MESSIAH'S THRONE AND KINGDOM OR, THE LOCALITY, EXTENT, AND PERPETUITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM; PP. 1-215

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CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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PREFACE.

THE Bible is a good book. It is the best book. It is God's book. It contains a glorious system of doctrine involving the salvation of men, the redemption of the world, and the glory of its Author. It gives an epitomized history of the past, and also, by prophecy, of the future. In it, the curtain is lifted by divine hands, and the yel to be, exhibited to view and contemplation. By descriptions, figures, and symbols panorann-like it passes before us the great convulsions which have yet to agitate the nations, the tumults which have to distract and perplex the people ; the terrible hosts which have to be gathered together to battle from the war-mad nations of the earth ; the oceans of blood which have to be shed; and the enormous multitudes of slain to be strewn on the fields of conflict. It exhibits the onward progress of these things, and represents them as darkening in horror, until the day of the Lord dawns, and the Son of man comes to the redemption of His own long, long suffering people; and this groaning earth, trodden down, oppressed, cursed by Satan its hellish god for six thousand years; and consequently ought to be studied by all.

It is a great mistake to say that prophecy is a dark subject, difficult to be understood, cannot be understood; and therefore it is labour in vain to study it. Such is a reflection upon the wisdom of God, PREFACE.

who has given us this large portion of His word; and a daring impeachment of His veracity, who has said, that all Scripture, and consequently the prophetic portion of Scripture, "is profitable for doctrine. for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;" 2 Tim. iii. 16. Many prophecies are easy to be understood, while others are more difficult, but the difficulty of some is no reason for abandoning the study of all, or of any; but on the contrary a strong argument for undertaking and prosecuting it with prayerful vigour and perseverance. And this labour shall be crowned with an abundant reward; for it is written, "Blessed is he that readoth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep these things which are written therein; for the time is at hand," Rev. i. 3. But the man who declines the study of prophecy because it is difficult to be understood, virtually takes it away from the Bible-throws it aside branding it as worthless, though the voice of God may be heard from that which is rejected, uttering the swful doom of the rejector : " If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the boly city, and from the things which are written in this book," Rev. xxii, 19.

Whatever may have been the amount of patient study and prayerful investigation of the prophetic portions of God's word, it would not be saying too much, to say, that it never has received all to which it is entitled. And in too many instances, men who seemingly wished to be candid and unbiassed, have entered upon the study of prophecy with unconscious preposession in favour of certain views; and consequently, instead of understanding the language in its plain grammatical meaning, they have endeavoured to see in it, and bring out of it, an entirely different meaning—a meaning which the language does not express; and which the fulfilled portions of prophecy do not indicate nor sustain. They have laboured to spiritualize literality out of existence—out of the Bible, and make the future fulfilment of prophecy something very different from the past; and that too, with the interpretations of God's providence withstanding them to the face.

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PREFACE.

There are perhaps more students of prophecy in the present day than there have been in any other age. The prediction of Daniel is seemingly being fulfilled; "Many shall run to and fro;" that is, many shall endeavour to search out the sense of prophecy, "and knowledge;" that is, the knowledge of prophecy "shall be increased." There are doubtless more prophetic expositions from the pulpit; and never did the press pour forth so many volumes interpreting prophecy, as it is doing at the present day. And it is worthy of notice, that the great majority of these,—almost the whole, many of which are the production of men of great talent, learning, candour and piety—contend for the literal interpretation.

The views presented in the following pages are literal, and the arguments advanced are to establish that interpretation. It is not pretended that there is anything new in these, but simply an exhibition of the truth presented in Scripture. Yet it is confessed that some views are set forth more plainly and extensively than the author has seen them in any work. Many of them were presented to his flock in a course of lectures, and a desire has frequently been expressed to see them in print. After much hesitation he has resolved to lay them before the public. If in the providence of God, they should furnish instruction to any, no matter how few, in the glorious revelations of the Holy Spirit to man; or stir up others to engage in the study of that portion of Holy Writ, he will feel that a great object has been gained. His sole desire is to exhibit the truth of God's word-to set forth the glory yet to be revealed, as foretold by the spirit of prophecy, in all its mighty overwhelming influence, for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of God's people; and his earnest prayer is, that God would bless his humble endeavour.

J. H.

Fishkill Landing, February 24, 1854.

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