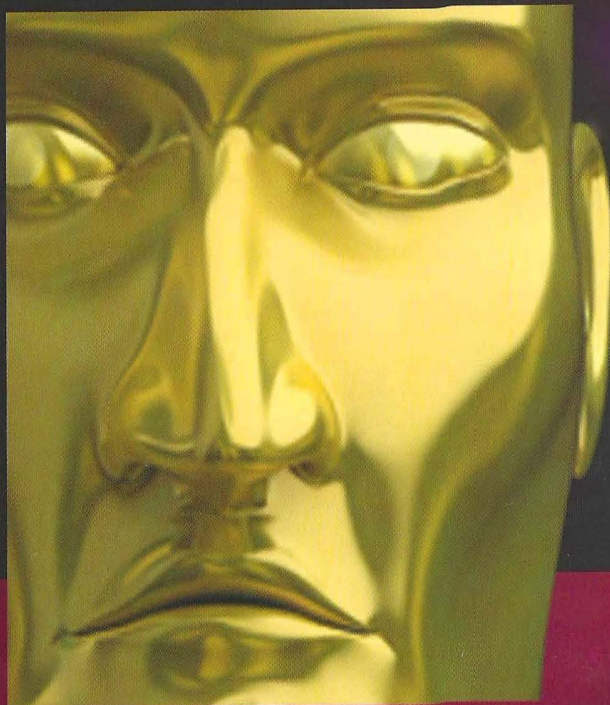


The FINGER of PROPHECY



R. ARMSTRONG AND J. L. FERGUSON

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Foreword

This booklet consists of a series of papers by J. L. Ferguson and R. Armstrong which were published in serial form in the magazine *Needed Truth* during 1970/71. In view of the great interest in Biblical prophecy they were considered worthy of preserving in this more permanent form. We are sure that many readers of this magazine will value the expositions in their collected format and will be stimulated to further study of this entrancing subject. The papers appear more or less as written; with such limited editing as seemed necessary for their publication in book form. Some overlapping in the treatment of the various headings of the subject is due to the authors alternating in the writing of the papers, but this is not thought to be detrimental.

Early in the series attention is drawn to the wealth of Old Testament prophecy which was fulfilled in the events associated with our Lord's first advent. This testimony to the inerrancy of Scripture is irrefutable and merits continual emphasis. The trend of modernist theology is to discredit Scripture authority, and many are disturbed and confused by the flood of liberal propaganda issuing from the religious Press. Scripture needs no defence from us. It stands as a witness to the immutability of God and those who presume to impugn it will be broken in pieces.

There remains in both the Old and New Testament writings a vast area of divine prediction awaiting fulfilment. But there are differing views among discerning students of Scripture as to the precise order in which the events associated with our Lord's second coming will occur. A certain general outline of the order of these events has been set forth in *Needed Truth* for the past 80 years or so, and this has found general support among leading teachers in the Churches of God. Recent events have tended to confirm rather than to disturb it. The writers of these papers have used this outline as the general framework of their study. But there are many details in the prophetic word which will be made plain only as the events to which they refer unfold. On such details undue dogmatism is to be deprecated. Here the writers of these expositions have shown commendable restraint. In some of the details they express a difference of mind, but alternative views are fairly presented and evaluated. Attention is directed to Appendices 2 and 3 where certain matters arising in the interpretation of [Rev.21,22](#) are discussed in more detail.

We now send forth these expositions to a wider Christian public as a contribution to the study of events which many students of the prophetic word consider to be at our very doors. We should not allow the varying views on prophetic fulfilment to obscure our vision of the glorious hope of our Lord's return. Avoiding unwise and fanciful speculation we shall find in the prophetic word encouragement and strength as we see the powers of evil massing around us. Let us be among those who *"wait for His Son from heaven"*,

"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13).

T.M.Hyland. August 1972

Preface to Third Edition

We are pleased to make available again this copy of *The Finger of Prophecy* by our esteemed brethren J. L. Ferguson and R. Armstrong.

The original booklet was issued in 1972,40 years ago, and many have followed with great interest the topics covered. Scripture quotes have been changed to NKJV and only minor alterations have been made to the original text mainly to be consistent with the change of bible version.

As we commend this booklet to old and new readers we recall the words of the Apostle Paul:"... *for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed*" ([Rom.13:11](#)).

M.S.Elliott for General Literature Editors. January 2012

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1

The Certainty of Prophecy

*"We also have the prophetic word made more sure,
which you do well to heed" (2 Pet.1:19).*

This was the confidence of the early Christians. They were conscious of the vast amount of Old Testament prophecy which had been fulfilled among them by the coming of the Lord Jesus. The sufferings of Christ and His ascension to glory - matters which were obscure to the prophets when they wrote of them centuries before - were now well attested history, announced to the nations by the Holy Spirit in the testimony of witnesses, prepared before by God.

Old Testament prophecy had mainly to do with Christ and Israel. The zeal of the LORD of hosts would perform two things: the birth and glorious reign of Immanuel ([Isaiah 9:7](#)) and the ultimate restoration of Israel ([Isaiah 37:32](#)). But when the prophets described the distant peaks of the coming of Messiah and His subsequent universal reign, it was not revealed to them that between these towering heights lay a great time-valley in which Israel would be laid aside by reason of her unbelief and the great purpose of the ages would be brought in. In that period Christ would build His Church. A new and holy nation would also be brought into divine testimony.

Today, members of the Church which is His Body, may enjoy a unique understanding of their Lord's will in matters of Bible prophecy. For not only can they ponder those marvels of fulfilled prediction with which the Scriptures abound, but they can also sense the beginnings of happenings which are equally and inevitably due for fulfilment after the Church has gone to be with the Lord. In the field of fulfilled prophecy they can rejoice in such scriptures as are noted in [Appendix 1](#) on page 102. Only Almighty God could have written up these matters in advance. *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world"* ([Acts 15:18 A.V.](#)). God - in supreme, omniscient control. The Bible is right after all.

But there is an immense and fascinating range of Bible prophecy which will proceed into orderly fulfilment when the Church is "caught up" (1 [Thess.4:17](#)). It is written of Israel's Redeemer in the coming day of His manifestation that "he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the LORD drives along" ([Isa.59:19 N.I.V.](#)). That is the character of the happenings of those "pent-up" days. And in them, what we now see somewhat darkly in the prophetic page will all be spelled out in unerring, historic accuracy.

Modern life in prophetic setting

At the present time there is considerable apprehension in the minds of thinking people as to the issue of current trends in the spheres of morals, science and international finance. For example, since June 1947 the cover of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists in the U.S.A, has had a symbolic clock depicting the approach of mankind to what they term nuclear doomsday. By 1963 the hands had moved to twelve minutes to midnight. In January 1968 they were advanced five minutes because of what they described as "*the dismal record of the last five years, including the development of nuclear weapons by France and China*". The most recent adjustment (14.01.2010) sets the clock at six minutes to midnight.

Certainly it seems as though all over the world there is a growing, Spirit-led consciousness among God's children that the coming of the Lord is near. The poet has written:

There's a whisper from the glory of the coming of the Lord,
Oh the joy my heart is tasting as I rest upon His Word,
And what peace amid earth's tumult does this precious truth afford -
"Hold fast! I'm coming soon!"

In the glory of His promise I am living day by day,
And the light of heaven is dawning on earth's dreary, desert way,
While I wait that sweetest whisper, "Up, my child and come away",
The King is coming soon.

There's a glory on the mountains and a glory on the sea,
And the valleys now are glowing, and the desert way can be
Just a pilgrimage to glory, since He whispered it to me,
"Hold fast! I'm coming soon!"

M.E. Barber

Much of this awareness of His coming is doubtless due to the remarkable way in which coming events in the sure word of prophecy are already casting their shadows across our pathway. It is in this sense that we are so profoundly privileged today. Our spiritual fathers lived out their days in the expectation of His coming, without the notable indications with which we are surrounded. We mention a selected few.

National events in prophetic setting

Israel: First there is by common consent the present-day miracle of Israel established again as a nation in their land, with their own government and civil administration, their well-trained military forces, all in a setting of a fast-growing economy. Yet they are literally surrounded by enemies, and their national recovery is presenting the nations of the world with major problems, for which there are no easy solutions. Meantime the Christian rejoices as he sees the prophetic parable of Israel, "*the fig tree*", finding fulfilment before his eyes; as he sees the ground being prepared for the making of the covenant of which Daniel spoke, even now the seeming answer to the insurmountable difficulty of the settling of a prosperous Israel amid hostile lands.

Every nation: But there is also the parable of "*all the trees*" (Lk.21:29). And the believer can see a deep significance in the present state of all the nations. Despite centuries of Bible impact, the nations are now drifting swiftly towards the godless conditions of unrestrained sin which characterised the days of Noah and of Sodom, and which are predicted as the prevailing conditions when the Son of Man comes. We see revolt against law and order in many walks of life, pursuit of permissive sexual lust, growth of divorce and breakdown in home and family life, insatiable demand for material things, steady decline from the fear of the Lord, abandonment to drugs and narcotics - men and women, young and old from every quarter, on the treadmill of sin. "*The mystery of lawlessness*" which was already at work in Paul's day, is profoundly hard at work today, with the additional difference that the restraining power is shortly to be removed (see 2 Thess.2:7). This "restrainer" has been variously viewed, as being, for example:

- the Roman Empire of Paul's day;
- human government providing law and order;

- Satan, seen as holding back the forces of evil;
- the effective power of Christian witness, and
- the Holy Spirit.

The view which commends itself to the present writer, as in keeping with the general tenor of Scripture, is that when the unique work of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is complete in this present age, both in and through the Church the Body, and as a consequence the Church has gone to be with the Lord, then and then only will God permit Satan to develop to rapid completion his own great, final assault on the minds of men. Then the man of sin will in due course be revealed, and when that happens, *"the lawless one"* ([2 Thess.2:8](#)) will find a world immersed in sin, ready for his universal dictatorship. While it is evident from Scripture that the Holy Spirit will continue, during that period, to work in the hearts of individuals, the restraining days will be over.

Unified World Religion: Then we would be extremely blind not to see the forces at work in the western world today making for one unified world religion. Old, and at one time insurmountable, barriers are being re-examined with compromising sympathy, and the tide has turned to flow towards a so-called spiritual unity. Herein are all the elements of the promotion of what finally emerges as a unified world religion, seen as *"the great prostitute"* in the days of the lawless one in [Rev.17](#).

Europe: Others may well be impressed with the grouping of European nations for economic and other purposes, a grouping which may hold considerable potential in the light of the confederation of nations and their rulers so clearly foretold by Daniel the prophet and by John the seer.

Thus we see around us the forces at work which are shaping the days between the Lord's coming to the air for His Church and His return to the earth for Israel's deliverance. To ignore the significance of these happenings might well bring upon us the censure of [Lk.12:56](#), "*... how is it you do not discern this time?*" And we rejoice in the Master's word in [Lk.21:28](#), although they refer primarily to another day, "*Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.*"

In such a spirit, then, we propose to look at some of the great milestones of prophecy, clearly taught in Scripture, but as yet unfulfilled. We shall avoid theories which have no scriptural warrant, and the assigning of dates which only does harm to the serious study of prophecy. It may not be possible to set out our understanding of these matters in a way acceptable to all. We shall therefore avoid dogmatism unless where faithfulness to the revealed Word demands it.

Last eve I passed beside the blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
When looking down, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with use in former time.

"How many anvils have you used", said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one!" said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

Just so - I thought - the anvil of God's Word
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.

John Clifford

2

The Lord's Coming to the Air

The Promise

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (Jn 14:1-3).

These words, spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples just before He went to the Cross, are of immense significance. The certainty of their fulfilment is based on the authority of the Lord Jesus, to whom God has committed the accomplishment of His prophetic programme.

Paul, writing to the young Thessalonian church of God, confirms our Lord's promise:

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:16,17).

It is important to view His second coming in its dispensational setting. His first coming was "to bear the sins of many" (Heb.9:28); His second coming will be consummative, and will be either for blessing or for judgment.

The second coming is **one coming** but it will be fulfilled in **two phases**. The word "*coming*" (Greek *parousia*) implies arrival and consequent presence with. It is used of:

- His coming as the Son of God to the air for the Church which is His Body, and
- His coming as the Son of Man to judge the nations of the world and to deliver His people Israel just prior to the setting up of His millennial kingdom. In this chapter we are concerned with the first phase.

In the early centuries A.D. a great spiritual darkness spread over the earth. Belief in divine revelation was superseded by ignorance of God's truth and replaced by the ritual and superstition of an apostate church.

Consequently, the knowledge of the precious truth of our Lord's return was obscured, and believers were not generally enlightened with regard to this glorious hope. But during the past five hundred years or so the Divine Spirit has enlightened afresh the minds of men of God who studied the Scriptures concerning these matters. Once again the precious hope of the Lord's return lightens the hearts of believers as they look forward to that great event. Its certainty is confirmed in the words: "*For yet a little while, and he who is coming will come and will not tarry*" ([Heb.10:37](#)).

How will He come?

The coming of the Lord to the air will be personal. He said, "*I will come again*"; and the apostle Paul wrote, "*the Lord himself shall descend from heaven*". He will come to the air in the body which bears the marks of His sufferings at Calvary, a body of "*flesh and bones*", the body seen by His disciples after He was raised from the dead (Lk.24:39). It will be the same body as that in which He appeared to Thomas, and said, "*Reach your finger here, and look at my hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing*" ([Jn 20:27](#)).

There will be three great signals in heaven, accompanying His descent:

- the shout of the Lord,
- the voice of the archangel, and
- the trumpet of God.

The Lord Jesus said that the Father had given Him "*authority over all flesh*" ([Jn 17:2](#)). He will exercise that authority when He comes to the air. When He utters His voice, the power of the Godhead will set in motion an orderly unfolding of tremendous events which are in God's plan of the ages, and which will continue until Christ reigns as supreme Head of the universe.

For whom will He come?

The shout of the Lord ([1 Thess.4:16](#)) will not be heard universally, but will be directed only to those who are "*in Christ*". The divine title "*Lord*" is used in Scripture in association with His "*all authority*". This shout will be like a military command, or summoning shout, a voice of power and authority. It will reach only those who have believed on the

Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized in one Spirit into the Church, the Body of Christ (1 Cor.12:12-13). All who have died in Christ since Pentecost as well as those who are "alive" and remain until the coming of the Lord will be in that vast multitude who will be summoned to meet their Lord in the air.

*The blood was the sign Lord,
That marked them as Thine Lord,
And brightly they'll shine,
At Thy coming again".*

H.K.Burlingham

The reader is referred to the following group of scriptures which all relate to this phase of the Lord's return:

Jn 14:1-3; 1 Cor.15:35-54;
Phil.3:20,21; 1 Thess.4:13-18;
2 Thess.2:1; 1 Jn 3:2

The meeting in the air

Millions of believers in Christ, members of His glorious Church, the Body, have died. Their souls are safe with Him in heaven, although their bodies have long since returned to dust. The Lord Jesus is "the resurrection and the life"(Jn 11:25). God, through Christ, has planned and perfected the marvellous process of their bodily resurrection which will take place at the sound of the trumpet of God (1 Cor.15:52; 1 Thess.4:16). By this means He will bring the souls of the dead in Christ and their new bodies together at His coming (Phil.3:20,21; 1 Thess.4:14).

In 1 Cor.15:37,38, we read, "And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere seed - perhaps corn or some other seed. But God gives it a body as he pleases, and to each seed its own body." These new bodies will be completely free from degenerative diseases, and fully compatible with the eternal environment to which He will take them. Like the personalities occupying them, they will be indestructible, sinless and perfect, and will live forever in a state of perfect happiness and joy. Dust that was once a human body, sown in death on land or sea, will become a perfect, glorified body like Christ's own glorious body (Phil.3:21). The bodies of believers who are "alive and remain until the coming of the Lord" (1 Thess.4:15), whether they be old, young, crippled, or diseased, will be transformed into perfect, immortal, glorified

bodies which will never taste death.

The Church which is Christ's Body will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Then the vast host of the redeemed will go up past moon, sun, and stars, past all principalities and powers, into the heaven of heavens where God dwells in eternal light. We wonder what effect the Lord's coming will have on people left on the earth. It is not ours to speculate where the Scriptures are silent. No doubt there will be great consternation in many parts of the world when this great event takes place. Headlines and newscasts will carry sensational reports that thousands of people have suddenly disappeared. People of all nationalities will mysteriously be taken from where they are, and from whatever they are doing. No doubt it will dawn on many people who heard Christians preach about the Lord's return that what they believed in has actually taken place.

The terrible lawlessness which we see increasing on every hand in our time is a sure forecast that the coming of the Lord Jesus is very near. As an unsuspecting world moves closer every hour to the time of God's judgments on the earth, those who know Christ as Saviour should be rejoicing in the hope of His return and ordering their lives in the light of it. *"And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure" (1 Jn 3:3).*

*"He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.'¹
Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev.22:20).*

Midst the darkness, storm and sorrow,
One bright gleam I see,
Well I know the blessed morrow,
Christ will come for me;
Midst the light and peace and glory
Of the Father's home,
Christ for me is watching, waiting,
Waiting till I come.

Long the blessed Guide has led me
By the desert road;
Now I see the golden towers,
City of my God;
There amidst the love and glory,
He is waiting yet;
On His hands a name is graven,
He can ne'er forget.

There amidst the songs of heaven,
Sweeter to His ear
Is the footfall through the desert,
Ever drawing near;
There made ready are the mansions,
Glorious, bright and fair;
But the Bride the Father gave Him
Still is wanting there.

Who is This who comes to meet me
On the desert way,
As the morning star foretelling
God's unclouded day?
He it is who came to save me,
On the cross of shame;
In His glory well I know Him,
Evermore the same.

E.F. Bevan

3

The Judgment Seat of Christ

"Judgment seat" is a translation of the Greek word *bema*. It is to be distinguished from the word throne (Greek *thronos*), which is used in particular of "*the throne of his glory*" ([Matt.25:31](#)), from which the Son of Man will judge the living nations before establishing His millennial kingdom, and of "*the great white throne*" ([Rev.20:11](#)), from which at the close of the thousand years He will judge the dead, the small and the great.

Bema is derived from another Greek word *basis*: a pace, hence by implication, a foot. So a *bema* was a step, or in common usage a rostrum, dais or platform reached by steps. It could be used for various purposes, as, for example, the official seat of the magistrate or of the adjudicator's seat at the Grecian games. In the original word itself there is no hint of judgment although its application in usage was obviously varied. Thus, although a judgment-seat might indeed be punitive it was not necessarily so, and as we proceed in our study we shall find in particular that the judgment seat of Christ is not presented as a judicial seat for condemnation of wrong but rather as a tribunal for assessment of service.

It will simplify our brief consideration of the subject if we look in particular at various aspects of it.

Who will appear before the judgment seat of Christ?

We dealt in a previous chapter with the Lord's coming to the air to take to Himself the members of the Church which is His Body. It is these who are seen in the various New Testament scriptures as standing before the Judgment seat of Christ.

In this connexion the following extracts from letters to Christians in the early churches of God are relevant:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."
([2 Cor.5:10](#)).

There.. *each of us shall give account of himself to God.*"([Rom.14:12](#))

so that

"... each one's work will become manifest: for the Day will declare it... "
(1 Cor.3:13)

and then

"... each one's praise will come from God" (1 Cor.4:5).

It is generally accepted that only those who are members of the Church which is His Body will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, though it is evident that others will participate in a pre-millennial resurrection. There will be, for example, the redeemed of Old Testament Israel, and the saved of the tribulation period. It is a requirement of [Isa.45:23](#) that they will be called to one of the several tribunals of Him to whom all judgment has been committed. There may well be a reference to this in [Rev.11:18](#). Certainly [Dan.12:13](#) is relevant, and the faithful of Israel, with Daniel the prophet, will stand in their lot "at the end of the days"- raised and rewarded for Messiah's kingdom.

But for our present study we shall accept that it is the saints of this present dispensation who are viewed in relation to the judgment seat of Christ.

When will the tribunal take place?

The following scriptures give adequate guidance:

"... for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just" (Lk.14:14).

"... until the Lord comes... Then each one's praise will come from God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"... the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day" (2 Tim.4:8).

