

CHAPTER 12

"On the Millennium, and the Scriptural Testimonies to the Doctrine of It"

by
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Part 1 Third Proposition

(Condensed and Paraphrased)

We come now to the proper consideration of our third proposition: *a conversion of the Jews to Christianity, collectively and as a nation, inaugurating the millennium.*

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 13:34,35)

These words are part of the Lord's answer to the Pharisees who came to him saying, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill you" (Luke 13:31). Jesus was then making his last circuit of Galilee before his arrival at Jerusalem for the Passover. He had not yet passed into Perea. Let us now compare Luke's text with the following from St. Matthew.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matt. 23:37-39).

These words were the last which our Savior delivered in public before departing from the temple on the evening of Wednesday in passion week. This declaration, then, was basically a repetition *verbatim* several days after his arrival in Jerusalem, and it cannot justly be considered to refer to anything that passed either in Jerusalem or elsewhere between the two periods. The concluding words in each instance are borrowed from Psalm 118:26: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD [Yahweh]!" This is a text which the people at large were as much at liberty to apply to our Savior as he was to apply it to himself. And why should both coincide in making such an application of it under the circumstances of the case? Because in each instance this part of the psalm was understood to refer to the Messiah. Thus it was applied by our Lord to himself, and it was quoted by the people

because they recognized that he was then making his entry into Jerusalem in the very character of the Messiah. Thus we may justly contend that the import of a declaration like this, "*You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,'*" is tantamount to saying, "You shall see me no more until you are willing to receive me as your expected Messiah."

Therefore the future conversion of the Jews and the consequent appearance of Jesus are both facts that can be justly inferred from these words: the former, because if the Jews are ever to be prepared to receive the same Jesus as their Messiah, whom they have up till now refused to receive as such, they must be previously converted; and the latter, because our Lord has said that they should see him no more until then, virtually promising that they shall see him then. If they were never to see him again in person, even when prepared to receive him as their Messiah, it is not conceivable that our Lord would have employed such language as he does--"*You shall not see me until a certain time.*" In ordinary language, this is equivalent to saying, "*You shall see me at that time.*"

We meet with another prophecy regarding the conversion of Israel in Zechariah:

It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn (Zech. 12:9,10).

The nation of Israel, though they had rejected Jesus as the Messiah once, are now fully prepared to receive him and acknowledge his Messiahship. This prophecy is found where other particulars relating to the conversion of the Jews and the second advent of Christ are recorded, that is, among the predictions relating to the catastrophe and sequel of the great antichristian battle before the beginning of the millennium.

This description in Zechariah is in part applied by St. John to the Speaker in the Book of Revelation, that is, to Jesus Christ: "*Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen*" (Rev. 1:7).

Again, consider Romans 11:25-27:

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

This prediction is perfectly plain and neither requires nor can receive additional light from any commentary upon it. It is one of those truths that anyone can understand. Upon the faith of this assurance, the conversion and salvation of the Jews may confidently be expected when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in.

In like manner, 2 Corinthians 3:13-16 tells of the removal of the veil from the hearts of the Jews, which now keeps them in darkness: "*But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.*" That the veil will some day be removed is assured from these words, but that it will not be until the heart of the Jew has turned to the Lord is equally made plain. The conversion of the Jews, then, is necessary to the full revelation of the glory of the ancient dispensation, reflected indeed from Jesus but visible on the face of Moses.