

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, October 17. 1691.

Quest. 1. **W**hat think you of the Millennium? and whether do you believe 'tis yet to come, or already past?

Ans. We believe, as all the Christians of the purest Ages did, that the Saint shall reign with Christs on Earth a thousand Years: That this reign shall be immediately before the general Resurrection, and after the Calling of the Jews, the Fullness of the Gentiles, and the Destruction of Antichrist, whom our Saviour shall destroy by the Brightness of his Coming and Appearance in Heaven. That at the beginning of this Thousand Years shall be the first Resurrection, wherein Martyrs and Holy Men shall rise and reign here in Spiritual Delights in the New-Jerusalem-- nay, in a New Heaven and New Earth foretold by all the Holy Prophets. For which Opinion of ours we hope to show no inconsiderable Arguments; which if they can be Answered, we'll willingly forsake it. And we think we have no less for it than the Universal Tradition of the Jews, the ancient Church of God, the unanswerable Authority of almost all the Books in the Holy Bible, and the constant Faith and Doctrine of the first and purest Ages of Christianity.

For the Jews, the Antichrists are so far from denying 'em us on this Point, that one of their great Arguments against the Opinion, and indeed the only one that makes any sound, is, That 'tis Judaism: But because the Jews held it, must it therefore be necessarily false? they also held the Creation of the World, and the Resurrection from the Dead. However, that part of it, and those Jewish Errors annex'd to it by Hereticks or weak Men, of Carnal Delights, &c. may be rejected, and yet the Foundation still be firm: For that the first Christians held it in a more sober Sense, we shall anon prove. But we have the Authority of such Jews for this Truth as were before our Saviours time, and that Nations refusing the Christian Religion, nay, that which makes against 'em, for it, affirms their Law shou'd cease. To instance in the famous Tradition which they term --- *Domus Eliae*, which Elias liv'd under the second Temple, before our Saviours Birth --- "*Duo millia Inane, Duo millia Lex, Duo millia Dies Messia* --- Agen --- *Fusti quos recussitabit Deus*, &c. The Righteous whom God shall raise to Life agen, (that is, at the first Resurrection) shall not any more be turn'd to Dust --- He goes on discoursing the manner of their escape in the Thousand Years, when God shall renew the World. But shou'd this Authority be question'd, we are yet more certain this was the Opinion of the Ancient Jews, by several Passages in the Apocrypha, particularly that in the 3d. of Wisdom, from the 1st. to the 8th. The Souls of the Righteous which are departed, shall shine in the time of their Visitation --- They shall judge the Nations, and have Dominion over the People: So 2 Mac. 7. 15. One of the seven Brethren --- When he was ready to dye, said, [to Antiochus] It is good being put to Death by Men, to look for hope from God to be rais'd up agen by him; (viz. in the First Resurrection) But as for thee, thou shalt have no Resurrection to Life. Accordingly Rabbis Solomon interprets Isa. 26. 19. Thy dead Men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise --- of Martyrs (Isaiah was one of that Number) and takes it as an Antithesis to what went before, V. 14. They are dead, they shall not live --- they are deceased, they shall not rise --- *Rephaim non resurgent* --- which *Rephaim* he understands to be the Wicked, for the Wicked, he says, shall not arise in *saeculo futuro* --- that is, shall not live agen till the thousand Years are over, as the very Scriptures express it, and the 21st. of Prov. and 16th. v. seems plainly to intimate as much, The Man that wandreth out of the way of Understanding, shall remain in the Congregation of the Dead. This for the Opinion of the Ancient Jews --- which that 'twas none of their vain Traditions, but exactly agreeing with Gods Word, seems so plain to us, that we believe 'tis impossible for the Antichrists to overthrow our Opinion, unless they'll deny all the Scriptures, as they already have a good part of 'em, because so directly against 'em --- (of which more anon.) And here we might begin with the Promises to Abraham and the Patriarchs, but because we shall meet with 'em agen, urg'd by a better Hand, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we'll