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me..."
(Rev.22:12).

There is no scriptural warrant for assuming, as some have done, that the believer appears before the judgment seat at death and receives, separately, any rewards at the Lord's coming. The tribunal is a single event, having to do with both assessment and reward, and is evidently set in association with, and probably following immediately on, the Lord's coming for the Church.

This agrees with the principle seen in the message of the parable of the

pounds. *"And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him..."* (Lk.19:15). Also in harmony with this view is [Rev.19:6-10](#), where the Bride of the Lamb is seen in the choice array of the fine linen which reflects the saints' righteous acts. What has survived the judgment has become the basis of adornment in reward, and the Bride is in readiness for the marriage of the Lamb. Meantime the great prostitute, the counterfeit bride, has been destroyed on earth and the Son of Man is preparing to descend on completion of the tribulation period.

What kind of judgment will it be?

It is an old and sound teaching that there are three judgments for the New Testament believer. These are:

(a) **Our past judgment as sinners.** Here we rest on such scriptures as [Jn 3:18](#), *"He who believes in him is not condemned."* On the strength of this we exclaim with Paul, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus"* ([Rom.8:1](#)). All our sin, past, present and future was judged in our sinless Substitute at Calvary. One of the glories of the New Covenant is *"I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more"* ([Jer.31:31-34](#). See also [Heb.8:8-13](#)). Thus the judgment seat of Christ is not for judging the guilt of sin.

(b) **Our judgment as sons.** There is an exhortation quoted in [Heb.12:5,6](#) which reasons with us as with sons, saying *"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him; For whom the LORD loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives."* A new man was born at our conversion and that new man never sins (see [1 Jn 3:9](#)). But the old nature remains and in its sad activity the believer is in a state of recurring sin in the flesh. Against this, the Spirit within him constantly wars. Further, with a view to the formation of Christ in the believer, the Lord has a school of chastening through which He calls His sons. From every point of view, He would have them be *"partakers of the divine nature"* ([2 Pet.1:4](#)).

(c) **Our judgment as servants.** This, we understand, is the character of the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ. A careful study of the various references to the subject will confirm this. Taking first the direct references:

Rom.14:12. "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." "Account" here is the Greek word *logos*. A spoken account will be given by each, as servant to "his own master" (verse 4).

1 Cor.3:13-15. "...each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire: and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss..." So our works will be manifested openly for trial so as to ascertain their sort. The purpose of the judgment is to separate the acceptable from the worthless in our lives.

1 Cor.4:5. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts and then each one's praise will come from God." Here the Discerner of all our secret thoughts and actions, the Assessor of all the motives and counsels of our hearts, will give just praise where praise is due.

2 Cor.5:10. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Again it will be a review of our accountability in respect of the day of our opportunity, with rewards in direct proportion and correspondence to acceptable service rendered. According as we have done so shall we receive. The worthwhile in our service will appear eternally in reward form. The worthless will be reflected negatively as loss at the judgment seat.

Rev.22:12. "And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every one according to his work." Again, work reviewed so that reward may be given where due.

There is agreement with this view in several of the parables. For example, in principle, in the illustration of the talents in **Matt.25:19**, "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them." It was an accounting in respect of "his lord's money"(verse 18). Again, in **Lk.19:15** it was a question of what the recipients of the pounds had "gained by trading".

Clearly the nature of the judgment at the judgment seat is presented

in scripture as emphasising an **examination and assessment of stewardship** (in *"the domestic court of the palace"* as Moule puts it) with a view to commendation and reward rather than a condemnation of sin. Nevertheless sin may well have adversely affected our service and thus the consequent reward. How thankful we should be that nothing can affect the eternal security of the believer!

It will be **intensely personal**. We cannot fail to be impressed with the references to *"each one"* being made manifest, *"each one"* giving personal, verbal account to Him by whom *"actions are weighed"* rather than measured. Thus the gold, silver and precious stone will remain after those eyes which are *"a flame of fire"* have searched our service record through, while the wood, hay and stubble are consumed. A personal accounting of our works (1 Cor.3:12-15), our words (Matt.12:36), and our thoughts (1 Cor.4:5). Nothing will escape those eyes; no dedicated life so full as to be incapable of evaluation, no faithful service so small as to go unappreciated.

The government in Washington has a pair of scales so delicate that you can put a piece of thin paper in the scales and weigh it, and then write with a lead pencil on that same piece of paper and weigh it again, and the scales will reveal not only the weight of the paper but also the weight of the amount of lead that was put on the paper from the pencil. So the Lord Jesus said, *"And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward"* (Matt.10:42).

No wonder a beloved fellow-worker was wont to say, "I wish it were over". As we leave that judgment seat we shall be marked out by the appreciation of the King, not only for the millennial reign, but for the eternal day of God. They will stand nearest to His throne then, who drink deepest of His cup now. Already the time to prepare is short. May the Lord help us to train our sights now on eternal things.

Not outward sphere, but inward heart,
 The love wherewith we do our part:
Not how large gifts we hold in trust,
 But how far used or left to rust.
Not how much done, but how well done,
 Faithful to many souls or one.

Seeking the Master's will to find,
 And lean on Him with peace of mind:
Content to fail in human eyes,
 His smile the one reward and prize.
In any sphere serve Him alone
 Till cross is left for crown and throne.

4

The Marriage of the Lamb

"And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready.' And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev.19:6-8).

The great event described here lies in the future, and is part of God's eternal purpose. The judgment seat of Christ, as we have seen, will take place after the Church which is Christ's Body has been caught up to meet Him in the air. The order of events in the book of Revelation seems to place the marriage of the Lamb just prior to the appearing of the Son of Man in judgment. The expression, "After these things" (Rev.19:1), appears to indicate that the events recorded from [chapter 6 to 18 of Revelation](#) have been completed (that is in the vision as John saw it). To clarify, we submit that the marriage takes place in heaven, and comes between the judgment seat of Christ and the coming of the Son of Man to earth.

Adam and Eve - Type of Christ and the Church

The type of pure marriage union is seen in Adam and Eve, who were united by God in innocency and who, being without sin, were constituted to live for ever. They were told by God (before sin came in) to "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it..." (Gen.1:28). This sinless union had the potential to produce a pure race to live in eternal fellowship with God. Adam failed by making a wrong moral choice, and his relationship with God foundered in a moment of disobedience. Thus man failed at the dawn of human history.

God's eternal purpose in Christ - the Church which is His Body - was beautifully typified in Adam and Eve. God saw Eve in Adam and caused a deep sleep to fall on him while He removed a rib, out of which He made

a woman ([Gen.2:21,23](#)). She was made from him and for him, and was also with him in his headship over all creation. This is a type which points in two directions, to eternity past and to eternity future. From His eternal vantage point God saw the Church, the Body of Christ, in His own Son. Paul writes of this as *"the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to his saints"* ([Col.1:26](#)).

The members of the Body of Christ (born-again believers of this age) were chosen *"in him before the foundation of the world"* ([Eph.1:4](#)). The Lord Jesus passed through the sleep of death at Calvary, that out of His sufferings and death might come the *"church, which is his body"* ([Eph.1:22-23](#)). It is said of believers in Him, *"we are members of his body"* ([Eph.5:30](#)). Paul writes, *"Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it"*. In due time He will present to Himself *"a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing"* ([Eph.5:25-27](#))

Christ seeking His Bride

One of the great purposes of the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world was to seek a bride for Himself. His love for her is beautifully expressed in [Matt.13:45,46](#), where He is *"... like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."* The Church which is Christ's Body - composed of Jews and Gentiles called to be *"... fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ through the gospel"* ([Eph. 3:6](#)) - is God's great masterpiece of the ages. This new and sinless creation in Himself can never be marred by human failure. She alone is the suitable eternal companion for Him who is *"heir of all things"* ([Heb.1:2](#)).

The Scriptures are clear that the members of the Church the Body of Christ are perfect as they are seen by God in Christ. While on earth individual Christians commit sins, because the old nature is present and will remain until death or until the coming of the Lord. But the new divine nature, that which is *"born of God does not sin, for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God"* ([1 Jn 3:9](#)). *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation..."* ([2 Cor.5:17](#)). It is important to see this truth in God's eternal plan for His Son's Bride. The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church; God sees it as perfect in Christ. Only such a Church can be the Bride of Christ.

The Bride and her eternal Lover

We now come to the events described in [Rev.19](#) - the uniting of the glorious Church the Body of Christ to her eternal Lover. As indicated already we see this wonderful event taking place in the interval between the rapture of the Church and the appearing of the Son of Man to judge the nations of the world. Towards the close of the seven-year period - the last week of Daniel's prophecy - the actual marriage will take place. The expression "*After these things*" ([Rev.19:1](#)) helps us to see where this great event comes in the prophetic scheme. If the events of the seven year period cover [chapters 6 to 18 of Revelation](#) and include, the opening of the seven seals,

- the sounding of the seven trumpets,
- and the pouring out of the seven bowls of the wrath of God on the earth, also the final destruction of the great world system called Babylon, then all these judgments will be completed before the marriage takes place.

Out of all the world's tribulation and chaotic conditions, and the great cosmic forces of destruction released in judgment during those awful years, there comes a great voice from heaven, calling all His servants and those that fear Him to "*Praise our God... Let us be glad and rejoice... for the marriage of the Lamb has come*" ([Rev.19:5,7](#)). What a glorious consummation for the Lord Jesus! How His great heart will thrill as He looks upon His Bride, the fruit of His toil and suffering. "*He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*" ([Isa.53:11](#)).

The Bride will be resplendent in the beauty of her adornment, arrayed in "... *fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints*" ([Rev.19:8](#)). The imputed righteousness God gives the Bride is given to all believers at the moment of their salvation, and is seen in the lives of each in the righteous acts they perform. This is what is meant by the righteous acts of the saints. In the Bride will be reflected the dazzling glory of the One who sold all that He had to purchase her. Here is love at its highest and purest fulfilment! What a glorious day for all believers to be gathered to Him for that divine ceremony, symbolising their union with Christ!

[Psalm 45](#) is no doubt a prophetic view of this great event and we submit

that those of Israel who *"died in faith"* (Heb.11:13) will be raised to share in the glory of the royal supper, which will take place on earth after the marriage. *"... the queen in gold from Ophir"* (verse 9), may refer to the Bride. Associates from other ages being present seems to have support from Rev.19:9, *"Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!"* The King girding His sword and His enemies falling under Him (verses 4 and 5) describe no doubt the same scene as we have here, following the marriage of the Lamb, when John saw the *"heaven opened"* and the Rider on the white horse, called *"Faithful and True"*, accompanied by the armies of heaven on white horses (Rev.19:11-14).

And so with the *"marriage of the Lamb"* another stage in the great eternal purpose of God in Christ will be fulfilled. May we who wait for that great day order our lives in the light of the Holy Spirit's message through Peter, *"Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by him in peace, without spot and blameless"* (2 Pet.3:14).

The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory.
But on my King of grace;
Not at the crown he giveth,
But on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land.

A. R. Cousin

5

The Times of the Gentiles

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near... And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Lk.21:20,24).

As these subjects in the field of prophecy develop, considerable prominence will necessarily be given to the nations of the world as distinct from Israel. At this point then it will be useful to consider what the Lord meant when He referred to *"the times of the Gentiles"*.

This is the only reference in Scripture to this expression. The Greek word translated *"times"* signifies a fixed or definite period. God's great programme for the Gentiles (that is, the nations of the world other than Israel) covers a period of time which is fixed by divine decree. It is the period of the treading down of Jerusalem under Gentile domination. It extends from the days of Nebuchadnezzar till the day when the Son of Man returns in power and great glory for the deliverance of the Holy City, as seen, for example, in [Zech.14](#).

There have been nations on the earth since the growth of the families of Noah's sons. Their beginnings are described in [Gen.10](#). They are mentioned from time to time in the development of Bible history, invariably in relation to Israel. No specific reference, however, is made at any stage to the actual date of contemporary history in the case of any particular Gentile ruler until [Jer.25:1](#), which reads, *"The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon)."*

This verse is of profound significance. It is the first recorded Gentile date in Scripture, indeed the only place where the chronology of Jew and Gentile are linked together by specific date. The first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king

of Babylon, was the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, in that year look place the first of the three carryings away of Judah into captivity, in the sovereign purposes of the Most High. The treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles had begun. Using the king of Babylon as the rod of His anger He had begun "... to *bring calamity on the city which is called by my name*" (verse 29), and such is the prophetic sweep of [Jer.25](#) that it finally has in view a like judgment falling on all the nations of the earth, with the king of Babylon in a coming day drinking the cup of divine fury last of all (concerning this judgment we find much food for thought in [Rev.17-19](#)).

So the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was the beginning of the dominion of Gentile power over Israel, the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. Israel was going rapidly into national disgrace and captivity. Her glorious capital city, symbolising the entire nation, would never again be free of Gentile domination, until the times of the Gentiles would be complete.

The sequence of this unbroken Gentile rule over Jerusalem was outlined in symbol in a dream which the God of heaven gave to this Gentile ruler, Nebuchadnezzar, in the second year of his reign. The account is given in detail in [Dan.2](#). It was an image with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, feet partly iron and partly clay. Through His servant Daniel, God also provided the interpretation of the dream.

A like message was conveyed also by God to Daniel in a dream in the days of Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar. This time it was of four great beasts which came up out of the sea. The details are in [Dan.7](#). Firstly the lion with eagle's wings, then a bear, next a leopard and finally "... a *fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong*" (verse 7). It had iron teeth and ten horns. Again Daniel received the interpretation.

The meaning of the two dreams was one; they **both viewed the passing down of world power through the Gentile nations**, the first dream from the human standpoint, the second from the divine. They traced it right through from the days of Nebuchadnezzar till the Son of Man will come and smash Gentile might with the sheer glory of His appearing. That, then, is the period of the times of the Gentiles.

It may be helpful at this point to set out the sequence of Gentile power, as depicted in the God-given dreams, and as confirmed so far in the history of the intervening centuries.

First: the head of gold (or the lion with eagle's wings) represented the Babylonian empire, and in particular Nebuchadnezzar, its despotic ruler. He was an absolute monarch, in the strictest sense. Daniel said of him, "... *all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down*" (Daniel 5:19).

Second: the chest and arms of silver (or the bear). Much has been written as to the relative values and specific gravities of gold and silver and the metals which follow, but suffice it here to say that, by common consent, the Medo-Persian empire (the two combined nations corresponding to the two arms) which succeeded the Babylonian, carried the inferiority in autocratic rule which the change from gold to silver had predicted. And Daniel records the passing of world power from one empire to the other from a divine standpoint rather than a military one when he records that "*That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom...*" (Dan.5:30,31). The kingdom had passed by divine authorisation, in the succession of Gentile dominion.

Third: the belly and thighs of bronze (or the leopard) symbolised the peculiar glory of Greece. In this case the succession was not only predicted but was also actually named by Daniel in chapter 8, many long years before it happened, with a fascinating account of how, following the death of Alexander the Great, his empire would be divided among his four generals (verses 21,22). Again, what is prophecy to man is simply history to God.

Fourth: the legs of iron (or the fourth beast), strong, crushing iron, graphically portrayed the might of the Roman empire, before which the Grecians completely collapsed, and the then known world came so effectively under the authority of Rome that in Lk.2:1 we read of Caesar Augustus decreeing that all the world should be enrolled. In due course, historians record the division of the Roman empire and the establishment of two great centres, Rome for the West and Constantinople for the East - the two legs seen in the vision.

Fifth: the feet, partly of iron and partly of clay. But although there is historical counterpart to the two legs of the image, nothing has as yet gone down in the annals of history corresponding to the two feet with their ten toes. This is the one part of the prophecy which history has not as yet confirmed. The former Roman empire awaits a future manifestation when its crushing, ruthless iron will be mixed with clay, when it will be presented to the nations of the world in ten areas of government rather than in the former two. With this kingdom, referred to in [Rev.13](#) and [Rev.17](#), we shall deal more fully when we consider later the subject of the grouping of the nations.

Between the fall of the fourth empire and its revival in another form (for the iron is common to both) there is one of those time gaps with which the student of Scripture is familiar. Another and deeply significant gap is the undefined length of time between the close of Daniel's 69th week and the opening of the 70th. With the close of the 69th week, the Lord Jesus, Israel's Messiah, was "*cut off*" and the period of the "*fulness of the Gentiles*" began, referred to in [Rom.11:25](#), and not to be confused with the "*times*" of the Gentiles.

In this dispensation of grace, Christ is building the Church which is His Body and His disciples are given the privilege of gathering in churches of God in obedience to the Faith, that they may form a spiritual house for God to dwell in. But following the rapture of the Church, either immediately or after such preparatory time as the Lord may decree, Daniel's 70th week will commence and run its memorable course. Then in the days of the kings of the iron-clay confederacy of that period, the Son of Man will come and like the little stone which smashed the image, He will put an end to Gentile rule and set up His own glorious kingdom. And concerning Israel, "... *the days of your mourning shall be ended*" ([Isaiah 60:20](#)).

A nation reborn

So we have considered in a cursory way the development, or degeneration of Gentile power in the times of the Gentiles. We now make a brief reference to Israel in the years of her subjection. The opening paragraph in "*A Nation Reborn*", a pamphlet published by the Education Department of the Jewish National Fund, reads as follows: "*In the year 70, Jerusalem was captured by the Romans and the Temple destroyed. With the loss of*

national independence and the subsequent dispersion, the Jewish people began to hope and pray for a return to Zion. During the centuries which followed, Jewish communities, though small in number, continued to exist in Palestine. Their numbers were reinforced from time to time by Rabbis, students and other settlers, who, in spite of hardships and discouragement returned to the Land to study there, or just to die there. The vision of the Return never faded from the heart and mind of the Jewish people. Poets, such as Hehuda Halevi (12th Century), gave poignant expression to these hopes".

From the beginning of the 19th Century, movements to promote the resettlement of Jews in Palestine began to develop in Central and Eastern Europe. Growing interest in the visionary ideals of Theodor Herzl resulted in the First Zionist Congress at Basle, Switzerland, in 1897, when the Basle Programme -unanimously adopted - was: "To create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law". Great impetus was also given by Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858-1927) who was dedicated to the idea of reviving the Hebrew language. In 1910 he began to prepare a modern Hebrew dictionary and soon afterwards a generation was born which spoke Hebrew as its mother tongue.

On 2nd November 1917, the famous Balfour Declaration was written. *"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish People, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object..."*

Then came the victorious entry by General Allenby into Jerusalem in December 1917 and the city was delivered from 500 years of Turkish rule, but was still not available to Israel. So the immigrant Jews began to return to the Land. In the 40 years before the State of Israel was established on 14th May 1948, it was estimated that some 500,000 immigrants had returned. But in the first 40 months after statehood some 700,000 came from 74 lands. They came to a land which was greatly carved up, much of the old territory and part of the Holy City being part of the Kingdom of Jordan. Then came the 6-day war, and on 6th June 1967, after the lapse of centuries, the entire city of Jerusalem passed again into Israel's hands

The Lord Jesus said: "...Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Lk.21:24). Some view this prediction as referring to the time when the Holy City will be trodden under foot by the man of sin for the 42 months of Rev.11:2.

We respect their view for a case which doubtless with considerable skill they could argue. The more generally accepted view, however, is that the setting of the Lord's words is the A.D. 70 destruction of Jerusalem, in the days of vengeance of which the prophets had spoken and which were envisaged in the Lord's parable of the burning of the murderers' city in Matt.22:7 and from the destruction by Titus, Jerusalem would remain trodden down by world powers "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

So did the treading down of Jerusalem cease on 6th June 1967? Even as we write [1972] the position of Jerusalem lies at the heart of fierce international dispute. Israel is determined not to give it up. Other and important nations disagree. There is a cloud over the Holy City, and it is not the canopy of Isa.4:5. Certain Gentile nations are still in hot pursuit of at least a portion of it. It may well take the Covenant of the Roman prince (Dan.9:27) to secure the city in its entirety to Israel, but even in those circumstances it would be in terms of a covenant with the Gentiles. Not till "the stone" of Dan.2:45 comes - the Lord Jesus Christ - will the city secure its abiding release under the benign rule of Messiah. Gentiles will tread down the city no more - the "times of the Gentiles" will be complete.

