

*The Holy Spirit's
Two-fold Use of
Millennial Prophecies*

by

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*An address given on May 14, 1947, at Highgate
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Reading:

Romans ix, 23—x, 1; x, 16—xi, 5; xi, 11—xii, 2.

I suppose many of us, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, have come across those who have differed concerning the millennial prophecies, and we have been inclined to blame *them*. I begin to feel that often it would be far better to say, "To what extent am *I* to blame myself for helping the mistake?" Let me illustrate: Many have made statements as to holiness lacking balance and ignoring Romans vii; but may it not be partly our over-statement in the other direction which has led to the swing of the pendulum? And may it not be that we have a greater responsibility than we thought towards those who tell us that the complete fulfilment of millennial prophecies is not in a future thousand years but in the present? If we say, "How ignorant," and look down on others and feel ourselves much wiser, we shall soon lose communion with God. Let us always, when approaching a subject, find what share

we have in errors of others and what we may learn from those who differ when they are, by grace, real children of God.

We all recognize, when turning to a passage like I Chronicles xvii and its promise to David's son, that not only is Solomon there, but Christ! "I will be to him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son" is plain. (See Heb. i, 5.) But is Solomon excluded? No; there is a two-foldness, even as with Psalm lxxii. You will recollect that we read in II Chronicles xxxvi, 22, that when Israel returned from captivity "the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing"; but, on turning to Jeremiah, we find it is not completely fulfilled till, as Isaiah xi, 11, says, "The LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people." A most striking passage is found in Abraham's life. In James ii, the Holy Spirit, applying the very passage used for his justification in Genesis xv, says, "And the Scripture was filled [i.e. in Genesis xxii] which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." The words of Genesis xv are thus "filled" in Genesis xxii, so God emphasizes a two-fold force, the second completing the first. A ram was God's immediate answer to Abraham, providing a sacrifice, but observe: "God shall see for Himself THE Lamb" was not then reached. The name of the place was, "In the mount of the LORD [not *it was* seen, but] *He shall be seen.*" Is it not possible that this is a Divine principle; that most

Passages Have a Two-fold Force and Meaning?

Let us turn to one or two Scriptures. Acts xiii, 47: Paul and Barnabas are coming out from the synagogue at Antioch. They are dealing with the Gentiles, and the reason is given: "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." But the context in the Old Testament goes far beyond present circumstances. Secondly, what about Romans ix? Is there any passage in the Old Testament more strikingly Israelite than Hosea i? "As He saith also in Osee, I will call them My people, which were not My people: and her beloved, which was not beloved." Plainly the "Lo-ammi" people; but here the Apostle says, "Even *us*, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Therefore though the added words about Jezreel apply later (cf. Zech. ix, 9, 10), the Holy Spirit Himself applies a portion of the passage *now*. And what about Hebrews viii, 6? "But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and

I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old." Thus this passage is Divinely applied to us now, and the new covenant ministry of the Lord Jesus; but it is also plainly millennial unless we nullify its Divine dates and data.

We call to mind Luke iv, where our beloved Lord, quoting Isaiah lxi, stopped in the middle of a verse, and applying a portion, not without future force, left the other words, "The day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn *in Zion*, to give unto them beauty for ashes." Many read without linking up with "The day of vengeance of our God *to comfort all that mourn . . . in Zion*" (cf. Isaiah lxiii, 4). When the Lord arises, it will be to comfort the mourners in Zion, as Zechariah xii and Isaiah lxi alike show. Romans xv, 8, moreover, reads, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy Name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gen-

tiles; and laud Him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a Root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." Here then the Apostle takes promises that we have regarded as millennial, and definitely uses them for saints now. Is it surprising, therefore, that many say, "You have made a mistake: you have cut off those words from the present time, and you have spoken of the future, whereas the New Testament says they are fulfilled now"?

What is the Key?