'till then dismiss 'em, tho' we can bring other Proofs almost as high, namely, from the Book of Job, cap. 19. v. 25, 26. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the Latter Day upon the Earth --- In my Flesh shall I see God --- That this Latter Day, or last day *ἐξ ἁνθρώπων* is used in the Holy Scriptures for the time of the Resurrection, every one knows; at which time Job says he shall see his Redeemer upon Earth, and in his Flesh or Body, renew'd agen after the Worms had destroy'd it. But if this be't granted to reach any further than the General Resurrection, let us go on to the Psalms, where we shall find much clearer Authorities. Not then to insist on that in the 90th. Psalm, Thou turnest Man to Destruction, agen thou sayest return ye Children of Men: For a thousand Years in thy sight are but as yesterday --- Not to insist on this, tho' from this place, *Iræneus*, *Justin Martyr*, nay, perhaps the Apostle himself in 2 Pet. infer the Millennium. There is a Text in the 104th. Psalm, which appears very fair for this Renovation, the 29th. Verse and onward; He has been speaking before of Man, and the rest of God's Creation, he goes on --- Thou hidest thy Face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they dye, and return to their dust --- Yet after this see the next Verse --- Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are Created, and thou renewest the face of the Earth --- And v. 32. He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth, He toucheth the Hills, and they smoke --- And 35th. V. Let the Sinners (or, they shall) be consumed out of the Earth, and let the Wicked be no more! What can be a plainer description of the *ἀνέσταισις*, the Renovation and Restitution of the Creature, of the New Heaven and New Earth, the Day of Judgment and Perdition of Ungodly Men? And in this very sense we find it interpreted by *Methodius*, Bishop of Tyre, in a Fragment of his preserv'd by *Epiphanius*, "*Et vero conturbatam iri Creaturam*, &c. But We are to expect that the Creature shall be troubled, and that it shall dye in the great Conflagration, that it may be restored agen, but not that it shall be totally extinct, that we our selves also being renew'd, may dwell in this New World free from Grief or Sorrow, according to that Text, Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are Created, thou renewest the Face of the Earth.

The Book of *Isaias*, besides what has already been urg'd, is full of plain Prophecies to this purpose; nor can we ever make the Jews, or hardly our selves believe, that all those august Promises of the Peace, Tranquillity and Glory of the Church; nay, in many places of the Jews distinguish'd from the Gentiles, are already fulfill'd: If any affirm the contrary, we desire no more to convince 'em but Isa. 65. 17. & 66. 22. Behold I Create New Heavens and a New Earth; I Create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her People a joy --- the Voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her --- For behold the Lord will come with Fire, and with his Chariots like a whirlwind --- The New Heavens, and the New Earth which I will make, &c. It hence appears that New Heavens, a New Earth, and a New Jerusalem shall be Created; it appears this is not yet past, because that not yet accomplished --- The Voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her. Besides the glorious Appearance of the Lord in flaming Fire to judge the World, and render Vengeance on his Enemies, is here described. But 'tis yet plainer, that all this is to be taken, not of the State of Christ's Kingdom, as 'tis now under the Gospel, but as 'twill be at the Restauration of all things: For thus St. Peter himself interprets it, 2 Pet. 3. 13. Nevertheless we according to his Promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth --- And where was this Promise, but in the very words before quoted? when was it to be made good? after the Heavens being on Fire shall be dissolved, the Elements [the *στοιχεῖα*, or heavenly Bodies] shall melt with fervent heat, the Earth and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up. This for *Isaias*. But we have infallible Authority of this, same St. Peter, that this Restitution of all things was Prophecy'd, not only by him, but by all the Holy Prophets since the World began, in his Sermon to the Jews, in Acts 3. To omit therefore other Testimonies in the Old Testament, some of which, in *Daniel*, are in as express Terms as possible: let us now proceed to the New, where

where we shall find it much clearer, and where we have our Saviours own Words for it; nay, Directions to all his Servants to Pray for it as constantly as for their daily Bread, in that Petition of the Lords Prayer -- *Thy Kingdom come* --- That this is God's Kingdom upon Earth may perhaps be not obscurely intimated, even in the Prayer it self, it being not improbable that those Words, *In Earth as it is in Heaven*, may refer to all the three foregoing Petitions as well as the last only -- That God's Name may be sanctified, and that his Kingdom may come, and he Reign on Earth as now in Heaven, as well as that his Will may be done in the same manner. But we further prove --- That 'twas taken in this sense by our Saviours Disciples, for a Temporal Kingdom: Lord, say they in one place, *wilt thou at this time restore agen the Kingdom to Israel* --- not doubting but he would do it one time or other, tho' not certain whether at that very time: Nor does he reprehend 'em for it as a gross Conceit, but only as an unseasonable Curiosity; nay, his Answer unto 'em not only grants, but confirms their supposition --- It is not for you to know the Times, whether this time or another, which he adds, the Father hath put in his own Power --- agreeable to that in another place of the Day of Judgment, when the Jews shall be restored --- no Man knoweth it, but the Father only. And much the same Answer our Saviour gives the Mother of Zebedee's Children, when she Petition'd that one of her Sons might sit on his right Hand, and the other on his left in his Kingdom: Which none denies they meant of an Earthly Kingdom --- To which he first replies --- *Can you drink of the Cup that I drink of?* --- Can you suffer Martyrdom for my sake, since for such, in an especial manner, this Kingdom was provided? They Answered, they cou'd --- Our Saviour rejoyn'd, they shou'd, but yet to sit at his right and left Hand, was not his to give, but was theirs for whom 'twas prepared by his Father --- Wherein he owns such a Kingdom, and such Rewards as they desired were really prepared by the Providence of God. Further --- this Kingdom neither was the Christian Religion, nor Destruction of Jerusalem, because it was not to come till the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled, and because we still pray for it: --- Nor is it his Eternal Kingdom in Heaven, because that Generation was not to pass away till All those things were fulfilled: --- That is, --- that Nation of the Jews, who are call'd an evil and adulterous Generation, --- they were not to perish before that Kingdom should come which is there prophesied of --- they were to continue a Nation to the end of the World: Therefore it must be an Earthly Kingdom.

