

seems applicable to this present evil age while the King is in the heavens,* and from thence in the person of the Spirit, as His substitute, administers the kingdom. During this age the sheet is let down from heaven and gathered of every kind, to be drawn up again at our Lord's second advent.

As to the *coming* age, it seems to be peculiarly the age of the *Son of Man*, as the present age is pre-eminently the age of the *Spirit*. Christ Himself spoke of the "Son of man" and "*His* kingdom" (Matt. 13 : 41, 16 : 28), a marked change of phraseology which cannot be without meaning. He will come to resume and complete His own personal dispensation, which was interrupted by His ascension, when He gave place to the Spirit of God as His substitute.

The peculiarities of this *coming* age are these : First of all, Christ's personal reign, which is so frequently and plainly set forth in Scripture that even the most tortuous exegesis cannot evade it. The kingdom will then be marked by *visibility* ; it will be not elective, but collective, comprehensive, extensive, and advance toward universal dominion. Then all the sheep shall be gathered into one flock under the one shepherd. Then "all Israel shall be saved : " one "nation" at least is to be "born at once" (*paam*, at a beat, or step), the only nation of whose conversion the Bible speaks as of a totality. The collective and universal feature will doubtless then be as prominent as the elective and individual is now ; organization will doubtless be conspicuous and world-wide, a compact government of which Jerusalem was in its best estate but a type (Ps. 122 : 3).

This coming age is to be the age of *conquest*. In the present age the policy is persuasive, not coercive ; it is the period of witness, not war ; of the Word, not the sword. The sword belongs not to the Church but to the kingdom. But then there are to be, both at the beginning and end, wars of conquest, and judgments more or less destructive. Satan's dominion is to be destroyed, and he himself, bound at first, is to be burned at last. And the saints, bound now, are to be *unbound* then ; the first resurrection from among the dead will let loose the bodies of "them that sleep" from the bonds of death and the bars of the grave, and they, with the living saints, caught up to meet the coming King, will be associated with Him in power and glory. Then shall we understand the full significance of those ten mysterious words which mark the sweep of that grand circle of the coming age—return, revelation, refreshing, restitution, restoration, regeneration, resurrection, reception, recompense, redemption.† This coming age is also the age of *completion*, when all things are to "head up" into Christ, who is cap-stone, as well as corner-stone, to the time-worlds.

There is an age yet *beyond* even this coming age, when time shall be no longer—an eternal age, better described by the word *aiōn* than *aiōnios*. This seems to be distinctively the period of the "*Father's* king-

* Dr. Bullinger, "The Church and the Kingdom."

† Luke 19 : 12 ; 1 Peter 1 : 13 ; Acts 3 : 19-21 ; 1 : 6 ; Matt. 19 : 28 ; Rev. 20 : 6 ; John 14 : 3 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 6 ; Rev. 22 : 12 ; Eph. 4 : 30, etc.