

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF THE MILLENNIUM.

Question. – I understand from Rev. 20:4-6, that Christ will reign one thousand years, and from verses 2 and 7 that Satan will be bound during that period. If Christ began to reign in 1878, and Satan will not be bound until 1915, the two periods do not seem to synchronize; and furthermore, both extend beyond the seventh-thousand year period which, according to our Bible chronology, began in the Autumn of 1872. How is this? Can you assist me?

Answer. – The Lord has evidently arranged for the gradual closing of the Gospel age and opening of the Millennial age, in such a manner that the one laps upon the other, with some particular purpose in view; but just what his purposes are he has not been pleased to inform us: and since this extends into the future we may reasonably suppose that it is not now "meat in due season for the household of faith." When the end has been reached and accomplished, we have no doubt whatever that it will be manifested to all of the Lord's people that his Word has been accurately fulfilled. Until then a certain amount of faith is required and expected from those who have so many evidences of the Lord's wisdom and exactness in the features of his plan already accomplished. "We can trust him where we cannot trace him." Apparently this matter of when the thousand-year period should be reckoned as fully beginning and fully ending will be an open question until the close of the Millennial age. It is our expectation, from Rev. 20:8,9, that the obscurity of this question will have something to do with the final test of loyalty and obedience to God, which will come upon the whole world of mankind who will have enjoyed the blessings of restitution throughout the Millennial age, and have attained perfection at its close. The indefiniteness of the end of the period would appear to be an important feature of their testing. Apparently they will think the period of Christ's mediatorial reign

ended before the Lord's time; and some of them, impatient of delay, will make a demonstration, and demand of the earthly representatives of the Kingdom that full dominion be at once restored to perfect man, according to their understanding of the divine plan and its times and seasons.

In so doing these will be demonstrating their own unworthiness to enter the age of perfection which will follow the Millennium, and will be destroyed in the Second Death. For, while such an attitude of mind may be forgivable in imperfect men of today, those perfect beings who shall have had a full restitution and large experience will be required to exercise a full faith, an unwavering confidence in the wisdom, love and promises of the Creator. And their failure to manifest implicit faith and obedience to the divine program after all their experience will be proof sufficient that they are unworthy of the eternal state. If permitted to go beyond into the full liberties of sons of God they would always be liable to sin and its consequences; and God's promise is that there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, no more crying, no more pain *there*, the equivalent of a promise that there shall be no more sin. Hence all who shall not have developed characters in full accord with, and fully submitted to the divine will, will be esteemed as having enjoyed all the blessings and privileges divine mercy has to offer. The fire, the judgment from heaven, will destroy such from among the people, in the Second Death, as unworthy of Life-eternal.

The Scripture declaration respecting the saints, the "overcomers" is, "They lived and reigned a thousand years." The reign of the saints cannot be properly said **[R2740 : page 368]** to begin before all the "jewels" have been gathered, nor before "the times of the Gentiles" end, in 1914. Nor is it said that their reign will be no longer than a thousand years. After the thousand years' reign Satan shall be loosed and the above trial shall ensue; but the reign of Christ and the Church will evidently continue long enough after the thousand years to destroy all found unworthy in that final test, and to thus complete the work for

which this reign is instituted; – for, as expressed by the Apostle, "He must reign *till* he hath put *all enemies* under his feet....And when all things shall be subdued unto him [some by conversion and some by destruction], *then* shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [the Father]." – 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

WHO CONSTITUTE "THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH"?

Question. – Our Lord commands us to do good, "especially to the household of faith." Who constitute this household – only the consecrated saints? Or does it include also the justified class, some of whom have not yet reached the position of sanctification or entire consecration? *Answer.* – We understand that the *Church of Christ*, as viewed from the divine standpoint, and as addressed in the Scriptures, includes only "the sanctified in Christ Jesus;" – those who have taken the step of justification through faith and, additionally, the second step of consecration to the Lord.

But "the household of faith" takes in a much larger number, – all who have faith in the Lord as their Redeemer from sin and its penalty, – all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ, and seeking in any degree to be in harmony with the Lord and his rules of righteousness. The loving interest and care of all the "saints" (the consecrated) is to be exercised, not only toward each other, but also especially toward these members of the household of faith who are supposed to be under "instruction in righteousness," helping them forward to take the position of full consecration and become reckonedly dead to the world, and new creatures in Christ Jesus, risen with him, to walk in newness of life and to become his joint-heirs in the promised Kingdom.

=====