As we ponder present-day Jerusalem, the miracle city, we marvel at the rapid unfolding in our own day of the eventful happenings which must inevitably precede the great prophetic fulfilments of the terminal years. And reverently, appreciatively ponder our Lord's words: "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the very doors" (Matt.24:33).

A Parable of the Fig Tree (Matt.24:32)

The fig tree putteth forth her tender figs;
The vine is gay with promise for the cup;
Laden with blossom hang its tender twigs;
And all around fair flowers are springing up.

The birds are singing in the leafy bowers;
The turtle's voice re-echoes through the land;
Winter is past with all its biting showers,
And Spring has touched the scene with magic wand.

But Israel is blind and cannot see
That buds of promise with the Spring appear;
Bursting with hope they hang on every tree
All telling of her glorious Summer near.

Downtrodden long beneath the Gentile's heel
She sings no more - indeed, has ceased to sigh;
Her heart is hardened that it cannot feel -
She asks no more but leave to live and die.

She hates the Muscove and she dreads the Turks;
She treats as foes all men who would befriend;
Deep in her bosom Gentile hatred lurks -
She scorns the arm that would her cause defend.

Man is her foe and she the foe of all;
Earth is her battlefield, earth her yawning grave;
Where shines the sun her sons in exile fall -
In life determined and in death still brave.

Who shall her blame though hate her heart doth swell?
Her failing - if it be so, who deride?
Does not the echo of her kingdom's knell
But pour contempt upon the Gentile's pride?

She fell – Ah! Yes – she fell by her own hand
She hewed her tree with many a mighty stroke;
Long ages did its strength the axe withstand,
Till in the end it bent and, bending, broke.

And Gentiles boast as if by their own strength
The might of Israel had been laid low;
Yet do they err - for they shall learn at length
That Israel but reaps what she did sow.

And from the ashes of her splendour great
The nations rise as rush-lights in her stead;
Vain in their pride they seek to imitate
The glory that o'er earth her radiance spread.

Vain, vain indeed - 'tis tinsel stead of gold!
And jarring are the discords that we hear;
They dress but in the garments that of old
Great Israel cast off and would not wear.

Proud Gentile, know that God has made thee stand,
A place in heaven's purpose thou dost fill;
Thou'rt but an earthen vessel in God's hand,
And He can make and He can mar at will.

Thy pride then humble for thy guilt is great
Heaven's goodness thou hast trampled in the dust;
Thy boast in armed hosts and princely state
Is vain, since thou hast made not God thy trust.

Thy fall is certain and thy time is nigh:
The cup thou'rt mixing thou must surely drink;
Then softly tread, and yet for mercy cry,
For thou dost blindly sport on ruin's brink.

Nor scorn the fallen though they humbled lie -
A stronger Hand than thine the blow has dealt!
Lest He who smote shall lift them up on high
And fill thee with the terrors that they felt.

The Most High rules o'er earthly kingdoms all
And giveth them to whomso'er He will:
A nation's doom is but a sparrow's fall
To Him whose word can make alive or kill.

Whom Israel now shields His grace shall spare,
But others He shall smite with chastening rod:
The nation that to mar her now would dare
Though great on earth is marked by Israel's God.

Ah! tremble ye, for retribution nears!
Ye trod upon the reed that God hath bruised!
No eye shall pity when have come thy fears,
Since mercy in her anguish ye refused.

And God has destined that His King at length
Shall sit on Zion's hill and reign in Power;
Righteous in rule, omnipotent in strength;
And Israel awaits that blissful hour.

Though she has sunk so far there yet remains
Her root in all its freshness in the ground;
And watered with the tear-drops of her pains
Her shoots shall spring and fruit shall yet abound.

For God shall overturn the powers that be
And set earth's diadem upon the head
Of Him who suffered on Golgotha's tree
And for the Jew and for the Gentile bled.

Then Israel shall sing her triumph song,
And, gathered in her strength, shall bless the day
That God in pity looked upon her wrong
And swept for aye her widowhood away.

Great was the glory of her former state;
Greater by far her future still in store;
Nations shall bow and, crouching at her gate,
Beg for the favour that they spurned before.

O Israel awake! thy raptured hour is nigh!
Thy King shall come and for thy help appear!
Lift, Zion, lift thy pale and languid eye,
For Spring has come and Summer must be near.

But frosts far on in Spring-time oft lay low
The blossom and the verdure of the vine:
One night of tribulation thou shalt know
Ere thou dost drink earth's cup of new made wine.

And dark shall be that night, and sore the blast
That then shall beat upon thy wounded breast;
The Gentile's rage in fury on thee cast
Shall vex thy soul that ages have oppressed.

Ah! Israel beloved, thy heart shall bleed
When that dark night shall climax all thy dread;
Who shall thy grief assuage, thy horror heed?
Who in that hour shall shield thy naked head?

But fiercest storms their fury fastest spend:
And darkest night precedes the dawn of day;
Soon for thy succour God in grace shall bend:
The Gentile He shall smite with dire dismay.

Then shall the Gentile's time for aye be past:
Earth's sceptre he for ever shall lay down;
And Israel in glory great, at last,
Shall wear upon her brow, a fadeless crown.

Creation in her glory shall rejoice;
Earth's wastes shall bloom and blossom as the rose;
All nature lift a glad and cheerful voice
When Israel has triumphed o'er her foes.

Her kingdom then for ever shall endure -
Its glory and its greatness who shall tell?
When God shall plead the portion of the poor,
And earth shall own one King - Immanu-El.

Author unknown - Extracted from 1903 Needed Truth Vol. XV

6

The Gathering of Israel

The return of the Jews to the land of Israel since the beginning of this century is no doubt the beginning of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies. Israel will be gathered home to the land God gave them by covenant promise to Abraham over 4000 years ago. Some remarkable events within our lifetime have, we believe, been preparatory to the final gathering home of this most remarkable of all people, who have survived the persecution of centuries. The present movement back to their national home signals the beginning of the end of *"the times of the Gentiles"*.

Israel dispersed

In the illustrious reign of King Solomon of Israel, for a period of 40 years, the nation reached the zenith of its power, glory, and wealth. Its fame spread across the known world, and kings brought their wealth and treasures as tribute to that great monarch (2 Chronicles 9:22-24). Through disobedience to the laws of God, idolatry and immorality set in, and eventually both the religious and national life of the nation were destroyed. God gave them into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and thus was fulfilled the prophecy recorded in Jer.9:11,16. A great people, whose high destiny was to disseminate the truth of God and His righteousness amongst the nations, themselves fell prey to the crippling effects of sin and departure from God. Even though there were a few bright revival years when the returning remnant came up from Babylon to rebuild the waste places of Jerusalem, Israel never again reached the zenith of the glorious days of Solomon.

Since their rejection of Messiah it has been true, as the Lord Jesus predicted, *"And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"* (Lk.21:24). Since their cries of hatred echoed across Pilate's judgment hall on the fateful day of Christ's crucifixion, Israel has been paying the awful price of that choice, *"His blood be on us and on our children"* (Matt.27:25).

One has written, "Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of. Yet he is as prominent on this planet as any other people... His contributions to the world's lists of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and learning are out of all proportion to the smallness of his bulk ... The Egyptian, the Babylonian and the Persian arose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded and passed away. The Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise and are gone. Other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out and they sit in silence now, or have vanished". But the Jews remain. What is the secret? The answer is in the word of God. We commend the reading of [Rom.9:4,5](#) which shows the purpose of God in Israel, and [Rom.11:25-27](#) which describes the future God has in store for them.

Throughout the centuries Israel has been preserved from extinction, and exists today, strong, virile, industrious, and in spite of the threats of the giant powers surrounding their tiny land, moves steadily toward their date with destiny. Can we see the hand of God in this? Surely we can, and the time is not far away when the prophecy will be fulfilled, "... I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make... the outcast a strong nation" ([Micah 4:6,7](#)).

Israel restored

Figuratively speaking, God stopped the pendulum of the prophetic clock as far as the nation of Israel was concerned when their Messiah was crucified. The death of Christ marked the termination of the 69 weeks (of years) of the 70 weeks prophesied by Daniel ([Dan.9:24-26](#)). After the Church the Body of Christ has been taken up to heaven, then the events of Daniel's 70th week (7 years) will be fulfilled. The question is asked in [Rom.11:1](#), "... has God cast away his people?" The answer comes back, "God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew" ([verse 2](#)). [Rom.11](#) gives three significant developments in God's dealings with Israel:

· relative to the present dispensation of grace, Paul said of Israel, "Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" ([verse 5](#));

- *relative to their defection he adds, "...have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall...salvation has come to the Gentiles"* ([verse 11](#)); and
- *"... if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!... if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?"* ([verses 12 and 15](#)). Thus the restoration of Israel is fixed in the purposes of God and will not be altered.

Israel today

We now consider what has happened to the people of Israel and their land in more recent times. Towards the close of the 19th Century Jews began to return to Palestine. For centuries they had been a people without a country. The Zionist movement had its beginning in 1897 with the first International Zionist Conference, which took place in Basle under the presidency of Dr Herzl. The fervent idealism of a Jewish national settlement in Israel which was the theme of his book, *"The Jewish State"*, did much to set Zionism in motion. During World War 1 a Jew, Dr Chaim Weizmann, who was a professor in chemistry, offered the British Government a secret formula which would greatly speed up the production of much needed munitions in the field of high explosives. The only payment he asked for the release of this discovery, was a national home for the Jews. This led to the famous Balfour Declaration in 1917, giving the Jews a national home in the land already theirs by divine promise. This was a significant step in God's plan to bring Israel back. Are these events representative of God's call to His ancient people to return to the land? We suggest that [Ezek.37:1-14](#) where we read of the vision of the valley of dry bones, provides an answer to this question. The vision no doubt portrays various stages of the restoration of Israel:

- Israel, through the long centuries of unbelief, dead to God ([verses 1,2,11](#)).
- Israel, today, a nation back in the land, her dry bones covered with sinews, flesh and skin, but with no breath in them ([verses 5-8](#)).
- Israel, in the future, when the breath of the LORD will cause the bones to live ([verses 9-14](#)).

It will not be until the Church the Body of Christ has been taken to heaven, and the Son of Man has come, that [Ezek.37:9-14](#) will be fulfilled.

the Hebrew word *tsela* meaning to limp or fall, or adversity. It is the same word as used in [Gen.32:31](#) to describe Jacob's physical halt in his step after his encounter with the angel of the LORD at Jabbok. Surely Israel has the mark of God!

The six-day Arab-Israeli war in June 1967 was no doubt a significant step forward in the life of the nation. An astonished world stood by and witnessed the miracle of Israel's victory over tremendous numerical odds. It would be foolish to ignore the fact of divine intervention on behalf of Israel. God brought them victory as in days of old. Great tribulation and sorrow still lie ahead for them, as God deals with them to bring home their guilt in the slaying of their Messiah at Calvary. As God deals in punitive measures with His people, He will not permit any nation to chastise Israel without His permission. The ancient seer said, "*For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'He sent me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye'" (Zech.2:8),* also, [Zech.12:3](#), "*And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."*

The purpose of the gathering of Israel is that God may purify them and restore them to be the head of the nations again, and that they may be the earthly people of God under the kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Messiah and King. As events affecting Israel move quickly towards the great time of their final restoration, we shall see the end of Gentile world rule. None can stay the hand of God when He calls His people home, and in preparation for their golden age we read that the Lord Jesus whom they crucified, "*... will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness" (Mal.3:3).*

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world wher'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

H. W. Longfellow

Final Grouping and leadership of the Nations

We have been considering the regathering in due course of a considerable representation of the nation of Israel in their own land. It may be helpful at this stage to look at the prophetic outline of the various groupings of nations between the rapture of the Church the Body and the coming of the Son of Man to reign. This will necessitate a consideration also of the sinister figure who dominates the world scene in the terminal years. At best it will be a brief outline. Both space and the purpose of these articles preclude an examination of various reasonings on contentious points. These the student can pursue in his own time to considerable advantage.

By far the most significant of all international movements will be

The Confederation of the Ten Kingdoms

This grouping is a requirement of the prophetic Scriptures. We recall how that Daniel saw the four beasts arise in succession from the sea. They were a lion (7:4), a bear (v.5), a leopard (v.6), and a fourth beast which had ten horns (v.7). This fourth beast was a kingdom out of which in due course ten kings would arise. In our consideration of the Times of the Gentiles we saw that this fourth beast prefigured the Roman Empire.

When John saw the counterpart of this vision, it was a single beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads. It resembled a leopard, had feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion (Rev.13:1-2). In effect, what he saw was the appearance in its final form of the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire. He saw it in the future days of its ten kings, when it will have all the characteristics of its former empires embodied in it.

We have noted that the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.2), represented world Gentile rule, and that the basis of this has broadened in the intervening centuries from a grouping of nations around the Mediterranean Sea to a collection of independent nations spread throughout five Continents. Some incline to the view that the Confederation of ten kings will be representative of the nations of the entire world, being in

effect something comparable to a Working Committee of the present-day United Nations Organisation. For example, as we write, the Security Council of the United Nations is composed of the representatives of fifteen Member States. This is not an unrealistic view.

The more generally accepted understanding, however, is that the original Roman Empire did not cover the entire then known world. It occupied, for example, an area less in extent than the empires which preceded it. Yet it "... devoured the whole earth" ([Dan.7:23](#)). So when it reappears in the terminal years, although only covering a governmental area approximating to its original boundaries, such will be the mesmeric, satanic power of its despotic leader, that the rest of the nations will be subject to him, and his mark will be universally acknowledged in the field of commerce.

This ten kingdom grouping is spoken of as "the beast" in [Rev.13:1,2](#) and [Rev.17:3-7](#). It will clearly be a functioning confederacy at the beginning of Daniel's 70th week. One of the heads of this beast is also spoken of as "the beast" ([Rev.13:3-10](#) and [Rev.17:8-18](#)). As is the kingdom, so is its ruler. A similar association is seen at the beginning of Gentile power. Daniel says of Nebuchadnezzar, "... you are this head of gold" ([Dan.2:38](#)). Then he says, "... after you shall arise another kingdom" (v39). Such was the domination of the Babylonian monarch that he symbolised the kingdom over which he reigned.

The Beast, the man, the first of the two in [Rev.13](#) (the second being the false prophet, his able lieutenant) is, we suggest, elsewhere named:

The Assyrian	Isa.30:31
The little horn	Dan.7:8
The prince who is to come	Dan.9:26
The king of the North	Dan.11:40
The desolator	Dan.9:27
The man of sin	2 Thess.2:3
The son of perdition	2 Thess.2:3
The lawless one	2 Thess.2:8
The antichrist	1 Jn 2:18

He will not be one of the original ten kings who agree to federate (Dan.7:24). He will be completely diverse from them, will put down three of them, then dominate the scene. Although he is thus an eleventh king, there is no question of his introducing an eleventh kingdom. He rises from obscurity within one of the ten kingdoms, a contemptible person who secures his ascendancy by flattery as typified (or prophesied) in Dan.11:21. At the beginning of the final 7 year period he will make the covenant with Israel as spoken of in Dan.9:27. This will doubtless ease the appalling Jew/Arab tension in the Middle East and bring relief to Israel from the malevolent offences of certain nations. As a consequence, *Isaiah 28:14* will become increasingly descriptive of the nation, "... scornful men, who rule this people who are in Jerusalem". Yet the covenant will doubtless also enable a God-fearing remnant in the midst of an otherwise apostate nation to settle down to a form of Temple worship. Then the Roman prince will break the covenant in the middle of the week, set up his own image in the Temple as the sole object of worship, and the faithful few in Israel will flee for safety from the breaking storm.

As from the middle of the 70th week, this sinister character will be in supreme control of world affairs. He will be the devil's superman, having resources as deep as the abyss from which he is said to arise. With these he will meet every international exigency. His confederacy, the kingdom of the Beast as it is called, will give undivided support for a time to all the aims of what is termed the great prostitute in Rev.17:1-6. This is evidently a world system of apostate religion and idolatrous uncleanness involving all the nations and their rulers. Some have seen in this prostitute the Roman Catholic Church, but we suggest that this would be an unrealistic appraisal in our day. When all born-again persons have gone to the Lord at the Rapture, it is evident that what might be described as a world-wide Council of Religion will rapidly emerge embodying the religions and cults of all races, the fruit in final form of ecumenical seeds being seditiously sown today. It will operate from headquarters in a Babylon rebuilt in Shinar and will control immeasurable wealth and power.

From another point of view, Zechariah had a brief view of the prostitute when the talent of lead was lifted from the basket and then replaced

(Zech.5:5-11). The basket was the symbol of commerce, and he saw a woman sitting in the midst of the basket, of whom the angel said, "*This is Wickedness*". And with the wind in their wings two women bore the basket to the land of Shinar where a house was prepared for it. The wicked prostitute, sovereign also amidst the commerce of the nations, irresistibly borne from doubtless the sophisticated western civilisation, in accordance with the sure word of prophecy, and settled in the ancient plain of Shinar in the Middle East - human civilisation, in its apparent zenith, back where it began.

In this religious, political system the Beast will see a growing, menacing challenge to his own world-wide dictatorship. His ten kingdom grouping will support him in destroying the prostitute and thus removing any obstruction to his own deification (a situation which Israel in particular will be made to feel when his image is concurrently set up in the Temple in Jerusalem). This leaves him the undisputed world ruler of life in every phase with, we suggest, his seat of power in the city of Babylon, and as the king of Sheshach (or Babylon, see [Jer.51:41](#)) he drinks last of all the nations the cup of divine fury ([Jer.25:26](#)). So we see Gentile power, given at the beginning to a Babylonian despot, required of one again at the close.

In this connection we should observe that many have difficulty in accepting that Babylon will be rebuilt, in view of such scriptures as [Isa.13:19, 20](#), "*And Babylon ... will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited...*"; and [Jer.50:40](#), "*As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,... so no one shall reside there...*" and other similar scriptures. But we would point out that when Jeremiah had written all the evil which was to befall Babylon, "*... you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her* ([Jer.51:63,64](#)). But ancient Babylon did not cease as a stone sinks in the river. Its fall was gradual. The city continued after the capture by Darius. It later revolted in the days of the Persian Empire. Alexander the Great took it in his military stride, and indeed reputedly died there. Besides, when Zechariah saw the vision of the basket in the land of Shinar, it was many years after the fall of Babylon to Darius.

We suggest therefore there is strong evidence in support of the view that somewhere in Euphratean Shinar a world metropolis will appear, Babylon by name, and by nature, a city which the wealth and skill of the feverish end-time may well throw up in an astonishingly short period. Nor let all this weaken the faith of the reader in an expectation of the imminence of the Lord's return. God does not necessarily rush the dispensations as they follow one after another, as witness the preparatory time interval for the training of the witnesses prior to the commencement of this present age. We hold firmly to the view that there may well be a time interval between the Rapture and the beginning of Daniel's 70th week, be it of long or short duration.

We come now to

The Northern Hordes

Another significant grouping of nations is described in [Ezek.38,39](#). [Chapter 37](#) views the restoration of the nation of Israel to their land and nationhood. The next two chapters outline the onslaught on them from the north. Then follow the details of the millennial Temple. This setting of the attack by Gog in chapters 38 and 39 points to its occurrence during Daniel's 70th week, as distinct from the advance on the holy city by Gog and Magog at the close of the Millennium ([Rev.20:7-10](#)). The actual time of the invasion is not given, but the invitation to the birds and the beasts to come to the carnage ([Ezek.39:17-19](#)) corresponds so closely to [Rev.19:18](#), and the conviction of Israel that from that day forward the LORD will be their God corresponds so closely to [Zech.12,14](#), that we incline to the view that the invasion is part of the great campaign of Armageddon.

Gog is the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal and is the divinely appointed commander to the advancing hordes as they come down from the uttermost parts of the north upon Israel's land. Gesenius, the eminent Hebrew scholar, was of the view that Gog is undoubtedly the Russians, that Rosh was a designation for tribes dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Volga, that Meshech was Moscow, and Tubal Tobolsk. Be the details as they may, among prophetic students today there seems reasonably wide, though not total, acceptance that Rosh represents modern Russia.

