak of the power and dominion which shall be given unto him. For the coming of this kingdom, we daily pray, and when we do so, we connect it with the time when God's will shall be done *on earth*, as it is in heaven. This kingdom is to be the grand result of God's dispensations. To this theme of deep and abiding interest to the Church of God, I now ask the reader's serious attention.

That the expressions "kingdom of heaven," "kingdom of God," and "kingdom of Christ," denote one and the same thing, is proved by a comparison of parallel passages in which these phrases are used. Has this kingdom already come? Is it already manifested in the visible church of God? Jesus is even now our king, he exercises all royal dignity, he rules and governs his people, rewards his friends, and punishes his enemies. But the kingdom and the glory is yet veiled from us. Indeed a usurper reigns over this world where the throne of the King of Zion ought to be. Our king is gone into a far country *to receive a kingdom*; but he has not yet returned to take possession.

Jesus Christ has already sat down on the right hand of God, and there he reigns gloriously, wielding his power and his providence on behalf of his people; but there is a special kingdom—**THE VISIBLE KINGDOM OF THIS EARTH**, and there is a special throne **THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID**, which are promised to him as the Son of Man. This kingdom is still future, and it is for this that we pray when we say, "Thy kingdom come."

This kingdom is that described by the prophet Daniel:—"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii. 13. 14.) We fully and

cheerfully admit that Jesus Christ now reigns over his saints, and that they are his spiritual kingdom. When men are converted to God they are "delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." But this is only the seed of that visible and glorious kingdom which Daniel describes. That the saints in the present dispensation do not constitute the kingdom is proved by the following truths:—The saints are spoken of as "the heirs of this kingdom," it is said to be promised to them; they are graciously assured that they shall be preserved unto this heavenly kingdom; and they are exhorted to give diligence to make their calling and election sure "for so an entrance shall be administered abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This kingdom is still future; it is not something which the saints do now enjoy, but something for which they are taught to look, and long, and pray. If further proof is needed, we have the express testimony of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where speaking of this kingdom and of the universal dominion promised to Christ in the 8th Psalm, he adds, "But now we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 11. 8.)

The establishment of the kingdom then is yet future; Christ's kingdom is not yet come. Even the saints in heaven are still anticipating it, for they sing, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," (Rev. 5. 10.) Let me then ask your attention to the following truths which are taught us in the Word of God, in regard to this future kingdom.

1. *Christ is to reign on the earth visibly and personally.* This is evident from the passage in the prophecies of Daniel, which we have already quoted. This kingdom it is distinctly stated is to be "under the whole heaven," that is over and upon the whole earth. So Jeremiah likewise testifies: "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and justice in the earth," (Jer. xiii. 5. 6.) Thus also the prophet Zechariah testifies: "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. The Lord my God shall come and all his saints with him. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth." (Zech. xiv.) Such is the testimony of the prophets. We

might multiply quotations from the Psalms, and from the New Testament; but as we shall have occasion to quote some of these passages in illustrating other particulars, we leave this part of our subject, with the above distinct and unmistakable proofs, that Christ's kingdom is to be visible, that it is to be on the earth, and that he is to reign personally.

2. *Christ shall sit on the throne of David.* In the promises made to David in 2. Sam. vii. 12-16, it is distinctly promised that the throne of Israel shall be given to David's seed for ever. This is confirmed in Psalm lxxxix. 29, 36, 37. But from Psalms ii and cx, we learn that David's seed is none other than the promised Messiah. During the times of the Gentiles "the diadem is removed," and "the crown is taken off;" there is a suspension of the reign of the princes of the house of David. But has the promise of God failed? No! no! Jehovah says, I will overturn, overturn, and it shall be no more, *until he come whose right it is*; and I will give it him. (Ezek. xxi. 26.) These promises are directly applied to our Lord by the angel, who announced his birth to the Virgin Mary. "The Lord 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. (Luke 1. 32. 33.) Has Christ succeeded to David's throne? Does he now sit upon it? Assuredly not. He is now ascended into heaven, but David's throne was on earth, He is seated on his Father's throne; but he has never yet ascended David's throne: he has never reigned in Mount Zion. Our Lord himself distinguishes clearly between his Father's throne, on which he now sits, and his own throne, on which, as the son of David, he is hereafter to sit. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am sat down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. iii. 21.) And yet men who have a system to defend, do not hesitate to maintain that Christ is already seated on the throne of David, is even now reigning in Mount Zion! What doctrine of Scripture is safe, if men may thus contradict the plain testimony of inspired writers, and even the very words of our Lord himself!

3. *Christ shall reign over the house of Israel.* This is clearly proved by the passages already quoted. To these we may add the following. "The Lord of hosts