

neither then, nor at any after period of their natural lives, did they see the Son of man coming. He was then unseen, and the Holy Ghost, which was there poured out, was the proof that he was by the right hand of God exalted. We shall immediately shew that from the hour these words were spoken, down to the present time, there has been but one occasion on which it can truly and scripturally be said that the Son of man was seen coming with power; and on that occasion he was seen by some who were standing by, when the words were uttered.

But, that we may understand the import of the language, "shall see the Son of man coming in his kingdom," let us go back a single step in the connection of the passage. In the verse immediately preceding the declaration, Jesus says: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his works." Here will be perceived the force of the suggestion, that what some of them should see before, all of them should see, after tasting of death. It is, as if he had said, "When he comes finally in glory, every eye must see him; but some of you shall behold his majesty before you die."

We have said, that there has been but one occasion in the history of the world on which it could scripturally and truly be said that the Son of man was seen coming in his kingdom. And when was that? It is not far to seek. Let it be observed that in each of the three evangelists, the declaration, "there be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom," or till they see the kingdom of God come with power, is immediately followed by the description of the transfiguration.

Matthew points out the connection between the prediction and the fulfilment: "And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John,"—some of them who stood there. Luke points it out even more distinctly: "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, James, and John, and went up into a mountain apart to pray; and as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered."

It is surprising that even a popular theory could have concealed from men a connection between a promise and its fulfilment, so obviously pointed out, especially when the fulfilment is so striking as this, and when this manifestation of the Son of man in his glory stands alone, and so prominent in the record of his humiliation and suffering. Viewed in this connection the import and object of the extraordinary occurrence burst forth, radiant as the robes he wore. There, on the summit of that high mountain, these three chosen witnesses from among the disciples beheld

what their brethren shall only see, when He comes to judge every man according to his works:—they saw the Son of man coming in his kingdom—they saw the kingdom of God come with power.

Let us now go back a little further in the connection, to see what was the occasion of this discourse about the Son of man coming in glory to judge the world, and of this promise, that some of the disciples should behold him in his royal state before tasting of death—a promise so remarkably fulfilled in the transfiguration. We find that Simon Peter, in name of the other disciples had just made the avowal "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It must seem unaccountable that an occurrence, the sole design of which, Dr. Barnes says, was "to convince them that he was the Christ," should have been deferred until after they were convinced of this truth, and had fully acknowledged it. Looking to the passage, without the commentary, we find that the Lord embraced the opportunity of this acknowledgement, to inform them of his approaching sufferings. There was an urgent necessity that they should be forewarned of these sufferings, which would appear so inconsistent with their ideas of a triumphant Messiah. With the intimation of his own sufferings and death, he joins a warning of the sacrifices they should be called to endure; which were also so widely different from what they might anticipate, as the followers of the Son of God! But having faithfully warned them, both of his sufferings and theirs, he assures them of the glory which shall follow; notwithstanding the apparent defeat, he shall come in the glory of his Father; and, notwithstanding their present sufferings, they shall be rewarded at his coming. If they suffered with him, they should also reign with him.

In all the circumstances of the case, such an assurance demanded the strongest confirmation. His sufferings and death would seem so completely at war with the prospect of his triumph; and the perils and sacrifices of the Christian course would be so apt to shake their confidence and hope in him. In order, therefore, to prove not only the possibility, but the certainty of his coming glory, he promised that some of them should, in this present life, obtain a view of him in his kingly state; and their testimony should remain as a security of the hope of the believer in after ages. This object is consistent with the charge he gave to the three witnesses, that they should not relate the vision until after his resurrection. Had its design been to convince them that he was the Christ, it would have been more important that it should have been related before he was declared to be the Son of God with power; when God raised him from the dead. But it had reference to a glory which should succeed these sufferings; and

the testimony was not needed till after they were past.

If we now examine the inspired descriptions of the coming and kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, both in the old and new Testaments it will be found, their prominent features exactly correspond with the three particulars we have noted in the accounts of the Transfiguration—Christ in his glory, the children of the resurrection in glory with him, and the visible token of the Divine Majesty overshadowing all. It is remarkable how exactly even the language of prophetic description answers to the language of this narrative. We need not quote the numerous passages in which the King of kings is represented as appearing amid his redeemed ones in radiant glory and light, nor those in which the redeemed are described as appearing with their bodies fashioned like unto his glorious body. And it will be remembered that the manifestation of the divine presence is an equally noticeable feature of these descriptions of the heavenly kingdom.

The visible token of the Divine presence is always a cloud of brightness. Not to mention other instances, it will be enough to refer to the shechinah, from which Jehovah takes the title of "He that dwelt between the Cherubim," and which is usually spoken of as "the Glory of the Lord." On one occasion, when all the congregation had beheld this glory shining forth from the door of the tabernacle, God said to Moses, "As I live, saith Jehovah, my glory shall fill the whole earth." In all subsequent descriptions of the blessed kingdom that shall be established here, this promise is kept in view down to the closing splendor of revelation, when in the new heaven and the new earth, the tabernacle of God is described as being with men, and he shall dwell with them. "And," it is added, "that 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."

In confirmation of this interpretation, we appeal to the original witnesses. John says, "We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father." But the testimony of Peter is more minute and explicit. In his first Epistle to the persecuted churches, he sets over against their manifold trials, the glory which is to be revealed when the chief shepherd shall appear. In his second epistle, addressed to the same parties, he encourages them to diligence and patience in the Christian course by the assurance, "For so, an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This is a reason for his anxiety to confirm them in the hope, and as a reason for their confidence in it he adds, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power