From there the northern hordes descend on the mountains of Israel, gathering other nations to them on the way. They have a controversy with Israel. But what they do not understand is that God is drawing them there for He has a very deep controversy with them. This would appear to be a movement quite independent of the ten kingdoms and their ruler and in all probability will annoy him intensely. "But *news from... the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many*" (Dan.11:44).

But the northern hordes will never strike a blow against Israel, God's sheltered ones (Ps.83:3), till the time determined. Nor will they ever return home. On the mountains of Israel God will rain down the fires of judgment and over a period of seven months Israel's sons will bury the slain out of their sight.

And, finally,

The Nations from the East

In Dan.11:44, tidings out of the east also trouble the Beast. There obviously comes a time when on the international front, all is not well for the hitherto undisputed world-ruler, the head of the ten kingdom grouping. He may well be the embodiment of all Satan's power and authority, but nothing can withstand the development of the purpose of the Almighty which from ancient times has been purposed upon the whole earth (Isa.14:26). The hand of God will then be stretched out to accomplish His final indignation on both Israel and the nations of the world and no combined forces in the universe can stay the momentum of the end time.

From the sunrise kings come to battle (Rev.16:12). This may well prove to be the nations from the Far East as well as from the east immediate to Israel's land. Whether Jer.51 will find its final fulfilment in those days it is impossible to say - Babylon, the capital city of the Beast, falling under the judgment of God at the hands of eastern nations as seen in the named kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, Ashkenaz. Be that as it may, from the east, as from the north, come the nations of the world, "... to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev.16:14). The nations are on their way to Armageddon!

So whether it is the nations in the ten kingdom grouping, or the hordes from the north, or the armies from the east, [Zech.12:3](#) and [14:2](#) presents the entire world against God and distraught Israel. With this we shall deal in greater detail in a subsequent chapter.

Lord of glory, thro' Thy mercy
We approach Thee now,
Pleading only by Thy merit
As we bow.

Bringing to Thee Chosen Israel
In their need so great,
One in heart we bear them upward -
Time grows late.

So we bring them, Tender Saviour,
May Thy Spirit fall,
Through the preaching of Thy gospel,
On them all.

E. Noble Pearson

8

The Great Tribulation

"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And if those days had not been shortened, no flesh would be saved: but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matt.24:21,22).

These words of the Lord Jesus, spoken, just before He went to the Cross, point to a future time when a world dictator, *"the man of sin"* (2 [Thess.2:3](#)), will bring upon the world and the nation of Israel a time of trouble unprecedented in world history. The coming of this dictator is the subject of a previous article. Concerning this future time some hold that the living members of the Church the Body of Christ will pass through the great tribulation. However, the Scriptures, and the divisions of time which are shown in them, make clear that this is *Jacob's* (Israel's) trouble. It will be a time of physical suffering for Israel in the flesh, and not for the Church the Body of Christ.

Jeremiah the prophet wrote of this future time of trouble, *" 'For behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, '... I will cause them [Israel] to return to the land... and they shall possess it... We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace... all faces turned pale... Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it'"* ([Jer.30:3-7](#)).

The Beast (the man of sin), whose dramatic rise to power to become a world dictator during a time of great distress of nations, will be the key figure in this short but terrible time on the earth. There is one week (or 7 years) yet to be fulfilled, according to the vision of Daniel, during which time the rise and fall of the Beast will be accomplished. We are told in [Dan.9:27](#) that he will *"... confirm a covenant with many [Israel] for one week [7 years]; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate..."* This means he will break the covenant with Israel, and order all temple services to be stopped at the end of the first 3½ years.

Then

will begin the great persecution of Israel and world-wide tribulation by the Beast.

The Mark of the Beast 666

The Beast is fully described in [Rev.13](#), and we refer our readers to a previous article on the world dictator. He will design a mark which will symbolise his world-wide authority over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. The people of all nations will be required to wear this mark either on their right hand or forehead, and will become Beast worshippers. Satan, who is invisible, will have a man in the world to represent him. Millions of devotees will worship the Beast, "*... both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave*" ([Rev.13:16](#)). Without the mark no man will be able to "*... buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: his number is 666*" ([Rev.13:17-18](#)).

The trade union and many other movements of our times reveal some of the characteristics of the coming world system. Union membership is demanded in many occupations today as the right to work. The social security number, now prevalent in many countries, in effect places a number on every person and almost everything is known of each person's status and occupation. The mark of the Beast will enable strict enforcement of the coming world government's rule, and everyone will be compelled to wear "the mark". Those who refuse will suffer greatly. No mercy will be shown to objectors. The opening of the third seal in [Rev.6:6](#), seems to indicate strict control of basic commodities and food due to world shortages. During this period the Jews will once more be hunted, persecuted, and marked for destruction.

The Associate Beast

The Beast will have a close associate in his dreadful work of evil. He is described as "*... another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and spoke like a dragon*" ([Rev.13:11](#)). This man is also called the "*... false prophet who worked signs ... by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast*" ([Rev.19:20](#)). This strange combination of lamb and dragon depicts a personality who will appear meek and religious, but beneath this guise, he will be cruel and

relentless toward all who dare to resist him. He will be a cunning, deceptive miracle-worker. He will make fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men, and will erect an image to the Beast in the holy place, in the temple which the Jews will build in Jerusalem (Matt.24:15). So great will be his satanic power he will give "breath" to the image (some form of animation) "... that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed" (Rev.13:15). In this time of great deception men will believe a lie rather than the truth.

Those who refuse the Mark of the Beast

Many Jews will refuse to wear the mark of the Beast, or worship his image, and as a result will share tribulation suffering with God's sealed witnesses. It would appear from Matt.25:31-40, that there will be Gentiles also who will refuse to wear the mark and will suffer great persecution. They will feed, clothe, and visit the elect of Israel during the years of their great distress, and will befriend them at the risk of their lives. "... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matt.25:40). This is the commendation of King Messiah in the day of His rewards for such noble acts of self-sacrifice to His people, many of whom will be killed during the great tribulation. John saw them in the Patmos vision, "... the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" (Rev.20:4). There seems no doubt that both Jews and Gentiles will be in that great company of martyrs. Jewish witnesses who will live under the shadow of death to preach the gospel of the kingdom, will be encouraged in those dark hours by such words as Daniel wrote long ago, "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Dan.12:3). The fruit of that world-wide ministry will be "... a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands... 'These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'" (Rev.7:9,14).

Israel's Hiding Place

Three small countries on the east of Jordan will escape from the power of the man of sin (the Beast). Daniel records, "He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon" (Dan.11:41). A hiding place for Israel is described in Rev.12. Twice in this chapter the place is mentioned where a woman will hide. The woman is Israel, and she "... fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days [3½ years]." Again we read, "But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [Same period of time – 3½ years] from the presence of the serpent" (Rev.12:6,14).

This is Israel's flight into the east from the terrible persecution of the Beast and the hiding place has been thought by many to be in the three lands delivered from the man of Sin (see Dan.11:41). There are 2.5 million Jews in Israel today (5.8 million in 2011), and many more will yet return as God calls them home to their land. This number will probably be greatly increased in the days of the Beast's power. The Lord Jesus confirmed Israel's presence in the land when He warned, "Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Matt.24:15,16). This abomination is the Beast's image in the Temple.

The Lord's words, "... he who endures to the end shall be saved" (Matt.24:13), are significant. The endurance He referred to is physical, and applies to those who will escape from the man of sin and his evil forces. The word "endure" is from the Greek word *hupomeno* which means to stay under, or persevere.

It will be during the 1260 days (3½ years) in hiding that the escaped remnant of Israel will lift their eyes to heaven, the only place from which deliverance can come, and cry from their hearts the prophecy of Isa.64:1, "Oh, that you would rend the heavens! That you would come down! That the mountains might shake at your presence." The

flaming descent or the Lord Jesus with the angels of His might will at last bring deliverance to Israel. What thoughts will fill the heart of the Lord Jesus as He sets Israel free from their oppressors! The words of the ancient seer will then become a reality, "*... they will look on me whom they have pierced*" ([Zech.12:10](#)).

Thus will end the short but terrible time of the "great tribulation" which is soon to come upon the tiny nation of Israel, and the whole world. May we who wait for our Lord's return spend our lives in the reality of these great truths, and examine our hearts in the light of Paul's words to Timothy, "Yes, *and all who desire to lead a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*" ([2 Tim.3:12](#)).

9

The Elect of those Days

"Nevertheless he did not leave himself without witness" (Acts 14:17).

This will be uniquely true of the final seven year period of the Times of the Gentiles. There are two points we do well to keep in mind if we are to put our brief consideration of this matter into perspective.

In the first place, at the moment when the Church the Body goes to be with the Lord (1 [Thess.4:16-17](#)) there will not be a single born-again person alive on the earth. The God who does not leave Himself without witness will require to begin a new line of testimony. This will become active at the beginning of the final seven year period. This is one of the several reasons for concluding that between the Rapture and the seven year period there will be an interval of time, of a length which will be by divine decree.

In the second place, as we consider generally the elect of the terminal years it is well to understand something of the religious, domestic and political tensions which will prevail at that time. *"Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth" (Rev.17:5)* will drink deep of the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus. When the prostitute is destroyed the even greater delusions of the false prophet will arise with attendant sufferings for all those world-wide who resist the mark of his overlord. Satan, the great dragon, is cast down from heaven to earth in great wrath, breathing vengeance on Israel and on all those who in every place *"keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev.12:17)*. And almighty God, who will already have sent in His displeasure the working of error whereby men will believe the lie from beneath, will later send His fearful judgments on the nations of the world, plagues and woes from heaven, a terrifying climax to a period of fearful tribulation. Indeed, *"... if those days had not been shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matt.24:22)*.

We consider then first

The Two Witnesses

The record is given in [Rev.11:1-13](#). Other witnesses will be elsewhere in the world at the time, but these two are seen as centred on Jerusalem, described in those verses as "... *the holy city... the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified*". The effect of their ministry, however, will be worldwide in its rejection, for when their testimony is complete the whole earth will rejoice.

Some conclude that the identity of the two witnesses is uncertain and leave it at that. Others think that the number two is a symbolic reference to an unmeasured company. The views of the early Fathers expressed over 1600 years ago are still extant on the subject and many considered that Elijah would be one of the two. This may well be so, in fulfilment of God's last promise to Israel, "*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD*" ([Mal.4:5](#)). Indeed, were it not for this reference to Elijah there would seem to be no reason for assuming that the two witnesses have had a previous existence. It would be difficult to assign the sending of Elijah (confirmed by the Lord Jesus in [Matt.17:11](#)) to any other period in the prophetic word. In keeping with this it has been noted that both Elijah and the two witnesses control the rain in judgment, each in their own time, for the identical period of 3 1/2 years. Further, so extraordinary a happening as a living man to go "... *by a whirlwind into heaven*" ([2 Kings 2:11](#)), and centuries later to appear personally on the holy mount with Moses and the Lord, certainly encourages the view.

As to the identity of the other witness, Scripture is completely silent. Some think Enoch, since he too was a prophet of judgment ([Jude 1:14](#)). Also he was translated without seeing death, so he may well have to return and pass through that experience - a weighty consideration. Others think Moses. This they base on the similarity of the miracles of turning water into blood and smiting the earth generally with plagues, a somewhat flimsy premise. On the other hand they point also to the strange fact of the contest between Michael and Satan over his body in death ([Jude 1:9](#)) and his appearance centuries later with Elijah on the mount. Should Moses prove to be the second witness, then the two men

who symbolised the law and the prophets will appear again to Israel as God's final appeal to the nation. There we must leave it, for the reader to consider, and the day to declare.

The period of their ministry is 1260 days, three and a half years spelled out in days as though God treasures every one of them. But which 3½ year period? Is it the first or second half of Daniel's 70th week or simply a period of 3½ years at some time within the week? [Rev.11:2](#), the verse immediately preceding the description of the witnesses, refers to the treading down of the holy city for 42 months. This is clearly the period of the second half of the week, following the breaking of the covenant with Israel by the man of sin. One's first conclusion would be that the presence of the witnesses will be during this period, to be followed in point of time by the kingdom of the world becoming the kingdom of Christ and He shall then reign for ever and ever ([Rev.11:15-18](#)).

But this setting of the witnesses is not without its difficulties. The book of Revelation does not move systematically forward in chronological order. For example, in [chapters 12 and 13](#) which follow, Satan is cast down to earth and the two beasts emerge. These happenings certainly do not follow the transfer of world-rule to Christ. Further, if the period is the second half of Daniel's 70th week, then the whole earth will be rejoicing over the death of the witnesses at a time when the armies of the nations will be converging on Jerusalem and the holy city will be in a fearful plight. This hardly makes for a time of worldwide rejoicing and the giving of gifts.

More in keeping with the Revelation generally would be the view that with the signing of the covenant at the beginning of the week, God sends His two witnesses to Israel, with a "sackcloth" ministry calculated to turn a remnant of the nation to the Lord, and to lay deep in the minds of apostate Israel a spiritual awareness which will be ultimately used by the Spirit in the day of national deliverance in the contrition of [Zech.12](#). During the first half of the week Israel's scornful sons will rule in Jerusalem ([Isa.28:14](#)), arrogant in the favour of the Roman prince who deals with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god ([Dan.11:39](#)). In the holy city will be "... *the iniquity of your sister Sodom... pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness...*" ([Ezek.16:49](#)). Then when the man of

sin is at the peak of his world-wide control in the middle of the week, he will be permitted of God to slay His two servants, their work in His view being complete. This would put the testimony of the witnesses in the first half of the week, but the point is not pressed since it is not altogether necessary to identify the period with either half, and it may simply be a 42 month period at any time within the 7 years.

Next,

The 144,000 Jewish witnesses

Another group of the elect of those days is seen in [Rev.7:1-8](#). They are 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe except Dan, described as servants of God. Their field of testimony would seem to be world-wide, for John saw the four angels, which stand at the four corners of the earth, restrain the four winds of the earth lest they blow on the nations of the earth in divine judgment until the 144,000 would be sealed for immunity in service. These will preach the gospel of the coming kingdom of Christ ([Matt.24:14](#)) in the day of the universally acknowledged kingdom of the antichrist; the tidings of God's Lamb (see [Rev.7:14](#); [12:11](#); [13:8](#); [14:4](#)) in the day of Satan's Beast; the message which will call on men to keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus ([Rev.12:17](#) and [14:12](#)). These will be proof against all Satanic seduction ([Matt. 24:24](#)). And when the days of their testimony are over they will stand beside the King when He judges the living nations as seen in [Matt.25:31-46](#). The King refers to them in infinite sweetness and appreciation as "*my brethren*". And the attitude towards them of the nations among whom they had mingled will be a determining factor in the judgment. Those who have befriended His "brethren" are called "*you blessed of my Father*", and on the basis of an imputed righteousness will enter into the blessings of the millennial kingdom.

And finally

The Innumerable Gentile Multitude

The world-wide effect of the testimony of the two witnesses and the 144,000 servants of God, together with the unique flight in mid heaven of the angel with the proclamation of the eternal gospel, will be seen in the salvation of "*a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues*" ([Rev.7:9](#)) who "*come out of the*

great tribulation" ([Rev.7:14](#)), and "those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name" ([Rev.15:2](#)). This host of Jews and Gentiles, touched by the ministry of the elect and fearless preachers, will accept the messengers and their message of the coming King. They will accept also the fearful punishments which will inevitably follow their consequent refusal of the mark of the Beast. "He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints" ([Rev.13:10](#)). They that endure to the end of the seven year period will be saved out of it all by the coming of the Son of Man, and from the judgment of the living nations will pass into the millennial kingdom ([Matt.25:31-46](#)).

Today, it is late in the dispensation of grace. And as we think of the completely dedicated character of the elect of the next dispensation, whether in relation to their service or their suffering, we do well to recall the battle-cry of a veteran warrior in respect of the elect of our own age, "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying:

*'For if we died with him,
we shall also live with him.
If we endure,
we shall also reign with him.
If we deny him,
he also will deny us.
If we are faithless,
he remains faithful;
he cannot deny himself" ([2 Tim.2:10-13](#)).*

Make me a witness, Lord,
So faulty I and weak,
My trembling word can scarce be heard,
So loud my failings speak.

Make me a witness, Lord,
Subdue my will to Thine
That, led by Thee, in meek accord,
My lamp may brightly shine.

Make me a witness, Lord,
That all at home may see
A constant daily growth in grace,
And glory give to Thee.

Make me a witness, Lord,
To those I daily meet,
That I may be Thy messenger
In neighbourhood and street.

Make me a witness, Lord,
With every talent given;
And let my treasure all be stored
In deepest vaults of heaven.

Make me a witness, Lord,
By gift, and prayer, and pen,
In native land and far abroad
Telling Thy love to men.

Make me a witness, Lord,
And use me in Thy way;
Though sacrifices we applaud,
'Tis better to obey.

Make me a witness, Lord,
Thou needest even me;
How strange that I can aid afford
When captives Thou wouldst free.

Make me a witness, Lord;
That souls on Thee may call,
And glorify Thy name adored,
O Jesus, Lord of all!

G. Alexander

10

The Battle of Armageddon

One of the two final wars of this world's history will be fought at a place called Armageddon (Hebrew, *Har-Magedon*), in the Middle East. This great future event shown clearly in Bible prophecy will occur at the end of the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy, or the last seven years of the Times of the Gentiles. We saw earlier how 69 weeks of years or 483 years were fulfilled up to the death of Christ, which leaves another 7 years to be fulfilled to complete this prophecy. [Revelation 6 to 19](#) inclusive, vividly describe momentous happenings on the earth during this seven year period. These include:

- the opening of the seven seals,
- the sounding of the seven trumpets,
- the pouring out of the seven bowls of the wrath of God.

These visions all have to do with conditions on the earth during that time when there will be great cosmic disturbances, plagues, and the judgments of God. Near the close of that time of world distress the armies of all nations will gather together in Israel.

Isaiah the prophet looked across the centuries and wrote of that coming time. *"Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it. For the indignation of the LORD is against all nations, and his fury against all their armies; he has utterly destroyed them, he has given them over to the slaughter"* ([Isa.34:1,2](#)).

Zechariah prophesied of the same time, and wrote, *"Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle"* ([Zech.14:1-3](#)). It will be the greatest movement of troops and machines of war the world has ever seen. It is this gathering

Of the military power of the world into Israel, and the appearing of the Son of Man in "... power and great glory" (Matt.24:30), that will bring to a close the great tribulation. Immediately following this the bloodiest military engagement in history will take place. The dark and unseen forces of the spirit world, called the "...spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon" (Rev.16:14,16). Thus in a simple and unsensational way the Divine Spirit records this coming event of the two greatest armies the world has ever seen, moving on a collision course.

This will be the commencement of the "day of the Lord", an expression which occurs numerous times in both Old and New Testament Scriptures, all referring to the time when God will send the Lord Jesus Christ to execute judgment and establish His kingdom. He "... has committed all judgment to the Son, ... and has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man" (Jn 5:22,27). Thus it appears that the first major judgment executed by the Lord Jesus will be the destruction of the world's military power.

The Armies of the World

God will move Satan to gather all the armies of the world into Israel, one of the smallest countries of the Middle East, for the Lord Jesus to destroy them. We can see the divine plan in this strategy, for a confrontation of such immensity will concentrate mammoth forces of men and equipment into such a small area that when they are thrown into confusion by the dramatic and unexpected appearing of the Lord Jesus there will be no possibility of escape or withdrawal. The Beast (or man of sin - see [page 44](#)) will be the mastermind under Satan's power to organise this great campaign, and direct them to Israel's tiny country. We are told of a divine miracle that will be performed to assist in the movement of armies. The sixth angel will pour out his bowl upon the river Euphrates, "... and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared" (Rev.16:12). It seems clear that this is the time when the Beast will move quickly to retain undisputed power over the military might of the Far East, Japan, China, Russia and India.

This move is suggested by Daniel's vision, "But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many" (Dan.11:44).

The Lord's Army

The one great power the Beast and the generals of his confederated armies will fail to reckon with as they plan the annihilation of Israel, is the unseen heavenly army of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are introduced to this amazing host of heavenly warriors in [Rev.19:11-19](#) where the Lord Jesus is seen coming out of heaven with eyes aflame, riding on a white horse and followed by the armies of heaven who also are seen riding on white horses. What a tremendous sight the flaming host will be (see [2 Thess.1:8](#)), as they descend from heaven, and no modern weapons of war can stop them!