Has the Lord given the promises originally made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah, to the church, where Gentile believers are more numerous, instead? Has He removed Israel as a nation altogether and brought in a fresh arrangement? Or is the application in the New Testament simply an accommodation? Or is there a two-fold *intention* of God? I hold strongly to this third solution. We must remember that the fully inspired Old Testament is far fuller in its meaning than many realize.

Abraham and Proof of Resurrection

When the Lord Jesus referred to the words, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," how did this prove resurrection? He used it thus! The usual interpretation is that it proves they are *still*

living in an intermediate state, that is all. *Whence* does Christ quote? Exodus iii, verses 6, 16: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In that context He implies He will give them **PERSONALLY** of Canaan; *that* is where the promise of resurrection comes in. To Abraham the statement was made: "To *thee and thy seed*"; and the fact that the seed had a part fulfilment does not ignore the fact that *he* is to have the whole in the future, and Christ showed this. Abraham could not possess in his earlier life, for "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." "These all *died* in faith, *not* having received the promises"; but they expected the promise, and Christ declares that in resurrection Abraham will have it.

Christ Seen in Words of a Two-fold Force

There is then a definite two-foldness. Take another passage of deeper meaning than is realized. In Leviticus xviii, 5, the Authorized rendering is, "If a man do, he shall live in them." But there is no original "if," and no "a." "The Man will do, and He will live in them"—a striking prophecy of Christ, completing the doing and then living in resurrection, receiving the award of righteousness, rising from the dead as the perfectly Obedient One. Again, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." Look at Hosea xi. Does it not seem to refer to Israel as a nation? Yet Matthew ii says it was to fulfil this Scripture that Christ was brought out of Egypt. Then *that* was a prophecy of Christ. Scripture is very full in its

intention, and often with a two-fold force. So in our present theme the Holy Spirit in the New Testament shows a reference to the present, and future.

Examples in the Book of Acts

The disciples ask the Lord, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Why? He had been "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (verse 3). Does the Lord say there is no kingdom for Israel? Far otherwise! "It is not for you to know *the times or the seasons*, which the Father hath put in His own authority; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me" So our beloved Lord emphasized that the Kingdom of God for them at that time was the arrangement for world-wide proclamation, to include Gentiles, but the times and seasons remain in the Father's authority. I suggest, therefore, that the present dispensation does contain anticipatory fulfilment of millennial prophecies, intended for those who are brought into the privilege of living union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Our beloved Lord has reached millennial glory in one sphere, in heaven, but He has not claimed it on earth. He sits on a throne, and is waiting to take one in relation to the earth. He has entered into His glory, but He has a future glory as well, and the present glory is united. He says, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." The *first* application of that very authority is, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations," a wondrous view of the *sovereignty* of grace. Such is the present ap-

plication of His authority, which appertains to the Kingdom of the Exalted and Glorified One. What is the present description of the Lord's people? Says James i, 18, "That we should be a kind of *first-fruits* of His creatures." The completion must come after the first-fruits. There *must* be a two-foldness. Ephesians i, 14, says, "... The Holy Spirit of *the* promise, Which is the Earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Have we the redemption of the purchased possession yet? No; we await this, the full sonship. But we are sons already! Praise God, sons inwardly, but the sonship of the body is yet to come (Rom. viii, 23). We have the Lord's Day now, but the Day of the Lord is to come. Christ has a two-fold aspect as to His resurrection. The literal third day He was raised, and the Church His body, will be raised on "the third day (II Peter iii, 8). Also concerning His Israel it is written, "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up" (Hosea vi, 2). The application in the third "thousand years" is to the bodies of His saints raised and Israel brought out of the graves, of Ezekiel xxxvii, but the present application is part of it. God's words to Adam were, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But, you may say, he did not die till 930 years after. That was the second fulfilment. He died *morally* the same day, but *physically* within a thousand years. In like manner, Christ was raised physically the third day. The saints have the power of His resurrection now (Eph. ii, 6; Phil iii, 10), but the completed fulfilment is in the resurrection body, and if there is a removal of the fulfilment of Israel's promise

