

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

THE PROMISED SIGHT.

"I tell you of a truth, that there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God."—Luke ix. 27.

The Messiah and the Kingdom of God stood associated in the Jewish mind. To deliver the nation from the Roman yoke and spread the kingdom of Israel, with them the Kingdom of God, over the whole world, they regarded as the principal work of their expected Messiah.

The disciples shared in the faith of the nation, but differed from the rest in holding Jesus to be the Messiah, the King of Israel. They expected his temporal kingdom, and clamored for the highest offices in it. Two of their leading men determined to end the dispute by asking Jesus, through their mother, that one of them should sit on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom. He spoke many parables to instruct the disciples and cure them of their carnal and mistaken views of his kingdom which was so entirely different from what they expected. At length he told them that some of their number before they died would see it. It was impossible for them while in the flesh to inherit the Kingdom of God, but they would have a clear sight of it in miniature. "He who knoweth our frame," can address both the outward and inward man in lessons that easily enter the mind and permanently abide in the memory. He commanded bread and wine to be used in the Supper, that the intelligent partaker might see or discern the Lord's body, and be known of him in the breaking of bread till the Lord comes. So in a week after Jesus made this promise, he takes Peter, James and John with him up into a high mountain, and in the Transfiguration showed them the glorious kingdom. But, asks one—"Did not Jesus refer to the setting up of the kingdom on the day of Pentecost, when he promised some of them before their death a sight of the kingdom? We answer—Each of the evangelists places this promise directly between what Jesus had said of his coming to judgment and the *Transfiguration*, making the former the preface to the promise and the latter its sequel. All the twelve saw Pentecost (Acts i. 23., ii. 14) but only three of them saw the Transfiguration. Jesus had special work for Peter, James and John, and he especially qualified them for their work. The first he surnamed Rock, and he was to open the kingdom for Jews and Gentiles. The other two he surnamed the Sons of Thunder—the one destined to drink early of the cup of martyrdom, the other to tarry long after the death of the other apostles, even till Jesus came and gave him on the Isle of Patmos his last revelation to man.

These three Jesus took with him as he did on other special occasions, and they were

able to say for the wavering and encouragement of God's children in all times and space, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eye witnesses of His Majesty* * * * when we were with him in the holy mount, etc. (1 Peter i. 16, 17, 18.)

When Jesus prayed on the holy mount, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. The disciples saw his glory as he will be seen when he comes in his kingdom.

They next saw the *subjects* of the kingdom represented in the two men who appeared in glory. Moses, who had died but was now glorified, represented all God's people who shall rise from their graves in glory when Jesus comes. Elijah who was glorified without dying, represented all those who will not sleep but will be changed in a moment at the last trump. Moses is mentioned first, because the dead in Christ shall rise first, and then the living saints shall be changed, and both shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall be ever with the Lord.

It is natural to speak of what lies nearest the heart, and these glorified ones spoke to Jesus of his DECEASE WHICH HE SHOULD ACCOMPLISH at Jerusalem. They did not speak merely of the death he should suffer at Jerusalem, though its agony was extreme, but of what he would accomplish by that death. These men could remember the countless offerings of bulls and goats which could never take away sin, nor make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. But soon Jesus would accomplish in his death what all these sacrifices aimed at but never reached—what prophets strove in vain to understand and what the angels desired to look into. (1 Peter i. 11, 12). Wonderful death! which decides the long contest between the two seeds and destroys him that had the power of death. An astonished universe re-echoed the cry, "It is finished." This is the corn of wheat which abideth not alone, but dying brings forth all the rejoicing subjects of the kingdom of God, and of that death and its victories these subjects will speak and sing forever.

Peter was so overcome with that glory that he knew not what to say when he spoke of making the three tabernacles. Yet he knew Moses and Elijah as intimately as if he had been their life long acquaintance. Might not this extraordinary recognition be included in the promise: "Ye shall see the Kingdom of God," and that when the veil was lifted they both saw and knew these glorified ones as they will see and know the glorified saints in the Kingdom of God? David said that the righteous would hear of God's goodness to him and be glad, how then will it enhance the happiness of heaven to know the redeemed, and to hear them tell of all God's wonderful love to each of them.

When these disciples saw the King in his beauty—saw the subjects of the Kingdom and heard their conversation, they were over-

shadowed with a bright cloud which at once revealed and concealed the presence of God, whose voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." This same voice, that from heaven first announced this great foundation truth, at the Jordan again proclaims it out of the cloud with the injunction, "Hear ye him." This is the cloud that led the march, and in the Red Sea went all night between the Egyptians and Israel a darkness to them, but a light to these, the cloud that hovered over the tabernacle and the first Temple, but had left the nation for centuries. It now came on the holy mount where the two great prophets of Israel appeared to represent the glorified saints, and also to add their hearty amen to the divine announcement coming out of the cloud. As if they said, God has in times past spoken to the Jewish fathers by us, but now he speaks to all men by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things. The Son has received no light from us, but out of his fullness have all we received. We are but his satellites. He is the Sun, the light of the world, "Hear ye him."

When the vision was past the disciples saw no man but Jesus. He remained with them in his former familiar manner and their fears were gone. They were not at the time capable of describing the matter and in obedience to their Master they said nothing to any man about it till after his resurrection.

After Jesus rose and sent his Holy Spirit on his apostles they wrote for us what they had seen and heard that we might have fellowship with them whose fellowship is with the Father, and his son Jesus charged us, while attending to the affairs of time, to seek *first* the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, assuring us at the same time that all needful things would be added. He thus takes charge of us and our affairs that we may the better plan and work for his kingdom. He has given us his gospel to spread it at home and abroad, and in proportion as this is done will God's righteousness increase and the subjects of his kingdom multiply. While we are watching and praying and striving to be prepared to meet the Saviour, let it be our constant aim to spread the gospel. Should we be downcast or disheartened at any time, let us go by faith to the holy mount and look at the glorious kingdom, thence to that day when Jesus will take us by the hand and lead us into the very midst of the bright cloud and present us without spot or wrinkle before his Father's glory.

UNINSPIRED TEXTS.—A church member said to Miss Guinness, "You know we have home needs to attend to, and does not the Bible say, '*Remember number one*'?" The smile that greeted this quotation showed the speaker that he was wrong somewhere, and he hastily corrected himself: "I did not mean that, I referred to the passage, '*Charity begins at home*.'"