The plains of Megiddo lying to the north west of Jerusalem, where many battles were fought in ancient times, will be the scene of the destruction of the armies of the earth, and the casting of the Beast and the false prophet alive into the lake of fire ([Rev.19:20](#)). We quote from an archaeological note: "*Megiddo was the famous battlefield, Armageddon, which gives its name to one of the final battles of the ages. It was situated on the south side of the plain of Esdraelon, 10 miles southwest of Nazareth, at the entrance to a pass across the Carmel mountain range, on the main highway between Asia and Africa, key position between the Euphrates and the Nile, meeting place of armies from the east and west... It has been said that more blood has been shed around this hill than any other spot on earth*" (Halley's Bible Handbook).

The sharp sword of judgment proceeding from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ is the destroying weapon that will cut down the massed forces of the Beast, and their flesh shall be food for all the birds that fly in mid heaven ([Rev.19:15,17,18](#)). Of that titanic battle we read, "*And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs*" ([Rev.14:20](#)). The area indicated here if taken in Hebrew measurement, which is 54 feet less than one eighth of a mile, or approximately 600 feet to the furlong, represents about 160 linear miles. We are aghast at the thought of blood filling an area of this size to a depth of a horse's bridle,

or about 4 feet. It gives us some idea of the terrible carnage that will take place when the Lord Jesus releases His mighty judgments. It will be without precedent in world history.

The issue of this brief but terrible battle is clear. When the armies of the nations surround Jerusalem it will be hopeless for Israel to resist. The odds will be overwhelming. The heavens will seem as brass above them, and they will cry out to God for deliverance as in times of old. Humanly speaking Israel will be doomed to destruction. Without warning the Lord and His mighty army will appear at the right moment. It will be wonderful to behold! The heaven-borne terror will descend on the forces of the world's vaunted military power deployed on Megiddo's plains. Assisted by natural forces, an earthquake, darkened sun, moon, and stars we visualise the world plunged into darkness, as this wave of heavenly power sweeps in to destroy the armies of the earth (See [Matt.24:29](#)). No doubt the rest of the inhabited earth will suddenly become aware of impending judgment, not only because of cosmic upheavals, but the face of the Lord Jesus Christ will be seen, set towards judgment."*... every eye will see him, and they also who pierced him*" ([Rev.1:7](#)).

Contemplation of the reality of those awful days that lie ahead for the world makes those thankful who know the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. All such will escape the judgments of God as they are poured out upon men and the great world system which is now almost ripe for that time. The consummation of that indescribable scene is best conveyed in the language of Scripture itself. *"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, 'Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great'... Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet... These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone"* ([Rev.19: 17,18, 20](#)). Thus will the Lord Jesus execute His first judgments on the earth when He comes as the Son of Man, and will usher in the *"... great and dreadful day of the LORD"* ([Mal.4:5](#)). We leave the reader to ponder the solemn issues of those soon coming days.

We look for our Saviour, we look for His coming,
When living and sleeping shall meet in the skies,
When from every nation, with great jubilation,
The blood-bought unite at the wondrous assize.

We look for that season with Christ in the glory.
How wondrous 'twill be! - No mortal can tell.
When works now recorded shall then be rewarded
And, sharing His glory, with Him we shall dwell.

We look for that time when this earth, undistracted,
Shall cease from its wars and true peace shall enjoy,
With Christ's sceptre swaying and millions obeying
And Satan chain-bound; none shall hurt or destroy.

J. Denson Smith

The Coming of the Son of Man

The elect in the dark days of the great tribulation will have an unshakeable confidence that the Lord will come for their deliverance. They will rest their weary spirits on the absolute certainty of the word of prophecy as, for example, "*His going forth is established as the morning; he will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth*" (Hos.6:3). We can depend upon it that the witnesses will give powerful testimony to the many inspiring references throughout the Scriptures to the return of the Son of Man to the earth in power and great glory, to smite the nations in His wrath and to comfort the mourners in Zion, then to reign with His saints in glory. We may be helped in our consideration of the manner

of His coming if we look at it from four different points in the Word. First,

As Israel's prophets foresaw it

Israel must have had many seers who spoke of the coming glories of Messiah and His reigning days in association with the nation, but none went on record in such choice detail as Isaiah. Of all the major prophets he has by far the most to say of the future glory of his people. He wrote in a day much more remote to the captivity than, for example, Jeremiah, and it may be as a consequence he was less burdened with the days of

coming gloom and better able to speak of the days of glory.

Nevertheless, he foresaw Israel trodden down by their adversaries, like a people over whom God had never ruled, as those who had never been called by His Name, and on their behalf he cried, "*Oh, that you would rend the heavens! That you would come down!... To make your name known to your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at your presence!*" (Isa.64:1,2). And in the sure confidence of the day when the Dweller in the heavens would come down, he affirmed, "... *therefore his own arm brought salvation for him;... he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing ... fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies ... the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him. 'The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,'¹ says the LORD*" (Isa.59:16-20). It was truly "... *the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all*

who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness..." (Isa.61:2-3). It would be the day of divine vengeance of the nations but it would also usher in "... the year of my redeemed"(Isa.63:4). The prophet thought of his God as One who "... looked, but there was no one to help"(verse 5). No one to help Israel in the dark hour of Armageddon - so "... my own arm brought salvation for me; and my own fury, it sustained me. I have trodden down the peoples in my anger ..." (verses 5-6). And as he peered into the future, Isaiah saw Israel's Deliverer come, marching in the greatness of His strength from the battlefield of Edom and Bozrah, a section of the great campaign of Armageddon. Vigorous, inspiring visions indeed for the strengthening of the hands of the faithful in the furnace of affliction.

Daniel, too, had visions of the coming glory of the Ancient of days and of the Stone cut out without hands. Others doubtless rejoiced the hearts of the people of their day with what was revealed to them of the vista of faith. But probably Zechariah in Zech.12-14 gives the most graphic and detailed unfolding of all the prophets concerning the coming of the Lord for the deliverance of Israel and Jerusalem at the close of Daniel's 70th week. He prefaces his account of the seeming impossible, with one of Deity's profound claims to omnipotence "Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: 'Behold, ... I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples... all nations of the earth are gathered against it. In that day, 'says the LORD,' I will strike every horse... save the tents of Judah... defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem... destroy all the nations ...'" (Zech.12:1-9) and "... I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem ... Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations... and in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with you" (Zech.14:1-5). Then "... they will look on me whom they pierced" (12:10). And here for us, all these centuries later, is the clue to the Speaker. It is the Man of Calvary, at the head of the heavenly host, who will come forth for the destruction of the ungodly nations and the relief of besieged Jerusalem and distraught Israel. And as His feet touch Olivet, the mountain will cleave in the midst from east to west, and in this pass the cut-off remnant will be safe.

Then, we consider the matter

As the Son of Man Himself described it

[Matt.16](#) is truly a remarkable chapter of "first reference". Here the Lord Jesus gave His initial disclosure of three separate things; the building of His Church, the outcome of His final journey to Jerusalem, and the manner of His coming again as Son of Man in judgment. As to the last of these in particular, *"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels"* ([verse 27](#)). That will not be simply in the moral glories of the Father, which it was not possible to conceal from the anointed eyes of His followers in the lowly, lonely days of His first coming. Nor will it be simply the majesty of the mount when in His transfiguration He received such unique honour from the excellent glory. But He will come in great power and visible glory, at the head of the vast concourse of the holy ones and the saints of the Most High.

According to [Matt.24](#) it will be immediately on the conclusion of the great tribulation, preceded by fearful disturbance in the skies ([verse 29](#)), and by the sign of His coming ([verse 3](#) - be it lightning flash of world-wide brilliance, the day will declare). Then shall all the tribes of the earth simultaneously see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory ([verse 30](#)). Not only so, but all the millions of the angels ([Rev.5:11](#)) will be with Him ([Matt.25:31](#)). So said the One who is coming.

And next,

As Paul was privileged to see it

His comments are illuminating as expressed in [2 Thess.1](#). He refers to the coming of the Son of Man as "... *revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire*" ([verses 7,8](#)). What an unveiling! The last time Israel or the nations saw Him was when *"He was taken from prison and from judgment... cut off from the land of the living!"* ([Isa.53:8](#)). And to the nation's high priest He had prophesied that day, "... *Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven*" ([Matt.26:64](#)). That day will have come. In the glory of His might He descends, glorified in His attendant saints, "... *to be admired among all those who believe*" ([2 Thess.1:10](#)). The vast concourse not only includes the innumerable

hosts of angels. It is also "... the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Thess.3:13). And wherever the Church the Body may be in the millennium, on earth, or in heaven, with only those on earth found worthy to reign with Him, certainly all will come with Him in His descent. It will be the manifestation of "... Christ who is our life" (Col.3:4), and we shall be manifested with Him.

And finally,

As John depicted it

The vision is outlined in [Rev.19](#). When the marriage of the Lamb is over ([verse 7](#)), the Lord goes down to earth with His bride, to make preparation for the great marriage feast for the righteous (a faint illustration of this distinction is seen in Esther 2, where [verses 16 and 17](#) depict the marriage and [verse 18](#) the feast which followed), and the great supper of God for the birds which fly in mid heaven.

And so the heavens will open and the Rider on the white horse come down. His descriptive names are Faithful and True, the Word of God, King of kings, and Lord of lords, together with another name written which no one knows but He Himself ([Rev.19:11-16](#)). He comes forth in righteousness to judge and make war, with eyes a flame of fire and a sharp sword proceeding from His mouth. He only needs His eyes and mouth with which to smite and to rule the nations of the world. He has many kingly crowns upon His head, whereas by contrast the dragon and the first beast (the only other royal diadem wearers in Scripture) have only seven and ten respectively. And He wears a blood-dipped robe, for He is on His way to tread the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. And as though the picture is not sufficiently graphic in its detail, we read, "*And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed him on white horses*" ([verse 14](#)). Some may say "But this is symbolic language." We reply, "Should that prove to be so, how much more fearful will the real thing be?"

Then in a moment when the nations least expect it ([Matt.24:39](#)), when the darkened sun has plunged the universe into sudden gloom, like lightning flash the Son of Man will come down with the myriads of angels and ransomed saints. The Beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to do battle with the Rider on the white horse and

His hosts. They are spread down sixteen hundred furlongs of the length of Israel ([Rev.14:20](#)) and are in process of completing the siege of Jerusalem. Then the Beast and the false prophet are as by unseen hands removed from the head of the attacking hordes and cast alive into the lake of fire and the sword from the Son of Man's mouth slays their vast, malevolent hosts. And in terse, macabre words the Holy Spirit gives the issue of the onslaught of the glittering military might of the world against God the Almighty - "*And all the birds were filled with their flesh*" ([Rev.19:21](#)).

But in that day, "*... I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on me whom they have pierced*" ([Zech.12:10](#)). And the LORD will take out of the trembling hand of deeply afflicted Israel the cup of His fury and she shall no more drink it again, for the days of her mourning shall be ended. It will have come to pass as one great lover of Israel said it would, "*And so all Israel will be saved*" ([Rom.11:26](#)).

After the silence of ages,
After the waiting of years,
He cometh - the answer to sages,
The vision foretold by the seers.

Regal in splendour He cometh
Sceptre of iron to sway;
Glorious, the King in His triumph
On His inaugural day.

Comes for the help of His people,
Conqueror - Faithful and True,
Calls from the parted blue heaven,
"Behold, I make all things new"

The Judgment of the Living Nations

The pre-millennium judgments of God will enter another stage with the gathering of the living nations of the world into the valley of Jehoshaphat. The descent of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of Man to the earth has been dealt with in the previous chapter, and He will be the central Figure in the rapidly unfolding drama of divine judgment. Every living person on the earth at that time will either go into blessing or judgment at His word. The Lord Jesus, now rejected by most of the world's population, will be in complete control of the eternal destiny of each. His word will be final, and in perfect righteousness, "... *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*" (Rom.3:19). He, who in suffering love at Calvary, had the magnificent capacity to say, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do*" (Lk.23:34), will in that day change the mighty forces of the cosmic order to do His bidding, as He employs them for His strange work in judgment. As the fixed laws of the universe, unrelenting, unalterable, guide the awful hurricane on its course, carrying all before it, hearing not the cry of the terror-stricken, and cutting its path of death and destruction, so the Lord Jesus will open the flood-gates of God's righteous judgments on the nations of the world in that day.

The Scene of this Judgment

As Armageddon will be the gathering place of the world's military power, for its destruction, so the valley of Jehoshaphat will be the gathering place of the living nations, for judgment. The ancient prophet's prediction is, "*I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of my people, my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up my land*" (Joel 3:2).

Joel the prophet shares in the great burden of prophetic ministry by depicting the assembling of the nations in the valley of decision, and the appearing of the Lord Jesus and His "*mighty ones*", to deal with the vast multitudes who will stand before His judgment throne. The "*valley of*

decision" should not be taken to mean that the nations will have an opportunity to make a decision. The die is cast, and the Lord Himself will be the Decider. No power will be able to alter His decision (Joel 3:11-14). The word *"surrounding"* in verse 12 seems to suggest a circular array in this valley, with the Lord sitting in the midst as Judge. The valley of Jehoshaphat is said to be the Kidron Valley on the east side of Jerusalem. What memories will be stirred in the heart of the great Saviour Judge as He sits in that valley and remembers the night He crossed the same brook with a handful of disciples, and made His way to the hour of Calvary. Another view suggests that with the cleaving of the Mount of Olives (Zech.14:4), the resulting topographical changes may well place the *"valley of decision"* in another location. Wherever this great valley is, the scene baffles human imagination as we visualise wave after wave of human beings, brought by an irresistible force into that great arena to hear a sentence of judgment or a message of blessing from the lips of Christ.

The Reason for this Judgment

Firstly, God will punish the nations for their treatment of His people Israel. Zechariah prophesied, "... *thus says the LORD of hosts: 'He sent me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye'*" (Zech.2:8). Hatred of Jews is mounting in many parts of the world today, and will reach its climax at the coming of the Son of Man.

Secondly, the living nations will be brought into judgment for their own wickedness, and for their rejection of the Son of God. John wrote of this fact as a reason for the judgment of God - *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"* (Jn 3:19).

Human sin will have reached its high water mark, and the prophet's words which have lain silent through the centuries, will at last summon the nations to judgment. *"Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow - for their wickedness is great! Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is*

near in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:12-14). God's patience towards the nations will be ended. The cry for vengeance which injustice has caused throughout the centuries will be silenced for ever.

Thirdly, the long promised kingdom of Christ and the golden millennium age of peace cannot be inaugurated while those who oppose its rule of righteousness and its King are still alive. Even the seemingly insignificant act of passive unbelief in the message of the sealed witness's gospel of the kingdom, will be sufficient to bring the judgment of the Lord on those who thus treat their message of life.

Not a single unbeliever will be left on the earth when the Lord Jesus Christ completes the judgment of the living nations. To be otherwise would be incompatible with the constitution of His coming kingdom of peace and righteousness. He will also put down all rule and authority and power in preparation for His absolute theocratic government over the nations. Our Lord appeared to have this in mind when He told His disciples that *"The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and those who practise lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth"* (Matt.13:41,42).

The Principle of Harmony in Prophetic Prediction of this Judgment

Men of God who wrote and spoke of the coming time of divine judgment, and whose ministry is recorded in the Bible, reveal a remarkable harmony in their messages despite the fact they lived hundreds of years apart. We acknowledge this as the work of the Holy Spirit of God with whom a thousand years is as one day. Daniel wrote of a night vision in which he *"... watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; his garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him. A thousand thousands ministered to him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened"* (Dan.7:9,10). The Lord Jesus Himself gives confirmation of that same judgment when He describes Himself as the great Shepherd Judge who will separate people as a shepherd divides sheep from goats. The omniscient Christ will in perfect righteousness assign each to blessing

or judgment. This is the Son of Man coming in His glory as the Judge of all the earth. No mistaking this Person of whom the prophets have written, as He sits on His judgment throne, and there will be a power associated with His glory from which none shall be able to escape, as *"All the nations will be gathered before him"* (Matt.25:31-33). John in his Patmos visions saw this same judgment. He saw the stars of heaven falling to *"... the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind"* (Rev.6:13). Heavenly bodies will collide with the earth as the terror-stricken population watch the heavens roll up like a scroll, and see mountains and islands moved out of their places by gigantic subterranean convulsions. People of every level of society will hide in *"... caves and in the rocks of the mountains..."* and say to the mountains and rocks, *"Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb"* (Rev.6:12-16). We read of *"... a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood"*(verse 12). Nature will provide no hiding place from that relentless storm, and wherever people are there will be no escape from the face of the Lord Jesus Christ as it is projected to every part of the world. It will be the same face of the Man Christ Jesus who once hung on the cross at Calvary, and the *"... visage... marred more than any man"* (Isa.52:14), will be terrible to behold. *"... every eye will see him, and they also who pierced him"* (Rev.1:7).

Judgment in Righteousness

One of the remarkable features of the Lord's judgment will be righteousness. The terms of blessing will have been made crystal clear by the world-wide message of the 144,000 witnesses, and there will be no excuse for ignorance. The Lord's perfect knowledge of each will make every plea for mercy unavailing for those who refused the message in the time of their opportunity. The Lord Jesus looked across the centuries and predicted what men would say to Him as He separated them for judgment. *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practise lawlessness!'"* (Matt.7:22,23).

The eternal destiny of the living nations will be in the hands of Christ as the Shepherd Judge. This returns us again to the scene described in

[Matt.25:31-46](#), when He will separate the nations on His right hand and on His left. Those on His right will hear Him say, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Joy will replace fear in their hearts as they recall their acts of kindness, marking their appreciation of their Saviour, and shown to His hunted preachers when they gave them food, drink, clothing and comfort in sickness during the dark days of tribulation. It will all come back to them, as bread cast upon the waters, and the King will identify them with Israel's witnesses and others to their blessing in millennial years, and indeed, through the eternal ages.

How different the King's sentence to those on His left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." These will not receive the King's witness and will refuse them life's necessities and comforts in their hour of need. This will forever seal their destiny in eternal fire. In refusing them, they will refuse Christ. Such is the basis of His righteous judgment. The irrevocable decision will be made.

It is solemn to contemplate that those who live in times of great privilege have great responsibility, and in any dispensation of God's dealings with men, the hallmark of divine blessing has been, and ever will be, obedience and faith in the revelation of God. Thus will the coming judgments of God on the living nations prepare the way and the people for the inauguration of Messiah's glorious kingdom and 1000 years of world peace which has been "*... prepared... from the foundation of the world*" ([Matt.25:34](#)).

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.
He hath loosed the fatal lightning of His terrible swift sword.
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps:
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

Julia Ward Howe

13

The Millennial Reign

There are many scriptures which deal with this delightful subject and it can be looked at from several points of view.

What is the Millennium?

The expression is taken from, and only found in, [Rev.20:1-10](#). It is the period of 1,000 years which follows the coming of the Son of Man to the earth for the deliverance of His saints and the destruction of His enemies. During this period Satan is bound in the abyss, so that his power over men as the god of this age and the prince of the power of the air will be effectively reduced, and "... *the veil that is spread over all nations*" will be destroyed ([Isa.25:7](#)). The Lord will be seen to reign everywhere supreme. Then shall the meek inherit the earth, and those who have been persecuted for righteousness sake shall inherit the Kingdom. It is the final age of human history in association with the earth that now is. It is man's last testing time.

What is the reason for the Millennium?

No one specific reason is given in Scripture but several seem clear.

In the first place, in a universal and general sense, the millennial reign of Christ is for the glory of God in the manifest triumph of His second Man ([1 Cor.15:47](#)). The purpose of God has long suffered seeming defeat at the hands of the first man, of whom it was written "*What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet*" ([Heb.2:6-8](#)). This sovereignty vested in man was lost through the Fall and since then "... *the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together...*" ([Rom.8:22](#)). In the second Man all the purposes of God will reach glorious finality and in His millennial reign He will deliver the whole creation "... *from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*" ([verse 21](#)).