for the third thousand years, our resurrection of the body will go too. Philippians iii, 16, reads, "Whereto we have already attained *in advance*" —the Holy Spirit's chosen word is not simply "attained," rather we have reached in advance. In advance of whom? Let us compare I Thesalonians v, 5: "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." What day? Romans xiii, 12, says, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand . . . Let us walk soberly, as in the day." What day? Before we answer we will read I Corinthians xv, 8: "And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one *born out of due time*." This does not mean "late," as some think, but "one born *before the time*." How was Paul "spiritually born" before the time? I Timothy i, 16, answers, "That in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a *pattern* to them which should *hereafter* believe on Him to life everlasting." Paul was saved from heaven by the light of the Lord's gracious shining. Israel will look upon Him Whom they have pierced and they will mourn (Zech. vii, 10). Thus we see the "pattern." We are the "first-fruits" then? Undoubtedly. John xi, 51, 52, answers, ". . . That Jesus should die [i] for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also [ii] He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." The children of God are to be gathered into one—the present aspect.

More Anticipatory Fulfilments

We could take many other prophecies of the future Kingdom and see their present anticipatory fulfilment in the future. "Out of Zion

shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” But surely there was an anticipation of this in Acts ii. Again, “In thy Seed shall *all the nations* of the earth be blessed.” “Go ye, and make disciples of *all the nations*.” Is there to be a city in the future? But is there not a city now—a real fulfilment in the heavenly sphere (Heb. xii, 22)? Is there to be a temple in the future? “He shall build the temple of the Lord” (Zech. xvi, 13), but “Upon this rock I will build My church” is included in the Divine plan (Matt. xvi, 18; Eph. ii, 22). Do we hold fast the glorious application of God’s promise that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem, as Joel, Zechariah and Ezekiel all make clear (e.g. Zech. xiv, 8)? Yet the Lord Jesus cried, “He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake He of *the Spirit*, Which they that believe on Him should receive.” Now we have the Divine key! The *Spirit* is the Earnest of the inheritance. The Kingdom is *now* in heavenly places, for where do we worship? “The hour cometh, when ye shall *neither* in this mountain, *nor* yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.” Observe, it is *more* than “Not in this mountain *only*”; not in this mountain at all! We must be a heavenly people and worship in heavenly places now. The “court” is “cast out and given to the Gentiles” (Rev. xi, 2), but the Holy Place is not cast out.

The Saints Have Reached Millennial Prophecies

already in the Holiest (Heb. x, 19). “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” is only fulfilled now among saints, who have a two-

fold position (i.e. in heavenly places) and yet physically in this world.

This is all in harmony with Acts i. Speaking of things to come, the Lord said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons," i.e. of the kingdom for Israel. The heavens must receive Him *until* the times of refreshing shall come, and He shall return to "reign before His ancients gloriously." The kingdom is now in the heavenlies where we are now "partakers of the heavenly calling," but "the righteous shall be recompensed *in the earth*" (Prov. xi, 31), and Jerusalem is to be a praise *in the earth* (Isa. xii, 6, 7).

The Feasts are in Correct Order

The very types illustrate this. "When the day of fifty was fully come"—Pentecost—or, rather, the true rendering is, "When the day of Pentecost *was being fulfilled*." Here is a word of fulfilled prophecy. Pentecost was being fulfilled then. What is the next thing in Leviticus xxiii? The Trumpets' sound is to be fulfilled. What is next? The Day of Atonement. Israel will weep. Next the Feast of Tabernacles. All is in perfect order.

Wheat and cereals, as they ripen, become golden through scorching. Trees are the reverse. The Feast of Tabernacles tells of glory *in the earth*. If the Passover, the First-fruit Sheaf, and Pentecost, have been fulfilled, and Trumpets and the Day of Atonement are awaiting this, why not Tabernacles? What about the fiftieth year, of which the fiftieth *day* is an anticipation? All the types confirm God's two-fold teaching. Our beloved Lord refers to it

in Luke xxii. He took two cups. The first was linked with fulfilment in the future Kingdom of God. The second cup was in the Lord's Supper. Thus He indicated a two-fold application. We are thus graciously reminded that, as II Peter i puts it, an anticipatory fulfilment only emphasizes a fuller climax. "We were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory." The Kingdom of God then "came" in type, but it only made the assurance of the completeness more full; and so with all the other prophecies.

