

and of his Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15: 24-28, this note of universality is especially stressed. "When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." All things shall be subject to him. As I Corinthians 15 points out, after he has reigned he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. But before the end of the promised millennial kingdom—before the time that he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father—there shall come that glorious era in which his kingdom shall be absolutely universal, for all rule and all authority and all power shall be subject to our Lord.

REMOVAL OF THE CURSE

A fourth feature of this millennial kingdom which we shall note is that it is to be a time when the curse shall be removed from the earth. In all of nature we see signs of the curse which God has put on the world because of the sins of man. Well does the poet speak of "nature red in tooth and claw." Part of the curse laid upon man, as recorded in Genesis 3, was that the earth should bring forth thorns and thistles, and that enmity was established between a part of the animal creation and humanity. Animals live upon other animals. Cruelty and suffering is widespread in the animal creation. The infirmity of the human body, with its weakness and its suffering, is part of the curse. Isaiah 11 beautifully pictures the removal of this curse. The Old Testament prophecies require this as an essential element in their fulfillment. The apostle Paul also tells us in Romans 8: 18-23, that the curse is some day to be lifted. In verse 22 he says: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." In verse 21 he declared that "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." We ourselves, the apostle says, "groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus Paul ties together the release of the animal creation from the curse, and the changing of the bodies of the saved into resurrection bodies, free from weakness and infirmity. This thought is also brought out in the passage in Revelation 20. There the apostle vividly portrays the resurrection of the Christians. "I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded . . . and such as worshipped not the beast . . . ; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection." He pictures the deceased saints as raised to life again,