

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

"Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12

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"COMMENTS ON GALATIANS 3 - No. 5." (Page 470)

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IN last week's article, texts were quoted to show that the expression, "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (verse 19), has reference to the second coming of Christ. This is an important point, and we wish to have it well fixed in the mind of the reader. We therefore present a few more thoughts in the same line of argument. Let us first read the eighteenth and nineteenth verses in connection:—

"For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added [spoken] because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."

There can be no question but that the "promise" referred to in verse 19 is the same as that mentioned in verse 18. And what is that promise? It is the promise of "the inheritance." What inheritance was promised to Abraham? In Rom. 4:13 Paul tells us that the promise to Abraham was "that he should be the heir of the world." This promise must be the same as that discussed in the third chapter of Galatians, because, (1.) only one inheritance was promised to Abraham, and (2) the same means of securing the inheritance is given, both in Romans and in Galatians. Compare the two texts: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." Rom. 4:13, 14. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. . . . And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." Gal. 3:16-18. That the thought in these two texts is identical, there can be no shadow of doubt. It therefore needs no further argument to show that the "promise" is the promise of "the inheritance," and that "the inheritance" is the whole earth, which God gives to Christ, the seed (Ps. 2:7,8), and to all who, by faith in Christ, become children of faithful Abraham (Gal. 3:7, 29). And this is at the second coming of Christ.

The next point to be emphasized is that in speaking of the seed, "the inheritance" is in the mind of the apostle. His argument, in outline, is this: The inheritance is given solely on account of faith. To the objection that this makes void the law, he replies that the law was spoken (made more plain) to serve an important purpose in connection with faith, and that it will continue to fill this office until the seed shall come to whom the promise was made, and through whom alone the inheritance can be obtained. The coming of the seed brings the fulfillment of the promise, and, of course, the end of faith. 1 Peter 1: 9.

And when will this take place? For answer, note two texts that have been previously quoted. Through the prophet Ezekiel the Lord says of the dominion of this earth: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Eze. 21:27. And that this refers to the second coming of Christ, he himself showed when he said: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations. . . . Then

shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:31-34.

From the foregoing, we think that there can be no doubt in any mind that the apostle has reference in verse 19 to the second coming of Christ. This will appear even more plainly as we develop the argument which he bases on this point. The next thing for consideration will be the relation which the law sustains to the promise and its fulfillment. This is the objective point of the whole argument; but since the limits of this article will not allow the matter to be presented in such shape that it could well be left for a week, we shall defer a discussion of that question until the next number.

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