

THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY.

– MATT. 19:28. –

In reply to the Apostle Peter's question – "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?" Jesus said unto them, "Verily, I say unto you that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." In another record of the same conversation there is a variation of words, but the ideas, so far as the present subject is concerned, are substantially the same: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I will appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:28-30.) For Christ to have a kingdom appointed to him, as Luke records the conversation, and for him to sit on the throne of his glory, as Matthew records it, appear to indicate one and the same rank, though in expressing it the same words are not used. As this statement contains, in germ, so much that is to be developed and perfected in the future, it is important to consider in detail its various elements. [R1283 : page 10]

1. THE THRONE. In the regeneration the Son of Man is to "sit on the throne." What throne, or what kind of a throne? Is it the identical seat, bench, or chair of state which David used that is to be given to David's Son and Lord for his use? Certainly not. Solomon laid aside his father's throne, and made a unique and costly one for his own use. (2 Chron. 9:17-19.) Is it Solomon's, or a material throne of any kind, whether made of ivory, or gold, or anything like them, which Christ is to occupy? There is no testimony to that effect. David sat on a material throne, and the throne of David is to be given to "the Son of the Highest," but it

does not follow from that that the Son of the Highest is to sit on a material throne. A throne is the seat of a priest or a king, and it is often used as the emblem, or symbol, of sacerdotal or regal authority. In this figurative sense, it seems that many glorious promises are to be fulfilled. "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:31-33.) That celebrated promise, which was made known to the virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel, may be taken as a sample. The throne of David is the emblem, or symbol, of David's reign, or kingdom; and David's reign, or kingdom, is a type, or figure, or shadow, of the reign, or kingdom, of David's Son and Lord. To the same effect is that memorable testimony which was given by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a [R1283 : page 11] prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (hades), neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:29-36.) Nor is the authority of Christ confined to the house of Israel, or any other particular house, the land of Palestine, or any other particular land, because "all authority" is his: "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a

name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11.) The authority of Christ to teach, and rule, and judge, extends over all heaven, all earth and all hades. Limitarians would have us ignore the words – "under the earth" – or blot them out of the inspired testimony; but hades is a part of Christ's dominion, and as indispensable as either earth or heaven. Christ has authority to reckon with every enemy of God and man; and wherever man is, his fealty will one day be claimed. "Every knee" is to have the opportunity of voluntarily bowing at the name of Jesus, and "every tongue" is to have the opportunity of voluntarily confessing that the Savior Anointed is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Neither death nor hades is an insurmountable barrier to this, because he holds the keys of both (Rev. 1:18), and will liberate every captive in due time.

2. HIS GLORY. In the regeneration the Son of Man is to sit "on the throne of His glory." What glory? "There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory." (1 Cor. 15:40,41.) There is a glory peculiar to each kind of existence, whether animate or inanimate, from the very lowest to the very highest. There is one glory of the mineral, and another glory of the vegetable, and another glory of the animal. There is one glory of man, and another glory of angels, and another glory of the Generator and Regenerator of man. It is the highest kind of glory to which the Son of Man has been raised – that glory which is peculiar to the divine nature. This is the burden of that wonderful prayer – in the highest sense "The Lord's Prayer" – which Jesus uttered shortly before he died: "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

"And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:1,5.) That this prayer was answered does not admit of a doubt. It is recorded of the martyr Stephen that he "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55,56.) To the same effect is the testimony of the highly favored Seer of Patmos, only his description of what he saw is much more full and gorgeous: "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were as white as wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his [R1283 : page 12] right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of hell (hades) and of death." (Rev. 1:10-18.) It is clear that the glory of our blessed Lord is of the same kind as that of the Most High himself. He has been glorified with the glory of God – the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; and his position is at the right hand of God. Not merely first in executive authority, but first in executive power also, in the accomplishment of the divine purpose regarding the salvation of man.

3. SIT. In the regeneration the Son of Man is to "sit on the throne of his glory." That posture is often assigned to persons when it cannot be understood in a literal sense. Among the gorgeous

imagery seen by the Apostle John is an infamous woman "that sitteth upon many waters." In her case, neither seat, nor posture, nor character, can be taken literally. They are all symbolic; and represent an established reign, or kingdom, or dominion, extending over "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17:1,15.) The Psalmist in his day was very familiar with the same kind of imagery. "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever." (Psa. 29:10.) Here, also, the posture and seat are evidently symbolic, and indicate that Jehovah's reign, or kingdom, or dominion, is established over all created beings. These samples may indicate the way in which the posture is to be understood in the present case. The expression is undoubtedly figurative, indicating that the position of the Son of Man, invested with all executive authority and power, has been established; and not merely established, but permanently established. He is to rest in the position which has been given to him: "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." (Isa. 11:1,10.) In what day? Read the context. When he is judging the poor with righteousness; when he is reproofing with equity for the meek of the earth; when he is smiting the earth with the rod of his mouth; when he is slaying the wicked with the breath of his lips; when he is filling the earth full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, and so on. His rest is not one of "masterly inactivity," but the very opposite. He is ever active, and his strength is equal to his activity. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa. 40:28-31.) His rest is in the strength of his nature; in the security of his position; in the satisfaction of his

work; and in the certainty of his ultimate and complete success. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right-hand, until I make Thine enemies thy footstool." (Psa. 110:1.) That position was given to our blessed Lord 1800 years ago; and it is never to be given up while one foe of God or man remains. Developed, extended, unfolded and manifested it will be, but never exchanged for any other.

4. JOINT-PARTICIPATION. In the regeneration the twelve apostles are to "sit on twelve thrones." This gives every apostle a throne. Not that the number of thrones is restricted to twelve, or that he who is to occupy a throne must of necessity be an apostle. Matthew speaks of them as "disciples," and Luke speaks of "thrones" [R1284 : page 12] without restricting them to twelve, or any definite number. The first disciples appear to be treated as representing all of their kind – true believers: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21.) The Lord's prayer [R1284 : page 13] also, already quoted, is very clear on this point: "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me." (John 17:9-23.) So the apostles seem to have understood this matter: – "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord: according as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Thereby are given unto us

exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:1-4.) "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Pet. 2:9.) "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Prophetic utterances are in accord with apostolic testimony: – "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32:1.) "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." (Psa. 45:6,7,16,17.) Thus it is plain that the glory which is peculiar to the divine nature, as well as judicial, sacerdotal and regal authority, are to be jointly participated in, not only by Jesus and his Apostles, but by all those also who "have obtained like precious faith," and who "overcome" the seductions of the world, the flesh, and the devil, during the present evil age. As the anointed Head has been exalted to the divine nature, the anointed members are to participate in his exaltation; as he has been invested with all authority and power, they are to participate in his dignity; and as he has to occupy his position until his foes are under his footstool, they are to participate in that complete and beneficent triumph. "This honor have all his saints." May we be found worthy!

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