In the second place, and in a more particular sense, the covenant

God made with Abraham in [Gen.15](#) will come into full operation in the Millennium. The seed of Abraham, after the flesh, will enjoy undisturbed, all the land of promise "... from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" ([verse 18](#)). The years of intervening centuries will have been tempestuous. Proud, scornful Israel, described in [Isa.48:4](#) as obstinate, with a neck like an iron sinew and brow of bronze, will have gone through the fearful furnace of affliction, and now *"... the days of your mourning shall be ended. Also your people shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified"* ([Isa.60:20-21](#)).

Thirdly, the Millennium will see the glorious fulfilment of the covenant of David. In that day, David's Son and David's Lord will sit on the throne of His glory. Not only so, but the saved of Israel and of the nations will enter into the Kingdom in the joyful blessings of the new and eternal covenant, whereby their sins and their iniquities will be remembered no more. Thus the God of all the promises will be over all, triumphant, and in Immanuel's reign all the nations shall *"...know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other"* ([Isa.45:6](#)).

One final point is worthy of comment. Men have ruled each other since ever there were nations on the earth. Forms of government have varied. We saw earlier in the image shown to Nebuchadnezzar the trend from gold to iron mixed with clay. The world has seen government by cruel, aristocratic despots. Of late it has seen the successful contest by downtrodden peoples to take over the rule of their own lands. It is the age-abiding struggle for power and authority, reaching its climax, as we saw earlier, in the universal dictatorship of the man of sin. But the issue of the matter is ever the same - sorrow, strife and bitter disillusionment.

"When human cisterns all are dried" (Dr. J.Ryland), then will be fulfilled what is written in [Ps.72:6](#) of Christ the King's Son, *"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth."* And to this tired, old world, weary of human misrule, the Prince of peace will come to give to the nations the beneficence of theocratic government, in which the human race will be able to rejoice for a thousand years.

Who will people the Kingdom?

Daniel saw clearly in His vision that after the tribulation of the Antichrist the saints would receive and possess the Kingdom. *I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom" (Dan.7:21,22).* And again in verse 18, *"But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever."*

When dealing with the judgment of the nations alive on the earth at the coming of the Son of Man, we saw the New Testament parallel to Daniel's vision. At the judgment in the valley of Jehoshaphat the redeemed of the nations are commanded by the King, *"Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt.25:34).* These will join the glorious company of regenerate Israel, upon whom the spirit of grace and supplication will have been poured at the descent of the Son of Man. They will join also the illustrious company of the 144,000 servants of God who survived the seven-year period of witness. With these they will enter the Millennial Kingdom, all in their ordinary, natural bodies. From these, the whole earth will in due course become populated, from their children and their children's children during the one thousand years.

Thus far we have clear guidance from Scripture. The question of whether and to what extent the saints of earlier dispensations will be on the earth during the Millennium in their resurrected bodies, merits consideration. (We do not refer to those counted worthy to rule, with whom we shall deal in the next section.) We think first of Old Testament saints. The nation of Israel enjoyed the covenant of Abraham, which guaranteed to them the seed and the land. In addition, as in the case of Abraham, they *"... waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb.11:10).* Generally they sought *"... a homeland... that is, a heavenly" (verses 14,16).*

It would seem reasonable then to assume that the covenant of Abraham will find adequate fulfilment in the Israelis, who have been redeemed at the coming of the Son of Man, going into the millennial

reign in their natural bodies to enjoy with their posterity the large land promised to their fathers. There would appear to be no need to have all the righteous dead of Old Testament Israel raised to people the land with them in order to fulfil the covenant. Contrariwise, the faithful of Israel looked beyond an earthly inheritance to a heavenly, and the city they looked for is the one which has the foundations, the new Jerusalem and not the old, the city which will come down out of heaven to the new earth, as seen in [Rev.21](#). There is no doubt that many Old Testament saints will share in the glories of Messiah's Kingdom. Daniel, for example, is to stand in his lot"... *at the end of the days*" ([Dan.12:13](#)). These are the days of"... *the abomination of desolation*" ([verse 11](#)). So at the close of the tribulation period and prior to the Millennium the Old Testament saints will be raised and suitably rewarded (see [Rev.11:15-18](#)).

Then Daniel, with all those who are accounted worthy, will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God ([Lk.13:28](#)). But for the rest of the Old Testament saints it seems reasonable to suggest for consideration, that when they are raised they will go to heavenly places where they will be for the millennial period; enjoying, it may well be, an association with the eternal city of their pilgrim longings; then come with it to the new earth for the eternal day of God. We appreciate, of course, that many enjoy the thought that the resurrected saints of Old Testament days will remain on the earth throughout the millennial period, nor do we wish to take this enjoyment from them.

Similarly, and again the matter is submitted for consideration, the members of the Church the Body will go at the Rapture to the place prepared for them in the heavenlies. This too may well prove to be the eternal city, at present in the heavens, to come down in due course to the new earth. That they will "...*always be with the Lord*" is clear ([1 Thess.4:17](#)). But concerning the Lord Himself in the Millennium, we recall His word to Nathaniel in [Jn 1:51](#), "*you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*" The perfect setting of this verse is the Millennium. The extent to which men on earth will see heavenly things when the heavens are opened, and whether in particular they will see the heavenly Jerusalem, is still one of God's secret things, but it is certain that the ascent and descent of the angels upon the Son of Man

will be visible to all. And in that day of glorious communication between heaven and earth, of which the ladder of [Gen.28:12](#) was a delightful symbol, the day when the heavens"... shall answer the earth" as Hosea foresaw it in [Hos.2:21](#), the resurrected righteous dead, in their glorified bodies, may well be manifested with Christ in His visits to earth, even as they will accompany Him in His warlike descent in [2 Thess.1](#). There is certainly no clear scriptural indication that the earth will be peopled in the Millennium by dwellers in natural bodies together with vast, uncountable multitudes of resurrected saints of all the ages in spiritual bodies. (We do not refer, of course, to those saints who will reign with the Lord, as dealt with in the next section.)

Who will reign over the Kingdom?

Isaiah cried, *"Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice"* ([Isa.32:1](#)). A King will reign and princes will rule. Jacob predicted the King in this way, *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him shall be the obedience of the people."* ([Gen.49:10](#)). The universal King would come from Judah, the royal tribe. So, centuries later, God not only exalted David to the throne and made him the highest of the kings of the earth, but gave him also the covenant of the house, the throne and the kingdom, as described in [2 Sam.7:11-16](#). and [Ps.89:19-37](#). This became known as *"... the sure mercies of David"* ([Isa.55:3](#)), and in particular they were made sure to David's great Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as witness [Acts 13:34](#). He was the One of whom Jeremiah wrote, *"Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness: a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth'"* ([Jer.23:5](#)). For, said Gabriel to Mary, the virgin of Judah, *"... you ... shall call his name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end"* ([Lk.1:31-33](#)). This was the child born and the Son given of [Isa.9:6-7](#).

So the King who shall reign in righteousness in the Millennium is the Lord Jesus Christ - Son of God as to eternity Son of David as to time. He shall sit on His throne and bear the glory of the Kingdom in the

beloved city, Jerusalem.

Who then are the princes who shall rule in judgment? Of whom did Isaiah prophecy, *"I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning"* (Isa.1.26) or Ezekiel, *"Enough, O princes of Israel! Remove violence and plundering, execute justice and righteousness..."* (Ezek.45:9)?

When Ezekiel wrote of the great regathering of Israel in their own land as a re-united twelve-tribe nation, after the many days of Hos.3:4 in which they would abide, "... without king or prince..." he says, "... my servant David shall be their prince forever" (Ezek.37:25). David here has been variously viewed, as Messiah (David's Son), as some other descendant of David or as the son of Jesse himself. A literal interpretation that David the son of Jesse is intended would appear to be more in keeping with the vision of Ezekiel in [chapter 44](#) and in keeping also with the principle of reward in resurrection administration, as seen also in the assignment of priestly service to the sons of Zadok. That being so, we view David as one of the great princes in millennial rule. From the faithful also of his dispensation many others will be selected for the position of judges.

Then our minds go to such scriptures as [Matt.19:28](#): *"Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"*, and [Lk.22:30](#), "... and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

So the twelve apostles, Matthias doubtless replacing Judas Iscariot, were appointed as princes to rule in judgment on the day-to-day problems of Israel's twelve tribes during the millennial reign. What a contemplation in the field of reward. What an inspiration to those who loyally serve Him *"outside the camp"*! These appointments are the expressions of His appreciation.

So too will it be with the faithful among the saints of both this dispensation and the next. As to our own day Paul says, *"If we endure, we shall also reign with him"* (2 [Tim.2:12](#)). And again, *"Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?"* (1 [Cor.6:2](#)). And of the faithful of the tribulation period it is written, *"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of*

those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" (Rev.20:4). So it is the faithful saints who will reign as princes and rule in judgment. This judgment has nothing to do with the assessment of the lives of the dead at the time of the resurrection, but with the day-to-day affairs of the living who enter the millennial reign or are later born into it.

The principle of allotment of authority over cities in varying degrees as seen in the parable of the pounds in Lk.19 provides much food for thought in connection with the manner of world-wide rule in the coming kingdom. In keeping with this principle is the word to the overcomer in Rev.2:26,27, "And he who overcomes, and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations - 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces' - as I also have received from my Father". So ranging from David in relation to Israel, and the twelve apostles in relation to the individual tribes, over all the nations will be assigned posts of varying responsibility to individual overcomers, as expressing the appreciation of the King in the city.

What will be the conditions in the world?

In the Moral Sphere: Zechariah wrote, "He shall speak peace to the nations; his dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth'" (Zech.9:10). Ps.72 by Solomon (appropriately, his name means peaceable) is a delightful preview of the conditions in the millennial kingdom. The key words are *righteousness* and *peace*. Verse 7 reads, "In his days the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace, until the moon is no more." The peace from Calvary will flourish in abundance. Isaiah saw it and wrote, "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever" (Isa.32:17). And again, "I will also make your officers peace, and your magistrates righteousness" (Isa.60:17). These two great qualities will act like an international militia, the outcome of the law which will go to earth's uttermost bounds from the Prince of peace in Jerusalem, administered by princes who everywhere rule in judgment.

Peoples and nations "... shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and

their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore"(Mic.4:3). The nightmare of terror which characterised the reign of the Man of sin will be forgotten in the comfort and contentment of Messiah's benign rule. "As one [literally, Hebrew *ish* - a man] whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you" (Isa.66:13) - the comfort as of men and not as of children. (When Israel's famous Weizmann Institute of Science celebrated its 25th anniversary its staff of 1,200 scientists were working in seven Research Units on 400 research projects. During one of the orchestral celebrations, over the platform was printed in large letters, "Science will bring peace to this land". Alas, Israel, it will not. Neither to you nor to any other land. But the coming Christ will, and shortly.)

In that day,"... *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea*" (Isa.11:9). As a consequence the deep peace and understanding which will come into human life will enter also into the animal world. This is referred to in several scriptures but nowhere more graphically than Isa.65:25, "*The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,*' says the LORD."

In the natural sphere: Isaiah sang about it, "*Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted as a forest*" (Isa.32:15). "*The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose*" (Isa.35:1). "*The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water*" (Isa.35:7). "*Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree*" (Isa.55:13). And Solomon wrote in Ps.72:16, "*There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, on the top of the mountains; its fruit shall wave like Lebanon*".

We marvel today at the accomplishments of the Israelis in the Negev and elsewhere in their land, transforming by brilliant schemes of irrigation and by sheer hard work former wastes into flourishing settlements. Beersheba, the capital of the Negev, once a small town of about 4,000 people is today a thriving city of around 70,000 inhabitants and as we write it has just been decided in Jerusalem that a new university is to be founded

there. Some fifteen years ago there was no town, only arid sand dunes. [Today in 2011, as we reprint this booklet its population has risen to 195,000] But such recoveries will be insignificant by contrast, when, in the vast territory which will fall to Israel in the Millennium,"... *they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities the desolations of many generations*" (Isa.61:4).

In the physical sphere: The pouring of the bowl of the seventh angel described in [Rev.16:12](#) will lead to fearful devastations on the earth. There will be a massive earthquake, as a consequence of which "... *the cities of the nations fell... every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*" It is evident therefore that at the beginning of the Millennium there will require to be a worldwide reconstruction of the communal dwellings of men, in accordance with a divine plan which we may be assured will exceed in glory anything this world has ever seen. That there will be again city dwellers is indicated in [Ps.72:16](#). Then Isaiah predicted, "*They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit*" (Isa.65:21). Further, men will still recover the precious and other metals from the earth ([Isa.60:17](#)). The Arab races will still have multitudes of camels and dromedaries ([Isa.60:6](#)). Micah pictured weapons of war converted into plowshares and pruninghooks, with every man under his vine and fig tree, none making them afraid ([Mic.4:3,4](#)), a delightful contemplation of men being left free to pursue peaceful, profitable occupations. So in the world at large, the great inventive genius of men and all the brilliant applications of the discoveries of science will doubtless be turned to peaceful uses for the well-being of earth's inhabitants in her golden age; so, to take an obvious example, when the nations present themselves annually to keep the feast of tabernacles ([Zech.14:16](#)) it may well be by means of massive air lifts. As to the precise nature of life in the Millennium, we shall have to content ourselves and wait and see. One thing is certain it will be infinitely more marvellous than mortals have ever known or the human mind has ever imagined.

What will be the nature of the worship of God?

There is a progression of thought in [Ezek.37:48](#) which we should not lightly set aside. [Ezek.36:16-38](#) reveals God's future programme of unmerited favour towards Israel, not for their own sake, but for His own

great and holy Name, and based on this He says "... Be *ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel*" (verse 32). Following this, [chapter 37](#) prophesies the national restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel. [Chapters 38 and 39](#) show that Gog will be the commander of the attacking hordes of the north, only to be destroyed on the mountains of Israel. From [chapter 40](#) onwards the prophet describes how he was brought in the visions of God to Israel's land and there he saw the temple of a future day, with its ordinances of divine service, its priesthood and its law of sacrifice. He saw also the revised position of the tribes in the land, lying in great parallel bands stretching from west to east, central to this layout ([48:8,9](#)) being the district (oblation R.V.), and central to the district, "*the sanctuary*". In pursuit of this thought there has been fairly general acceptance that in [Ezekiel 40 to 48](#) we have in view the millennial city, temple and priestly service. Central in the land will be the district described in [Ezek.48:8-22](#) (The layout of the arrangement is shown in [Appendix 4](#).)

The sons of Zadok will lead the priestly service as a reward for consecration in their day of opportunity. The Levites will again minister in holy things, albeit in a restricted way. This is all set out in [Ezek.44](#). There will be an altar and a law of sacrifice although all the Levitical offerings will not be reintroduced. A notable omission, and deeply significant, is the lamb of the evening oblation (the hour of Calvary). All offerings will clearly be memorial in character, in retrospective appreciation of the crosswork of Him Who will then sit as a priest upon His throne and bear the glory ([Zech.6:13](#)).

We should state in fairness at this point that many devout students of the Word are so perplexed at the contemplation of reversion to animal sacrifice that they would not subscribe to the foregoing view. Rather, they consider the Ezekiel Temple and cognate matters as what might have been an "alternative purpose of God", an arrangement of things which He would have introduced during the first period of Israel's nationhood had they responded to divine entreaty that is "... *if they are ashamed of all that they have done*" ([Ezek.43:11](#)). We mention with respect the viewpoint, although not subscribing to it. Other portions of the Word besides the foregoing would appear to call for reversion to animal sacrifice, as for example [Isa.60:7; 66:20-23](#). If our understanding is correct,

We can rest assured that no legal ceremonial will ever be allowed by God to be in conflict with the truth of the New Covenant, that "...this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb.10:12). The whole arrangement of things will be just as precious a memorial of the Lord's death to those in that day, as are the bread and wine in all their simplicity to us in our day. And doubtless they will sing the precious little psalter of Messiah's reigning day, commencing with Ps.92, a song for the Sabbath day (and what a Sabbath day the Millennium will be!) through to Ps.100, a psalm of thanksgiving.

How does the final rebellion arise?

From such a scripture as [Isa.65:20](#) it is clear that in the Millennium men and women will live very long lives. Some have seen a significance in the fact that the longest premillennial life on record (Methuselah, 969 years) was not allowed to reach 1,000 years. This honour may yet be shared by many who will enter the kingdom and in faithfulness see all of its 1,000 years."*... for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of my people" (Isa.65:22), and "... the child shall die one hundred years old" (Isa.65:20).*

The same portion teaches also that"*... the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed"*. So there will be sin in the Millennium. Those who enter the kingdom from the judgment of the living nations shall be eternally saved people. Yet they may sin, though not so as to lose their eternal inheritance. In this they are like believers today, and in one further particular, for they will have children who will be born equally alienated from God as are the children of believing parents today. So gradually in the kingdom the potential to sin will increase, and the further from the King the greater the potential. Sin will, of course, be under great restraint by reason of the firm yet beneficent rule of the King, and by reason also of the fact that Satan will be bound and unable to stimulate sin in the human heart as he had done through the hitherto course of time. But gradually in the kingdom the potential to sin will increase, for it lies deep in the human heart, quite apart from immediate Satanic temptation. Those who sin, and those who "*pretend submission" (Ps.81:15), as foreseen in Deut.33:29; Ps.18:43,44; Ps.66:3* will doubtless resent the judgments of the administration of righteousness and seek to avoid

Satan on his release from the chain of the abyss. It will be the climax of proof of the fallen nature of man, unresponsive to every manifestation of divine goodness. At the close of the 1,000 years Satan will be loosed and will go in his fury to deal a final blow at all those who love God. He is said to be loosed "... for a little while" (Rev.20:3). In this brief period he will obviously spread over all the earth the deceptive propaganda he has planned in his devilish mind during his millennial imprisonment. From the four corners of the earth they will come, from Gog to Magog, duped hordes like the sand of the sea for number, drawn irresistibly to the City of the Great King. Note, it is the dwellers in earth's four corners who are thus deceived, those settled furthest from the King. The object of attack is "the beloved city" and with it is associated "the camp of the saints" (Rev.20:9), just as Ezekiel saw the city within the oblation. But not a blow will be struck, for when the attacking hosts will have completely surrounded the sacred area, divine fire descends and destroys every trace of rebellion against the King.

*"Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father,
when he puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.
For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet"*

(1 Cor.15:24,25).

He who wept above the grave,
He who stilled the raging wave,
Meek to suffer, strong to save,
He shall bear the glory.

He who sorrow's pathway trod,
He that every good bestowed -
Son of Man and Son of God -
He shall bear the glory.

He who bled with scourging sore,
Thorns and scarlet meekly wore,
He who every sorrow bore -
He shall bear the glory.

Monarch of the smitten cheek,
Scorn of Jew and scorn of Greek,
Priest and King, Divinely meek -
He shall bear the glory.

On the rainbow-circled throne
Mid the myriads of His own.
Nevermore to weep alone -
He shall bear the glory.

Man of slighted Nazareth,
King who wore the thorny wreath,
Son obedient unto death -
He shall bear the glory.

His the grand eternal weight,
His the priestly-regal state;
Him the Father maketh great -
He shall bear the glory.

He who died to set us free,
He who lives and loves e'en me,
He who comes, whom I shall see,
Jesus only - only He -
He shall bear the glory.

William Blane

The Great White Throne Judgment

*"Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it,
from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away.
And there was found no place for them"
(Rev.20:11).*

We come now to the closing scenes of this world's history. In the minds of the prophets and men of God through the centuries there was the reality of a final day of judgment, a consummation of all things, and now in the last message of the Bible, John the apostle writes what he saw of that great day. The turbulent years of antichrist, the destruction of the world's armies, the judgment of the living nations are, in the apostle's vision, accomplished. Satan who has been bound for a thousand years during the golden age of Christ's universal reign will master-mind a mammoth campaign of deception and gather the nations from the ends of the earth in a final but futile assault on the "*beloved city*" Jerusalem. A fiery judgment from heaven will end that final attempt of the forces of evil. The awesome reality of the final great judgment day casts its shadow over the universe.

