

the heaven, and with the creeping things" (Hosea 2:18). As if he had said, "When God shall have been reconciled to the world in Christ, he will also give tokens of fatherly kindness, so that all the corruptions which have arisen from the sinfulness of man will cease."

In a word, under these figures the prophets teach the same truth which Paul plainly affirms, that Christ came to "gather together" out of a state of disorder "those things which are in heaven and which are on earth." (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20.) It may be thus summed up: "Christ will come to drive away everything hurtful out of the world, and to restore to its former beauty the world which lay under the curse."†

Time of the Millennium

We now come to a very interesting and important question. When is this wonderful change in the creation -- this glorious Millennium which Isaiah describes -- to occur? It would certainly seem reasonable to think that the situation described in verses 6-9 is to follow upon the events described in verse 4. It is hardly logical to think that He slays the wicked with the breath of His lips only at the end of a long period in which there has been no cruelty or suffering. It would be much more reasonable to think that such action on the part of the Lord introduces the period.

The picture in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 describes a situation brought about because the Word of the Lord is going out from the place where He has His throne. He is represented as physically present with His people. It would seem necessary then to think that this comes after the return of the Lord to this earth.

If Isaiah 11:6-8 is to be taken literally, as other passages in Scripture seem to require, then it surely must follow the return of Christ to earth. There is no suggestion anywhere in Scripture that the curse upon the physical creation will be removed before the return of Christ.

†Calvin, Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Edinburgh, 1850; Vol. 1, pp. 383-4.