

power, and all such shall be priests to God and to Christ, and they shall reign with Him a thousand years. In their song they did not stretch forth to that eternal reign on the earth which will commence after the one thousand years have ended and the earth has passed away and been renewed. That was too glorious a theme to be recorded by John and for the inhabitants of the earth in their corrupt and fallen state to become acquainted with. If they rejoiced with such exceeding great joy in the prospect of returning to reign only for a thousand years, before the earth was fully redeemed, glorified, and made new, how much greater would be their joy, and how much more glorious would be the song, if they could see themselves made kings and priests to God, and knew they were about to commence a reign on the earth which would endure throughout the countless ages of eternity.

To prove that mankind, when they come out of their graves, will come into possession of the earth, let me quote a very familiar passage from the 37th chapter of Ezekiel. Ezekiel lived in the midst of a people who had apostatized in a great measure from the religion of their fathers, and who began to think that their hope was lost, and that they were cut off from inheriting the promises made to their fathers, because they saw that their fathers for many generations were dead and gone, and neither they nor their seed had come into possession of the Promised Land, according to the prediction made in the days of Abraham and Jacob. You recollect that the Lord promised Abraham and Jacob that they should have the land of Palestine for an everlasting possession. Not only their seed, but they themselves, Abraham and Jacob, were to inherit it everlastingly. Well might the Jews, when considering

these promises, and looking upon the bones of Jacob and their old forefathers, who were righteous men, bleaching, as it were, in their sepulchers, be ready to find fault and say: "Our bones are dried, our hope is lost: the promise is not fulfilled, and we are cut off from our portion—that is the promised land given to us for an everlasting inheritance." The Lord, to do away with such wicked and erroneous notions which were prevalent among the apostates of Israel, carried Ezekiel into the midst of a valley full of bones, and then told him to prophesy unto those bones and to say unto them: "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord unto these bones; Behold, I will bring up flesh and sinews upon you, and will cover you with skin," etc. And Ezekiel prophesied as he was commanded, and as he prophesied there was a great noise and a shaking and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And while he was examining these numerous skeletons, without either flesh, sinews, or skin, "Lo, the sinews and flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them." Then the Lord said unto the Prophet: "Prophesy unto the wind, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

Now, if we were to go to uninspired men and ask them the meaning of this, they would say it was the conversion of sinners to newness of life; but the Lord had another interpretation, which you will find in the following verse: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel,"