'Twould be too long for this Paper to take notice of many other Texts in the Evangelists, or to add any more to what has bin said on that in the 3d. of the Acts, concerning the Times of Refreshing, and Restitution of all things, --- Let's therefore go on to the 8th. of Rom. from v. 17. to 22. where are mention'd --- Our being glorify'd with Christ, and that for suffering with him, --- of that Glory to be reveal'd, --- of the Creatures earnest Expectation and hope, of the whole Creation's groaning and travelling, and its being at length deliver'd from the Bondage of Corruption: --- Of all which, if any man can make sense if they take it any other way, we are extremely mistaken. --- And to what but this Millennium, and Great Day, according to our Hypothesis, can those passages, Rom. 11. 13, 14, 15, refer to? If the diminishing them (the Jews) be the riches of the World, how much more their fulness? --- If the casting away of them, be the reconciling of the World, what shall the receiving (the *ἀγαπῶντες*) of 'em be, but Life from the Dead? What can be plainer for the Reign of Christ, after his coming to Judgment, before the End of the World, than that 1 Cor. 15. 22, 23. *They that are Christs (shall rise) at his coming, --- Then cometh the End, when he shall have deliver'd up the Kingdom to God, even the Father --- for he must reign (still after the beginning of the Resurrection, which is to last this thousand Years) till he hath put all his Enemies under his Feet --- and the last Enemy is Death --- and this too after the Resurrection; for then, as we read in the Revelations, Death and Hell are to be cast into the Lake.* The next we'll produce, shall be from the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chap. 1. *Again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the World, he saith, Let all the Angels of God worship him* --- and here the Learned Mr. Jo. Mede seems to have just Cause to find fault with our Translators (for they were not infallible) for rendring it *Again when he bringeth in* --- instead of, *When he bringeth in again his First-begotten into the World, or, When he shall bring him in again*, the Original being *ἵνα δὲ πάλιν ἐσαρχήσῃ πρῶτόγονος εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην* --- The Word

οἰκουμένη signifying, as all know, the Terrestrial habitable World --- and that 'tis of our Saviours future Reign and coming into the World, appears from Chap. 2. V. 5. where the Apostle calls it *οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν* --- The World to come, whereof we speak, or concerning which he had been discoursing in the former Chapter; which World to come is not yet put under our Saviour --- v. 8. for now we see not yet all things put under him --- tho' we see him so high advanc'd, as for the Suffering of Death to be Crown'd with Glory and Honour. Besides, as the Apostle argues, Now, that is, at his Incarnation, or his coming into the World, we see Jesus made a little lower than the Angels, but when God bringeth him again into the World, this World to come which he has not put in subjection to the Angels; he then saith, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*; that is, *Worship him all ye Gods*, as we Translate it --- *ye Elohim*, which includes Angels, the place being taken out of the 97th. Psalm, which contains a glorious Description of the second Coming of Christ to Reign here and Judge the World. --- Let's go on to the 11th. of the Hebr. v. 8. *Abraham was call'd to go out into a place which he shou'd after receive for an Inheritance, namely, the Land of Canaan*: This he did not receive while he liv'd, see Acts 5. 7. *He gave him no Inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his Foot on* --- This was intended to him in Person --- God Promis'd that he would give it to Him for a Possession, and that as distinct from his Seed, for so they are nam'd --- He, and Isaac and Jacob liv'd in Faith, as 'tis added, *not having receiv'd the Promise* --- What Promise but that of Canaan before mentioned --- but having seen 'em offer off; namely, at the end of the World, they as well as Abraham looking for a City with Foundations, whose Builder God is; viz. the New Jerusalem to descend out of Heaven, which therefore can't be Heaven it self; besides, 'tis such a City as they now desire, v. 16. and as God has now prepared (ibid.) and provided, v. 40. both for them and us together, therefore not actually given it 'em; and what that better thing is, (better than Canaan then was) which God has provided, see Chap. 12. the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the General Assembly of the First-born (which plainly intimates the Resurrection) and to that Kingdom which can not be mov'd. Thus says Irenaeus, when describing the Reign of Christ, and Christ himself restoring to Abraham the Promis'd Inheritance. St. Peter we have already discours'd of; St. Jude is almost a Transcript of him; but the twentieth Ch. of the Revelations is to express and plain, that we think it can never be avoided --- wherein 'tis evident, that after the Fall of Babylon, the Appearance of our Saviour in the Clouds, the Destruction of Antichrist in the foregoing Chapter, after all these Satan is bound, v. 2. for a thousand Years; (is he so now? or has he been e're since Constantine?) After this the Souls of them that were Beheaded, or Murdered, for the Witness of Jesus, &c. lived and reigned with Christ a thousand Years. --- But the rest of the Dead liv'd not agen 'till they were finish'd --- the Dead must be taken literally of one as well as the other: It's added, *This is the first Resurrection*, and the 2d. is describ'd in the tenth Verse, --- *I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God* --- the Sea gave up its Dead, &c. If we make the first Allegorical, how shall we secure the second?

