

A MORNING WITHOUT CLOUDS. MILLENNIAL DAWN.

Who can look around him, and consider the state of the world in which we live, and not be obliged to confess that clouds and darkness are now on every side? "The whole creation travaileth in pain." Rom. 8:22. Look where we will, we see confusion, quarrels, wars between nations, helplessness of statesmen, discontent and grumbling of lower classes, excessive luxury among the rich, extreme poverty among the poor, intemperance, impurity, dishonesty, swindling, lying, cheating, covetousness, heathenism, superstition, formality among Christians, decay of vital religion – these are the things which we see continually over the whole globe – Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

But there is a good time coming which David saw far distant, when this state of things shall be completely changed. There is a kingdom coming in which holiness shall be the rule, and sin shall have no place at all.

Who can look around him in his own neighborhood, and fail to see within a mile of his house that the consequences of sin lie heavily on the earth, and that sorrow and trouble abound? Sickness, and pain and death come to all classes, and spare none, whether rich or poor. The young often die before the old, and the children before the parents. Bodily suffering of the most fearful description and incurable disease, make the existence of many miserable. Widowhood, and childlessness, and solitariness, tempt many to feel weary of life, though everything which money can obtain is within their reach. Family quarrels, and envies and jealousies break up the peace of many a rich man's happiness. Who can deny that all these things are to be seen on every side of us? There are many clouds now.

Will nothing end this state of things? Is creation to go on groaning and travailing forever after this fashion? Thanks be to God, the second advent of Christ supplies an answer to these questions. The Lord Jesus Christ has not yet finished his work on behalf of man. He will come again one day (perhaps very soon) to set up a glorious kingdom, in which the consequences of sin shall have no place at all. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no pain and no disease, in which "the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick," (Isa. 33:24.) It is a kingdom in which there shall be no more partings, no moves, no changes, no good-byes. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no deaths, no funerals, no tears, and no mourning worn. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no quarrels, no losses, no disappointments, no wicked children, no bad servants, no faithless friends. Where is the Christian heart that does not long for this state of things to begin?

– *Bishop Ryle*.

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Like the great majority of those who have caught glimpses of the Millennial kingdom, this brother's mind settles upon the final results to be obtained at the close of the Millennium; and his view consequently is rather that of the perfection to follow, than of the Millennium itself.

There will be pain and sighing and trouble and death all through the Millennium, down to its close. But there will be a vast difference between *now* and *then*. Now, both saints and sinners suffer, and the former generally suffer most; then, only the wicked will suffer. Now, all who serve God are disadvantaged – "whosoever will live godly, shall suffer persecution;" "in the world ye shall have tribulation;" "marvel not if the world hate you." Then, "ye shall turn again and discern [a difference] between him that serveth the Lord and him that serveth him not." It shall not be as now: the wicked shall no more "spread himself as a green bay tree;" no more shall it be true of them

that "their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish," while the just are led as lambs to the slaughter. – James 5:6.

The tears and pains and sorrows of the overcomers – the good soldiers of Christ who endured much and bravely for his truth's sake – will be at an end then. They all end with the present age of the Church's trial. The tears and groans and pains of the coming age will come from the ungodly. All wickedness will meet with a just and speedy punishment then, and every effort toward righteousness will bring blessings and releases from present imperfections which now cause pain, suffering and death.

Now the penalty of sin rests heavily upon all because of Adam's sin. The fathers ate a sour grape of sin and all the children's teeth are set on edge; but all this ends with the present age. Pain and death will then be an individual matter; only the sinners will suffer, as the prophet explains. (Jer. 31:29,30.) There will be death then too, but not as now, the Adamic death upon all; "the soul that *sinneth*, it shall die," and no others. (Ezek. 18:4,20.) None but *willful* sinners will die then, but such shall surely die. Some, after coming to a *full knowledge*, and after a hundred years of trial, because still wilfully rebellious following the example of Satan and *loving* sin rather than righteousness, will die at a hundred years of age, and yet be but children. Others, who will make some progress under the Millennial trial, and continue to live down to its close, will be proved by a trial at the close of the Millennium, to still love sin, notwithstanding all their knowledge and experience with it – its cost, etc., and such too will be cut off from life, in the Second Death as clearly shown in Rev. 20:14,15. [See TOWER of Oct. 86.] Hence we see that sorrow and pain and death will still be known until the great Redeemer and Restorer has finished his great work of judging the redeemed world in righteousness, – to test which of them are worthy of everlasting life upon the condition of free, willing, glad obedience to all of God's requirements – which are all righteous.

So then, the Millennial reign of the great Restorer is the "times of restitution," a time in which imperfection will still continue, but in which it will gradually give place to perfection in the obedient. It will be the time for *making* all things new; but all things will not be perfectly restored and new until its close. It is to be the great schooling time for earth's billions, in which they shall all come to a knowledge of the truth; the great restoring and perfecting time both for man and for the earth, both so far from being perfect or very good now. It is the great Day of Judgment in which Christ shall "judge the world" and "judge angels" (Acts 17:31; Psa. 96:13; and 1 Cor. 6:2,3) rewarding with restored perfection the willing and worthy, and cutting off from life, forever, all willful sinners. This "righteous judgment" of all, necessitates the fullness of knowledge and assistance promised to all, then.

Hence, we say the Morning without Clouds is that of the perfect age beyond the reign of Christ. The Millennial morning will be specially cloudy – "Behold he cometh with clouds." (Rev. 1:7.) "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." (Psa. 97:2; 50:3.) The Millennial dawn will be amid "clouds and thick darkness," – a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation," in which the new and rightful King of earth will rule and correct the nations with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel – debasing the high and the proud and exalting the humble lovers of righteousness. – See, "The Plan of the Ages," chapters xiii, xiv, and xv.