The judgment we considered earlier which will take place before the millennial reign of Christ was of the living nations but the "*great white throne*" judgment will be of "*the dead*". This climactic judgment will involve not only the human dead of many ages but also the material universe as we know it today. We must confine ourselves and avoid conjecture as we allow the Divine Spirit to speak from the Bible of these tremendous events towards which the world is quickly moving.

While God now waits in His longsuffering for people to repent and turn to Him, it is an absolute certainty that the day of His mercy will pass. "*But the LORD shall endure forever; he has prepared his throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness...*" (Ps.9:7,8). "*He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision. Then he shall speak to them in his wrath, and distress them in his deep*

displeasure" (Ps.2:4,5). This divine attitude will characterize all the judgments of God as terrified people try to escape, and is perfectly justified because of man's refusal to receive the salvation God has offered in every age.

The Dissolving of the heavens and the earth

At the judgment of the "*great white throne*" two things are in the prophet's vision. (1) the dissolving of all material things in the universe, and (2) the judgment of the dead. While time does not seem to be reckoned beyond this point, we place this final judgment day somewhere between the end of the 1,000 years reign of peace and the time when the "*new heavens and anew earth*" appear, fresh from the hand of the Divine Architect and Creator. In this judgment we are looking at a dimension that is entirely beyond the realm of human thought and calculation. The natural laws of physics and gravitation cannot explain to reason what divine revelation reveals to faith.

The One who sits on that throne, although His Name is not given, is no other than the Lord Jesus Christ. None will be able to plead ignorance of this Divine Person. Since His lowly birth in a cattle shed in Bethlehem almost 2,000 years ago, the name of the Man Christ Jesus has been known, heard and written about throughout the world. It is the same Man; resplendent in His regal majesty, with wound-prints of crucifixion on His holy body, terrible to behold. Son of God and Son of Man, once the Lamb of Calvary's hour of suffering, now the mighty Conqueror of sin, death and hell. King of eternal ages, Judge of all the earth, He will sit with eyes of flaming fire to survey the hosts of the dead from the centuries of time to hear His sentence of their final destiny. How small the earth and heavens seemed as John saw them receding into oblivion from the face of Him who sat upon the throne and no place was found for them!

Some, including the co-writer, hold the teaching that after the millennial reign of Christ, the present earth and heavens will be cleansed by fire and become the future eternal dwelling place of the redeemed. However, the view of the writer of this chapter is that, in keeping with the message from the throne in heaven that John heard, "*Behold, I make all things new*" (Rev.21:5), that the present material universe around us will be completely destroyed. The apostle Peter wrote by the Holy Spirit, "*But*

the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up ... the heavens, being on fire, will be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat... Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pet.3:10-13). To Peter was also given the revelation that the present heavens and earth "are reserved for [or with (R.V.Margin)] fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pet.3:7). It is clear that the statement of Rev.20:11, "... the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them", can be taken to mean the dissolving of the earth and the heavenly bodies, as we have viewed them in Peter's prophecy. [See also Appendix 2],

The Judgment of the dead

We now turn to the sobering reality of the coming judgment of people who have lived on the earth through the centuries of time. Whatever kind of life they chose to live, mingled with joys and sorrows or fleeting pleasures, they will almost certainly be at that time *"the dead"*, the great and the small, who will stand in front of that white throne, the very whiteness of which symbolizes the perfect righteousness which will govern every verdict and sentence given by Jesus Christ, the Judge of all the earth. What an awe-inspiring vision John saw in lonely Patmos island, when he witnessed this great host of the dead standing before the throne! What miracle of divine power will uphold that vast multitude of people, since both the heaven and earth will have passed away! The great climax of the ages will unfold, as in awed silence the hush of eternity fills the vast dimension of those closing scenes of final world judgment. At last the books will be opened, the books that hold the secrets of people's lives, and *"... another book ... which is the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works" (Rev.20:12,13)*. It seems clear that these resurrected bodies, unlike our physical bodies which are subject to death, will be indestructible like the eternal personalities which will inhabit them. As such they will live in the full consciousness of their surroundings and environment. Many men

who in their lives were famous for wickedness, and made the world tremble, will be there. The dead from every age in the world's history from Adam until that final day, with some exceptions, will be there.

The exceptions will be:

- the members of the Church the Body of Christ who have died in the period from Pentecost to the Rapture, and will have been caught up to "... always be *with the Lord*" (1 [Thess.4:17](#)); and
- the great multitudes of the living nations who will have been judged before the 1,000 years of peace, and who, as we saw in an earlier study, will go away into everlasting punishment ([Matt.25:46](#)).

Other exceptions may include:

- the righteous dead from Old Testament times who will be raised to share the 1,000 years of peace, and
- the saved of the living nations who are said to go into eternal life just before the millennial reign.

From all other ages of time, death must yield up its prisoners to a resurrection and eternal existence.

The Opening of the books

The opened "*books*" ([Rev.20:12](#)) at that great judgment day will reveal all the works of every person done in his or her lifetime. As the record of each person is brought into the searchlight of the divine gaze, every mouth will be stopped. No act in life whether good or bad, done openly or in secret, will escape the record but will come out in that terrifying experience. The "*book of life*" which contains the key to either eternal judgment or blessing for every person will also be opened. It is evident that those whose names are written in that book will be saved from judgment and prepared for a place with the redeemed on the new earth. The basis for their salvation will lie in their faith towards God and obedience to divine revelation during their time on earth ([Rom.1,2](#)). For the rest whose names are not found "*written in the book of life*", these will be "... *cast into the lake of fire*" ([Rev.20:15](#)).

What the lake of fire will be like we are not told, but we do know that the Lord Jesus said it was "... *prepared for the devil and his angels*" ([Matt.25:41](#)). God will have no pleasure in seeing myriads of the creatures

of His hand, whom He loved, consigned for ever to that awful place of permanent separation from Himself. Those who find themselves there will be there by their own choice made in life, and as a result of what they did with the message of God for their time. The lake of fire will be place where there will be no rest and from which there will be no escape and, while untold myriads will share the same fate, there will be a state of eternal loneliness and rejection filled with the remorse of a haunting memory that things could have been different. Something of this experience may be reflected in the story of the rich man the Lord Jesus spoke of, who died and was buried, and "... *in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes...*" (see [Lk.16:19-31](#)). The rich man in Hades is still there at this moment, and awaits the time when the dead shall stand before the great white throne in the final resurrection. The rich man is a single example of a person whose name is not written in the book of life. The lake of fire experience, whatever it may be, is called the second death but it will not be death in the sense of physical cessation, but permanent existence described in Scripture as "*eternal punishment*".

These truths are too awful to contemplate and yet they will be as real some day as the very physical surroundings we touch and handle in everyday existence. Surely, in the solemn realities we have briefly considered, there is more than sufficient to cause all reading these lines who do not know the Lord Jesus as personal Saviour, to consider without delay their eternal relationship to Him. For those who know and follow Him as true disciples what an effect these things should have on our lives, enabling us to serve Him with clean hands and a pure heart, while we tell people of His way of escape from the coming judgment day.

Upon the golden seashore sand
I wrote my name one day;
The waves came in and when they left
My name had passed away.

Upon the shifting sands of time
Men write their names today,
But when eternal years roll in
Their names will pass away.

Upon the spotless Book of Life,
God wrote my name one day;
Eternal years can never take
That God-penned name away.

My name is there for ever
Through all God's endless day;
For He who died to write it there
Has put it there to stay.

Fred Cowell

"Unto the Ages of the Ages"

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev.21:1).

Thus the visionary of Patmos, peering deep into the day of eternity, opens his brief unfolding of the final drama in divine revelation. He sees a tiny cross-section of life in the eternal arrangement of things, a worthy climax indeed to God's great recovery plan in redemption.

The whole burden of Scripture has been to advise and to warn the human race as to sin in relation to divine holiness; to record the great prophecies of a Saviour who would come for their help; to present the central theme of the visitation of men by the Son of God, for a few, momentous years "moving in servant form through scenes of time"; then laying down His life on Calvary to provide a basis for the reconciliation of a holy God and an unholy human race; of His subsequent resurrection; the instruction of His apostles as to the present-day service of God; His ascension and, in due course, His return to receive the Kingdom. What then could be more fitting than to conclude divine revelation with a brief reference to the ultimate and eternal?

It would be a pity to complicate so choice a consideration as this with matters of acknowledged controversy. We refer to three in particular.

First - are the new heaven and the new earth the present spheres purged by fire or are they absolutely new?

Second - in [Rev.21:9](#) to [Rev.22:5](#), is the city presented in the setting of an eternal scene or a millennial?

Third - is the city actually on the earth or in suspension over it? [See [Appendix 3](#)],

For the present we shall accept the former in each of the three cases above.

Here then, at last, is "*... the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" ([Heb.11:10](#)). What was visionary to the men and women of faith in their pilgrimage, now becomes their dwelling

place in eternity. It is the New Jerusalem. It comes down out of heaven from God. It has the adornment of a bride on her wedding day. The imagery breathes joy and fulfilment of long cherished hopes.

Then as the eternal city takes its place on the new earth, the voice out of the throne proclaims that the tabernacle of God is with men. He had tabernacled before with them in the days of human failure; in the curtains of the wilderness till David's day; in the various temples till the coming of Messiah; in the flesh of Emmanuel; in the spiritual house expressed among the churches of God in the day of grace. But now, in a setting of eternal suitability, God will dwell among the redeemed. They will be His "peoples" (Rev.21:3 R.V. - a plurality worthy of note when considering the inhabitants of the new earth). And from every eye the last tear will be wiped away, for death, mourning, crying and pain will be no more. Job wrote, "He dams up the streams from trickling" (Job 28:11). Yes, the hot burning tears of the saints; they trickled in the dark; they will glitter in the light. The first things will have passed away for ever, never again to return. The Throne-Sitter speaks, "... Behold, I make all things new ... It is done" (Rev.21:5,6). On the Cross He had said, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30). That day "... was the Preparation, and the sabbath drew near" (Lk.23:54). But now the fruits of that great preparatory work are in full view. It is the beginning of the eternal sabbath rest of God, in which all His saints shall share.

It takes a little adjustment for some believers to accept that their eternal place of service will be on the new earth, and not in heaven as they had supposed. It may be they have been influenced in their thinking by such scriptures as 1 Pet.1:4, where their incorruptible, undefiled, unfading inheritance is viewed as reserved in heaven for them. But that inheritance is in a city which will come down to earth when time has run its course. It may well be that it is to that city, presently situated in heaven, that the saints go on death - "... with Christ... far better" (Phil.1:23) Some day we shall know.

The city is then described in greater detail in Rev.21:9 to Rev.22:5. Some view the outline as literal, others as figurative. One thing is certain, the Spirit could not depict to finite minds a comprehensible picture of the infinite. When Moses reproduced on the desert sands the pattern showed

him on the mount, and Israel were permitted to look on "... *the copy and shadow of the heavenly things*" (Heb.8:5), what they saw was, as it were, "... *a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things*" (Heb.10:1). The delightful description in these verses may therefore be a presentation in the understandable things of time, of that which is eternal and thus at present incomprehensible to us. But if that is so, we can be assured that the reality will far exceed in glory the choice imagery.

It is a city of twelves. Twelve gates, angels, tribe names, foundations and apostle names; measuring in the vision twelve thousand furlongs in length and breadth, with a wall height twelve times twelve cubits. Here at last is the city of divine government and thus perfect administration.

The city is named, "... *the bride, the Lamb's wife*" (Rev.21:9). So the members of the Church which is Christ's Body are evidently dwellers in the eternal city of God. In association with them is seen the names of the apostles of the Lamb on the twelve foundations of the city's wall.

It is evident also that the redeemed of Old Testament Israel enjoy relationship to the city; were it otherwise the appearance of the names of the tribes on the twelve gates of the wall would lose all relevance. Indeed, an eternal significance will attach to the names on the gates, for from great Israel "... *according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God*" (Rom.9:5). And the saints' everlasting felicity was secured by Him, whose searching (Matt.13:45-46) and whose sorrow will be touchingly kept in remembrances, in the message of the pearl from which each gate is made.

Round about the city are the nations with their kings; those redeemed multitudes who were never identified with either Israel or the Church the Body, who will come from the darkness of centuries in the far-off lands to the brightness of the glory of the Great White Throne, there to receive eternal justification and life at the hands of the Judge. And among them will be those who shine with the distinctive rewards peculiar to the over-comers - crowned ones in their midst.

Thus the redeemed of all lands and ages will find their place in relation to the eternal city. It is the New Jerusalem; the holy city, Jerusalem (Rev.21:22-22:5).

In it, says the Spirit of God, shall be first, negatively:

- **no temple** - for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are personally there.
- **no need of sun or moon** - for its light is the glory of God, and its lamp, the Lamb.
- **no sin or curse** - for by divine decree these will never be allowed to arise again.

But then, positively:

- **the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it** - eternally undisputed authority. From this throne will flow **the river of the water of life** down the middle of the golden street, flanked on either side by **the tree of life**, with its fruit and healing leaves - eternal communion and refreshment.
- **the servants of God will see His face**, have His name on their foreheads and do Him service - eternal identification with the priestly service of love in all its manifold forms.
- **and they shall reign for ever and ever** - eternal union with the Throned-One of eternity.

Thus, in the presence of the Eternal, we take leave of our consideration of the *Finger of Prophecy*. We have reached the point where God will "... be all in all" (1 Cor.15:28), and He will reign for ever and ever, enjoying the undisturbed "... dominion unto the ages of the ages" (1 Pet.5:11 R.V. margin). For which cause we exclaim, "Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations of the age of the ages"(Eph.3:21 R.V. margin).

Oh the blessed joy of meeting,
All the desert past!
Oh the wondrous words of greeting
He shall speak at last!
He and I together entering
Those bright courts above;
He and I together sharing
All the Father's love!

Where no shade nor stain can enter,
Nor the gold be dim;
In that holiness unsullied,
I shall walk with Him;
Meet companion for the Master,
From Him, for Him made,
Glory of God's grace for ever,
There in me displayed!

He, who in the hour of sorrow
Bore the cross alone;
I, who through the lonely desert
Trode where He had gone;
He and I in that bright glory
One deep joy shall share,
Mine to be for ever with Him,
His that I am there.

E.F. Bevan

16

Epilogue

The foregoing chapters are not an exhaustive treatment of the great prophetic ministry of the Bible, but are intended to arouse active interest in what it says about future world events which will affect, without exception, every human being, dead or alive. Prophecy as given us in the Bible is God-breathed, and His Holy Spirit moved men to write about what they saw and heard, and therefore it must be accepted as part of the complete revelation of God to men, the centre of which is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, although of many parts, is a complete unity and cannot be separated. Approximately two thirds of the Bible is given to prophecy, either fulfilled already, or to be fulfilled in the future, and it is to the study of the latter we have given our attention, in the sincere hope that some will be helped to a better understanding of what God has told us will take place in the terminal years of the present world system.

There is a remarkable and accurately designed harmony between Old and New Testament prophecies of the end times, towards which the world of mankind is moving to a date with destiny, although the forecasts were written by different men who lived hundreds of years apart. Daniel wrote of many prophetic events, and as an epilogue to his great ministry, heard a voice say, *"But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase"* (Dan.12:4). Never was a more accurate assessment given of twentieth century conditions, although written 2,500 years ago! John the apostle wrote 600 years later what he saw and heard from his island imprisonment on Patmos. This is called *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants - things which must shortly take place"* (Rev.1:1).

The events of our times, dominated by rapid change technologically, increasing lawlessness, immorality, unrest and fear, are shaking the very foundations of the world's social structure. These happenings, viewed in the light of fast moving developments in the Middle East, all point to the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ, after which event will come the time of God's judgments on the world.

We felt urged to issue this booklet for several reasons. Naturally we are anxious that those linked with us in testimony in the churches of God should be reminded, in the case of older saints, and alerted in the case of younger, as to the probability of an early"... *gathering together to him*" (2 [Thess.2:1](#)), so that all might be found working and watching at His coming (see 1 [Thess.1:9,10](#)). But our longings are also with very many beloved fellow-believers who have not yet separated themselves to their Lord's will as revealed in the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that they might be found numbered with His people, observing the whole counsel of God when Christ appears (see 3 [Jn 4](#)).

We felt also a deep sense of constraint in connection with our fellow-men and women, who are still without the peace of God, which comes through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. His death on the Cross has provided forgiveness and cleansing from all sin, for all who will receive Him as personal Saviour ([Jn 3:16](#)). And in particular we have prayed that many of great Israel's sons and daughters might be alerted to vital matters soon to affect their nation, that they might have the veil of unbelief removed from their hearts and that they might recognize and acknowledge in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah of promise, who came to save, not from the Roman power of that day, but rather"... *his people from their sins*" ([Matt.1:20-25](#), [Lk.1:30-38](#)).

As these pages are sent out on their mission, our earnest prayer to God is, that many will be helped to see and do the will of God as revealed in Scripture. We link ourselves across the centuries with one who wrote, "*Oh, send out your light and your truth! Let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your tabernacle. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy*" ([Ps.43:3,4](#)).

Appendix 1

**A selection of Old Testament prophecies specifically referred to in
the New Testament as having been fulfilled:**

[Click on Bible references below to see text](#)

Old Testament	Subject matter	New Testament
Isa.7:14	The virgin would conceive	Matt.1:23
Mic.5:2	The birth in Bethlehem	Matt.2:6
Hos.11:1	The Son called out of Egypt	Matt.2:15
Jer.31:15	The weeping in Ramah	Matt.2:18
Isa.40:3-5	The voice in the wilderness	Matt.3:3
Isa.9:1-2	The people see a great light	Matt.4:15,16
Isa.42:1-3	The bruised, unbroken reed	Matt.12:18-21
Isa.6:9-10	The heart of Israel grows dull	Matt.13:14,15
Ps.78:2	The ministry of parables	Matt.13:35
Isa.29:13	The vanity of Israel's worship	Matt.15:8
Zech.9:9	The King comes to Zion	Matt.21:5
Ps.8:2	The praise of babes	Matt.21:16
Ps.118:22	The builders reject the Stone	Matt.21:42
Zech.13:7	The Shepherd smitten	Matt.26:31
Zech.11:12-13	The price of Him that was valued	Matt.27:9,10
Ps.22:18	The parting of His garments	Matt.27:35
Ps.22:1	The cry at the ninth hour	Matt.27:46
Isa.53:12	The numbering with transgressors	Mk.15:28
Isa.61:1-2	The Spirit of the LORD upon Messiah	Lk.4:18,19
Ps.69:9	The consuming zeal	Jn 2:17
Isa.53:1	The arm of the LORD revealed	Jn 12:38
Ex.12:46	The unbroken bones	Jn 19:36
Zech.12:10	The pierced Messiah	Jn 19:37
Ps.69:25	The desolate habitation	Acts 1:20
Joel 2:28-32	The outpoured Spirit	Acts 2:16-21
Ps.16:8-11	The resurrection of Messiah	Acts 2:25-28
Ps.110:1	The ascension of Messiah	Acts 2:34
Deut.18:15	The prophet like Moses	Acts 3:22,23
Ps.2:1-2	The raging nations	Acts 4:25,26
Ps.2:7	The day of the Son's begetting	Acts 13:33
Amos 9:11-12	The Gentiles seek the LORD	Acts 15:15-17
Hos.2:23	The setting aside of Israel	Rom.9:25,26

Appendix 2

The new heaven and the new earth

Some students of Scripture view the new heaven and earth as belonging to a new creation of God, and thus, so far as the old universe is concerned, they hold what has been termed the "removal" theory. This, in fact, is the view of one of the writers of this booklet, and it is frequently met in discussions on the subject. In reaching this conclusion considerable thought has obviously been given to the fact that the heaven and the earth in the eternal state are "new" and that they replace a former universe which, in terms of Scripture, has "*perished*", has "*passed away*" has been "*dissolved with fervent heat*", has been "*burned up*", and generally has "*fled away*", no place being any more found for it. This is a perfectly understandable conclusion, and those who have reached it regard it as well supported by Scripture. They view the heaven and the earth of the eternal state as a completely new creation of God, having no connexion whatever with the former things.

The other writer of this booklet, however, has differed in his understanding of the subject and after patient study of the relevant Scriptures has concluded that what is presented in the new universe is a cleansed, re-made edition of the old.