God's Truthfulness Must Stand

You ask, "Are the millennial prophecies partly filled now?" Yes, in *heavenly* places; but that only makes more sure that what the Lord has caused to operate in the first-fruits He will complete in the earth. This is necessary for God's truthfulness. If we are partly to blame for those who have rejected the millennial teaching because we have, in the swing of the pendulum from the statement that the promises to Zion were promises to the Church, left out the application intended by God today, we must also emphasize that if this were the only fulfilment would not God's truthfulness seem to be broken? Do you ask, "Why? Cannot God bring us Gentiles into the blessing of the olive tree?" Yes, He can *add*, but He cannot *omit* that which He has promised. He can bring others in, but He cannot rob those whom He has included, and He has promised the blessing to Israel, and to Israel as *a nation*. He can add us Gentiles, as Romans ix says, "Whom He hath called not

of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles" I rejoice in Hosea ii and Jeremiah xxxi. But that cannot alter the fact that the house of Israel and the house of Judah must have their part in the fulfilment. God's holiness is involved, with the stress on the earth. Yes, "Jerusalem shall be a praise on the earth." Christ's work necessitates it. Christ's work was, as minister of the circumcision, to fulfil the promises made unto the fathers, *and* to the Gentiles. So we read in Romans xv. Paul mentions the two *together*. Christ's work, therefore, as the parable makes clear, involves not only the purchasing of the treasure but of the *field*. The Last Adam, He must have the sovereignty on earth that Adam forfeited. To the first Adam God said these striking words, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and have dominion." Adam lost fruit, death came in, he forfeited dominion, all was empty. Christ has much fruit, a multiplied people, He will fill all things, He shall have dominion. The Last Adam takes up the threads. He is the True Israel, and thus, as the Seed of David, He must have the promises. "God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David." *That* is not in heavenly places. We are reminded once more of God's unimpeachable truthfulness in this connection as we notice the striking words of Jeremiah xxxiii, 20: "Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a Son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, My ministers." Here then God

definitely speaks of the Levitical priests. You cannot “spiritualize” such words away. Christ, as the One fulfilling the promises to the fathers, must have the future blessing. The converging of all prophecy illustrates this. Galatians iii shows that when our beloved Lord came, there was a fulfilment of the promise long before the law, the promise before the ages, the unconditional promise, as II Timothy i, 10 emphasizes, God’s salvation was given as in Christ before the times of the ages. But when our Lord was born, there was also the law and its curse to be met. He fulfilled the eternal promise *and* met the law’s demands and the law’s curse, and God’s two promises—the one in a past eternity and the other in connection with the law—converged and found fulfilment. Finally, with respect to Israel, Romans xi comes in fullest unveiling. It shows

The Future Millennium Dare not be Left Out

We have seen in Romans ix that we are now included in the blessings of the Old Testament, but also we hear the words, “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved” (Rom. x, 1). They have not believed. There is a remnant now, but that does not satisfy Paul’s longing. He yearns for more. Though there be some “seven thousand,” he desires more, and continues to stress that the diminishing will be followed by their fullness. “What shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead!” Far from saying the present dispensation displaces Israel, the Holy Spirit says they will be grafted into their own olive tree. God is able to graft them in again. He

has put us already in "millennial promises" in Romans xi, but all spared Israel shall be saved (Jer. 1, 20). "But," you say, "that is going back to the old nationalism." Not in the least. The wording is perfectly clear. "Even so have these also now not believed the mercy that reached to you, that they also may receive mercy." In other words, Israel of old was blessed of God on the grounds of privileges, but they have been cut off from the ground of outward privileges, and each individual of the nation *will be* brought in with the very same mercy, which reaches you as an individual believer now. But, inasmuch as we have seen, God will pardon those whom He reserves, "All Israel shall be saved."