Thus for Scripture --- To come to Fathers: Our Enemies as good as give us all the first, and most of the second Century; or if they won't, we can prove 'em ours, Papias, Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Clement, and afterwards Irenaeus, Lactantius, Tertullian, Methodius, (already quoted) and still lower, St. Cyprian, Nepos, Apollinaris, and many others too long to Name. Nor need we wonder that poor Papias is represented as the Founder of this Opinion, and a weak Man, by Eusebius, tho' he owns him a diligent, and expert in the Holy Scriptures, since he and his Friends Dionysius, Gaius, and other Antichrists, have dared, some of 'em positively, others by consequence, to strike out almost an eighth part of the New Testament, no less than four intire Books from the Canon of the Holy Scripture, because they saw it impossible to overthrow the Testimonies therein for this great Truth; namely, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second of St. Peter, the Epistle of St. Jude, and the Revelations --- against the last of which they bore the greatest spite, as being the clearest against 'em; some attributing it to the Heretic Cerinthus, but all denying it to be St. John's, particularly Eusebius, tho' herein he notoriously contradicts himself; and tho' there are such severe Sanctions at the end thereof, against whoever shall take away any thing from it (the Holy Spirit that indited it no doubt foreseeing what would happen) how much more against those who took it away altogether? 'Tis too long to insert the Words of all the Fathers confirming this Doctrine, which indeed would require a Volume; take but two: Justin Martyr, who in his Dialogue with Tryphon tells us --- *That he himself, and all other Orthodox Christians believ'd it, and those who did not, ought not to be esteem'd Christians* --- But adds expressly, that there shou'd then be no Jewish Observances or bloody Sacrifices, but True and Spiritual Prayers and Thanksgivings offer'd to God: And Methodius before mentioned, Of those who shall rise --- *They shall neither Dye nor Mourn, but live the Life of Angels, being employ'd in Good Works* --- Accordingly Lactantius, *They shall live a Heavenly and Angelical Life*. We'll conclude this Noble Question with a Passage of Tertullian, which fully includes all the Doctrine of the Millennium, and first Resurrection: 'tis lib. 3. cont. Marcion, cap. 24. *For we are knowledge, says he, a Kingdom promis'd us upon Earth, but before Heaven, and in another State, to wit, after the Resurrection, on, (the first) in the 1000 Years, in the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, which the Apostle calls Jerusalem which is above, and the Mother of us all: This Ezekiel knew, this St. John foretold: there, we say, the Saints shall be received at the Resurrection, and refresh'd with all spiritual good things, in compensation of whatever they have either despis'd or lost in this World --- for 'tis both just and worthy of God, that his Servants should triumph there where they have formerly suffer'd for his Names sake* --- And this is the manner of the Heavenly Kingdom --- After which 1000 Years, wherein will be finish'd the Resurrection of the Saints, to be rais'd sooner or later, according to their deserts, then the Destruction of the World, and last Conflagration being accomplish'd, being chang'd in a moment into an Angelical Substance, where this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, we shall be translated into the Kingdom of Heaven.