In order that the reader may give the matter further thought it may assist if we set out first of all the various Scriptures which are regarded as having a bearing on the subject. They are:

- "*For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth*" ([Isa.65:17](#)).
- "*They will perish,... they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak you will fold them up, and they will be changed*" ([Heb.1:11,12](#)).
- "... by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which now exist are kept in store by the same word, reserved for fire..." ([2 Pet.3:6,7](#)).
- "*But... the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved ... and the elements will melt with fervent heat...*" ([2 Pet.3:10-12](#)).

- "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea" (Rev.21:1).
- "Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them" (Rev.20:11).

To understand what the Spirit teaches in these portions, thought must be given to the implication of several key words. We shall take them in the order of occurrence above, and since the late Mr. W. E. Vine is generally agreed as an acceptable guide to the meaning of Greek words we shall first quote from his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words:

- "*perish*", Greek *apollumi*, "signifies to destroy utterly. The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss not of being, but of well-being".
- "*change*", Greek *alasso*, "to make other than it is, to transform".
- "*pass away*", Greek *aperchomai*, "to go away, to pass... hence to set off, depart".
- "*dissolve*", Greek *luo*, "to loosen, especially by way of deliverance... unbind, release".

Perish: We have to consider whether these words necessarily call for the annihilation of the old creation in its removal, and indeed whether they warrant at all the thought of extinction. For example, the unsaved are said to be "*perishing*". But that does not involve cessation of being. Again, the present universe is one day to "*perish*". So did the world of Noah's day. It is described as "*the world that then existed*" and it perished by means of water. It is contrasted with "*the heavens and the earth which are now*" which have been stored up for fire. "*The world*" then must have included the earth itself at that time, whatever else, and it perished. But it nevertheless continued to exist, fresh from the cleansing of its former sin. Its perishing did not involve extinction.

Changed: Again, the present heaven shall be "*changed*". But so will the bodies of the living believers when the Lord comes, when mortal puts on immortality (1 Cor.15:52). There is evidently continuity in the transformation.

Pass away: Then the first heaven and the first earth will "*pass away*". So will the rich man like the flower of the grass (Jas.1:10). This word has

various occurrences in which the thought is that of passing from one place or stage or point of time to another.

Dissolved: Also, the elements (*heavenly bodies* - R.V. margin) are to be "*dissolved*" with a fervent heat which will burn them up. They will thus be unloosed from their present cohesion by Him in whom all things consist. In this we cannot fail to see the analogy with the bodies of the departed believers. The earthly house of their tabernacle is said to have been dissolved but each is assured of a building from God (2 Cor.5:1), and is there no link between the old tabernacle and the new building in the process described as "... who will transform our lowly body" (Phil. 3:21)?

It seemed then to the writer that there was nothing at variance in these scriptures with the view that the new heaven and earth might well prove to be the present universe, purged from the curse of sin by fire, and reappearing in eternal freshness, with no more sea.

Consideration however had to be given to the significance of the word "*new*". Did the word demand the complete extinction of the old so that an absolutely new and hitherto unrelated universe might appear? In the New Testament there are, in the main, two Greek words translated "*new*". They are *neos* and *kainos*. (The occurrences of the two words are noted below for reference).

It is *kainos* which is used to describe the new heaven and the new earth and generally it is the more frequently used. Reverting to Vine for their meaning, he writes:-

"*kainos* denotes 'new,' of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not 'new' in time, recent, but 'new' as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old. 'The new tongues' *kainos* of Mk.16:17 are the 'other tongues' *heteros* of Acts 2:4. These languages, however, were 'new' and 'different' not in the sense that they had never been heard before, or that they were new to the hearers, for it is plain from v.8 that this is not the case; they were new languages to the speakers, different from those in which they were accustomed to speak.

"*neos* signifies 'new' in respect of time, that which is recent: it is used of the young, and so translated, especially the comparative degree 'younger'; accordingly what is *neos* may be a reproduction of the old in

quality or character... The 'new' wine of [Matt.9:17](#) ... is *neos*, as being of recent production; the 'new' wine of the kingdom, [Matt.26:29](#) ... is *kainos*, since it will be of a different character from that of this world."

Confirmation of the foregoing seems unnecessary but it is interesting to find that so eminent an authority as Behm writes (in *Kremer's Theological Handbook*):- "Of the two most common words for 'new' since the classical period, namely *neos* and *kainos*, the former signifies what was not there before', what has only just arisen or appeared', the latter what is new and distinctive', as compared with other things, *neos* is new in time or origin, i.e. young, with a suggestion of immaturity, *kainos* is what is new in nature, different from the usual, impressive, better than the old, superior in value or attention.

It seems clear then that the use of *kainos* rather than *neos* points to the fact that the newness of the universe in eternity lies in its freshness of quality or character rather than in its freshness at a point of time as a new creation, and that there is in view the old and accustomed appearing transformed in perennial freshness, just as will the bodies of the saints.

Isaiah speaks of the "creation" of new heavens and a new earth, as though there was no connexion with the old. But the new universe which John saw is part of an eternal arrangement of which the One who sits on the throne said, "*Behold, I make all things new*" ([Rev.21:5](#)). He will thus *make* and not *create*. The vision of Isaiah in [Isa.65:17](#) appears to be in a millennial setting and the creation referred to is in the moral sphere rather than the physical. The making by God of a new universe may well be mirrored in what Jeremiah wrote, "*Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make*" ([Jer.18:3,4](#)).

This appendix is presented with a view to stimulate thought. The subject is profound and beyond human comprehension. It is revealed to us only in part. We must give due weight to each other's understanding and allow no difference of interpretation to cloud the certainty of our hope, for we "... according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" ([2 Pet.3:13](#)).

Notes referred to:

neos occurs only in connection with:

new wine	Matt.9:17(2) ; Mk.2:22 ; Lk.5:37-39 (4)
new lump	1 Cor.5:7 .
new man	Col.3:10 .
new covenant	Heb.12:24 .
new moon	Col.2:16 (in composite form).

kainos occurs in the A.V. in connection with

new bottles	Matt.9:17 ; Mk.2:22 ; Lk.5:38 (in each case "fresh" R.V.)
new things	Matt.13:52 ; Acts 17:21 ; 2 Cor.5:17 ; Rev.21:5 .
new testament	Matt.26:28 ; Mk.14:24 (in both cases "new" omitted in R.V.) Lk.22:20 ; 1 Cor.11:25 ; 2 Cor.3:6 , Heb.9:15 .
drink it new	Matt.26:29 ; Mk.14:25 .
new tomb	Matt.27:60 ; Jn 19:41 .
new doctrine	Mk.1:27 ; Acts 17:19 .
new piece (cloth)	Mk.2:21 ; Lk.5:36 (3).
new tongues	Mk.16:17 .
new commandment	Jn 13:34 ; 1 Jn 2:7,8 ; 2 Jn 5 .
new creature	2 Cor.5:17 ; Gal.6:15 .
new man	Eph.2:15 ; 4:24 .
new covenant	Heb.8:8,13 .
new heaven(s) and earth	2 Pet.3:13 ; Rev.21:1 .
new name	Rev.2:17 ; 3:12 .
new Jerusalem	Rev.3:12 ; 21:2 .
new song	Rev.5:9 ; 14:3 .

To consider further the use of *kainos* and *neos* in the New Testament, the following links may be helpful:

[kainos](#)

[neos](#)

Appendix 3

What is the city of [Rev.21:9-22:5](#)?

Most agree that the holy city, new Jerusalem, is seen in [Rev.21:1-8](#) in its eternal setting on the new earth. A widely held view regarding the verses which follow - that is [Rev.21:9-22:5](#) - is that they describe the eternal city whilst in suspension over the earth during the Millennium, the abode of Christ and His Bride. The writers of this booklet have difficulty in accepting this view and hold with others that the same city, in the same eternal setting is spoken of throughout.

A determining question is whether the city in 21:9 to 22:5 is in suspension at any time, whether over a millennial or an eternal earth. The fact that the city is seen as "*descending*" has apparently given rise to the thought that it only comes so far down but does not reach the earth. It is difficult to sustain this deduction. By the same reasoning the city of v.2, which is also seen as "*descending*", would be in suspension over the new earth. This thought of course is inadmissible since the tabernacle of God will then be *with* men and He will dwell with them. Many persons and things are described in the New Testament as "*descending*" but the only instance where the earth is not reached is in [1 Thess.4:17](#) where the descent of the Lord is specifically identified as being to "*the air*", for the gathering home of the Church the Body. It would be more in keeping with the general use of the expression "*descending*" if we viewed the city in [v. 10](#) as descending to the earth.

But if we accept for the moment that the eternal city *can* be viewed as in suspension over the millennial earth, several other difficulties arise. How, for example, do the kings of the earth bring their glory "*into*" it, or even simply "*to*" it, as some insist from the Greek word *e/s*? In any event we can safely say that there is no thought in *e/s* of "up to", as seen in a vertical direction, some having suggested that the nations in that sense bring their glory up to the suspended city. Nor is there any grounds for suggesting that the preposition *epi* in [Rev.5:10](#) can be translated as "*over*" in any geographic sense.

Then "... *the nations... shall walk in its light*" ([Rev.21:24](#)). How can this be when one has regard to the increased intensity of the light of the

sun and moon which is a feature of millennial days ([Isa.30:26](#))? Is there not a confusion of thought in assigning both the light of the suspended city and the increased light of the sun to the same millennial period?

The glory which Isaiah saw resting over the millennial Jerusalem was not a city of light in suspension, but "... *the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering. And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain*" ([Isa.4:5,6](#)). And as touching the surpassing glory of the city itself Ezekiel beautifully described it as "*THE LORD IS THERE*" ([Ezek.48:35](#)). His presence alone will be adequate glory. There would appear to be no valid reason for positioning the city of [Rev.21:9-22:5](#) in suspension over that glorious earthly scene and thus mixing the glory of the celestial with the quite separate glory of the terrestrial ([1 Cor.15:40](#)).

If however we accept the view that the city is the new Jerusalem resting on the new earth we must examine certain difficulties which this presents to some. One is the reference in [Rev.21:24,26](#); [22:2](#) to nations and kings and difficulty has been expressed in visualising nations in eternity with kings reigning over them. In this we must accept the plain fact that the "*men*" of [Rev.21:3](#) are God's "*peoples*" (plural R.V). So that apart from the members of the Church the Body who indwell the new Jerusalem, and the redeemed of Israel who are eternally associated with it, there are also peoples or nations of men. They will have gone justified into eternal life at the judgment of the living nations and at the judgment of the great white throne. At no time did they lose their national identity by incorporation into the Church the Body nor were they of Israel's race. In eternity they are evidently seen in their great national arrangements outside the city. In its light they walk, into it they bring their glory, and faith's overcomers from among them are their princely leaders.

Another point is that for the healing of the nations there are leaves on the tree of life. We recall our first parents in innocency in Eden with free access to the tree of life. We note too that this arrangement was foreshadowed in the millennial Jerusalem ([Ezek.47:12](#)). Alford comments.

*"Among the mysteries of this new heaven and earth this is set forth to us: that, besides the glorified church, there shall still be nations, organized under kings, dwelling on the renewed earth and (Rev.22:2) saved by means of the influences of the heavenly city". On the Greek word *therapeia*, Vine writes,"... primarily denotes care, attention... then, medical service, healing... of the effects of the leaves of the tree of life, perhaps here with the meaning 'health'." Thus the city dwellers will be eternally refreshed by the fruits of the tree, and the nations around eternally invigorated in their service by its leaves.*

And, one final point. The statement in [Rev.21:27](#) that *"...there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life"* is not to be accepted as viewing certain outside the eternal city as disqualified from entering into it by reason of their unclean condition in that day, but rather as a declaration of the eternal purity of the new universe which could only be described by a contrast with the impure conditions prevailing at the time when the Revelation was made,

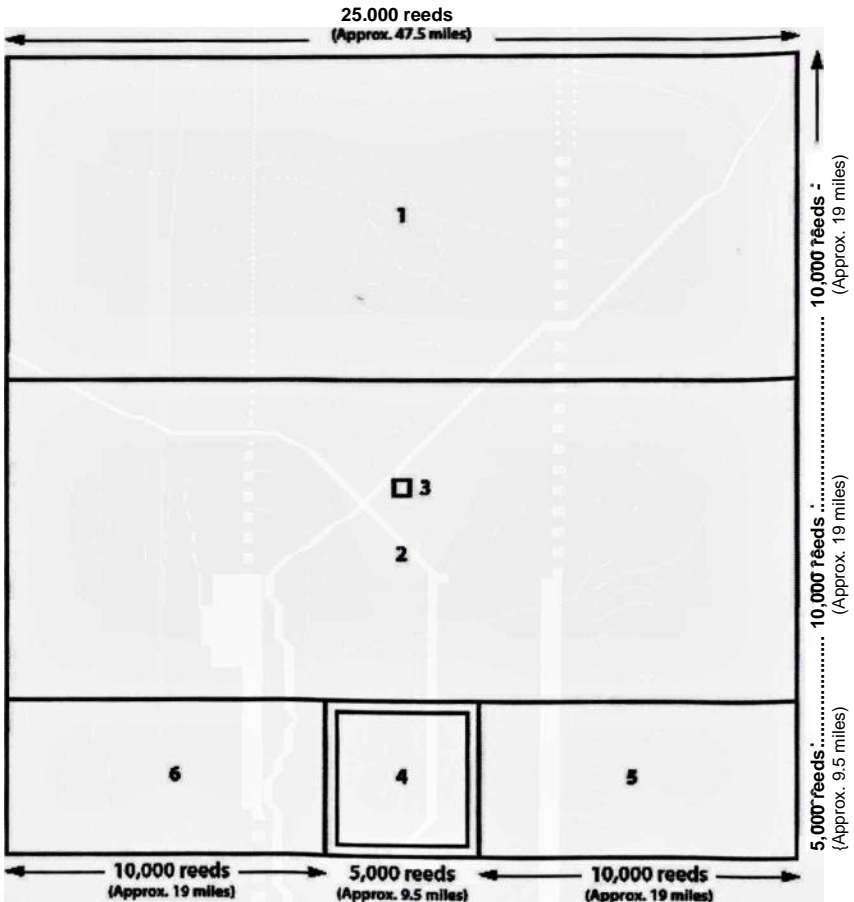
and corresponds closely to the earlier description of the new Jerusalem in [v.8](#).

If then our understanding of the position is correct, we leave the final page of Holy Scripture in the glory of the redeemed of the human family in a new creation, eternally associated with the glory of the new Jerusalem on the new earth, part of the new universe of God. And God Himself all and in all.

Appendix 4

Suggested layout for the holy district as shown to
Ezekiel (see [page 69](#))

THE BORDER OF JUDAH



THE BORDER OF BENJAMIN

Notes to Appendix 4

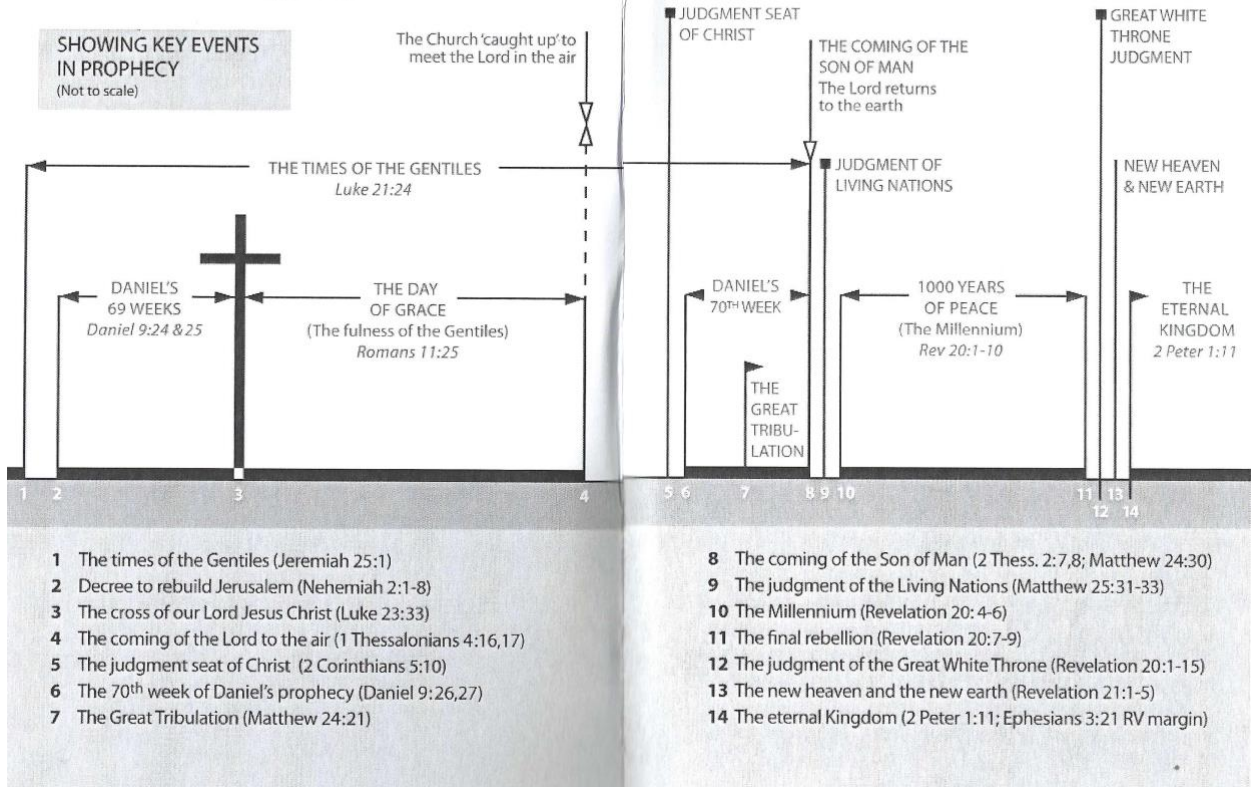
1. Portion of the holy district of the land allocated to the Levites "*... they shall have twenty chambers as a possession*", measuring 25,000 x 10,000 reeds or say 47.5 x 19 miles ([Ezek.45:5](#); [48:13,14](#)).
2. Portion of the district allocated to the Priests, being "*... a place for their houses, and a holy place for the sanctuary*", measuring as in 1. above ([Ezek.45:1-4](#); [48:8-12](#)).
3. The sanctuary (consisting of the temple building and the outer court), surrounded by the outer wall which was "*to separate the holy areas from the common*", the latter measuring 500 x 500 reeds or say 1 mile x 1 mile ([Ezek.42:20](#)).
4. The city and its suburbs, measuring 5,000 x 5,000 reeds or say 9.5 miles x 9.5 miles ([Ezek.48:15-17](#)).
5. The two portions of the residue allocated to the Prince, the increase of which is to be for food to those who labour in the city ([Ezek.48:18-22](#)).

The modern equivalent of the (Ezekiel) reed is given as 10 feet in the I.V.F. *New Bible Dictionary*. In [Ezek.40:5](#); [41:8](#) the reed is stated to be 6 or 6 great cubits which for our purposes can be taken as sufficiently close to the 10 feet referred to. Mileage equivalents are obviously approximate only.

Appendix 5

SHOWING KEY EVENTS IN PROPHECY

(Not to scale)



11/4/15

- 1 The times of the Gentiles (*Jeremiah 25:1*)
- 2 Decree to rebuild Jerusalem (*Nehemiah 2:1-8*)
- 3 The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Luke 23:33*)
- 4 The coming of the Lord to the air (*1 Thessalonians 4:16,17*)
- 5 The judgment seat of Christ (*2 Corinthians 5:10*)
- 6 The 70th week of Daniel's prophecy (*Daniel 9:26,27*)
- 7 The Great Tribulation (*Matthew 24:21*)

- 8 The coming of the Son of Man (*2 Thess. 2:7,8; Matthew 24:30*)
- 9 The judgment of the Living Nations (*Matthew 25:31-33*)
- 10 The Millennium (*Revelation 20:4-6*)
- 11 The final rebellion (*Revelation 20:7-9*)
- 12 The judgment of the Great White Throne (*Revelation 20:11-15*)
- 13 The new heaven and the new earth (*Revelation 21:1-5*)
- 14 The eternal Kingdom (*2 Peter 1:11; Ephesians 3:21 RV margin*)