"All Israel" will be a complete nation, the aggregate of the individuals, elect individuals, individually saved. The two promises absolutely converge, and God takes up every thread. The six times urgently emphasized 1,000 years of Revelation are not to be "spiritualized" away. Hence Christ died for that nation—i.e. all alive then, composed of saved persons. How this will manifest to the glory and truthfulness and unchanged purpose of God. The words, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever," were spoken to the fig tree. The fig tree is not a type of Christ, but is a type of "privilege" alone. The olive and vine are types of Christ. They are never brought into a position of "no fruit," and the Vine particularly pictures the fruitfulness of saints *now*. The Olive, too, is our olive. We are brought into union with Christ now in the power of the *Spirit*. The olive oil is emphasized as well as the root—a type of richness. Here is the earnest of the Spirit; notice "*their* spiritual

things" (Rom. xv, 27). But Israel will be brought into the same Olive Tree. It is in view of this that the Apostle bursts forth, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.'" God fulfils now, in heavenly places, in part and in measure to a first-fruits people, but He will fulfil the climax in the coming antitypical Feast of Tabernacles, and Jerusalem *shall* be "a praise in the earth." Thus the present dispensation does not remove the future, nor does the future make the present merely a gap. They are parts of the *same* divine Purpose; and God accomplishes part now, and will carry out the completeness. Every time we have a realization of the Lord's Day, we say the Day of the Lord is *near*. If a saint partakes aright of the Lord's Supper, thereby the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is proclaimed. If he rejoices in sonship now, he says, "I am waiting for the sonship of my body." We are not to take our eyes off the climax, but, having received the Earnest of the promise, we look for the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

Finally, Romans xii is not a fresh chapter apart from xi. It is a corollary of love's obedience:

"I Beseech You Therefore, Brethren"

in view of resurrection glory, "to present your bodies a living sacrifice." If you have reached millennial prophecies in heavenly places, now on earth you are out of harmony with the world, and its kingdoms and their politics. The kingdom of God has not come on earth, and you are a stranger here. Live up to that position. Live

as one who has been taken out of the world, for the Lord said that “I have *sent them into* the world”—sent back from the resurrection standpoint as a living people, a new people, who are not identified with the world’s standpoint, or glories, or arrangements, for they have their citizenship in heaven already, “from whence also we look for the Saviour, Who shall change the body of our humiliation.” Our body is not yet in the glory; that awaits millennial fulfilment. The body is an earthen vessel; it is to be changed. Everything on the *earth* awaits a future fulfilment. Every time you lay or “*sow*” a believer’s body in the grave you are reminded Christ is going to bring a blessing to the earth, and bodies will be raised from the earth; “the land of the Lord” will be claimed (Isa. xiv, 1, 2). Christ will reign in the earth. As a heavenly people, let us live in the power of the Spirit today, and let these bodies, though weak, be used by Him, not to please ourselves, nor to seek the wealth or ways of the world, but let us be as those whose object is to live for Christ, looking forward to His coming.

And as we behold poor, despised, forgotten, chaotic Israel, let us pray for them, remembering that until Jerusalem is God’s centre, there cannot be peace on earth.

“Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion.”

Can this be linked also with the resurrection day? Undoubtedly. “Thou art My Son; *this day* have I begotten Thee.” “I have set My King” is in the same context. “Sit thou *until*.” The King by right now shall be King in fact,

and Jerusalem shall be the centre of the Great King, and the prayers of the redeemed, and the prophecies that encouraged their prayers, shall be fulfilled.

Our subject leads us to praise, worship, expectation, to a perception of the Lord's will concerning Israel, to a right discernment of our heavenly calling as fellow members of the body of Christ, to clear-cut separation from the world out of which we have been taken, that we may be pure witnesses to Him, snatching by mighty grace from their perilous position those for whom His precious blood has been poured out, the blood of the "New Covenant." O that this may be increasingly manifested in the realized power of the Holy Spirit.