

# “THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES”

OR

## PROPHECY AND HISTORY

*A Co-ordination of Prophecy and History, with special  
Reference to Armageddon and the Second Advent*

By

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LONDON :  
COVENANT PUBLISHING CO. LTD.

6 BUCKINGHAM GATE, S.W.1

1927

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*“Fulfilled Prophecy is miracle in the highest sphere. Proclaim God’s miracles in our daily life to the people.”—H. Grattan Guinness.*

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*“The Scriptures must be fulfilled” (Mark xiv, 49)*



"DISCIPULUS"

*Made and Printed in England by  
The Garden City Press Limited, Letchworth, Herts*

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## PREFACE

THE following chapters are an attempt to elucidate the questions, "What are the facts of the world's history and chronology?"; "What are the facts as to the nature, object and fulfilment of Bible prophecy?"; and, "Are the facts of one borne out by the facts of the other?"

Such was chiefly the subject-matter of our *What Saith the Scripture?* first published in 1922, and re-issued in 1924 as *Prophecy and its Fulfilment*, now out of print.

In view of the eventful history of the last five years and its rapid advance, it has been thought best not to reprint that volume as it stood, but to prepare an entirely new essay on the same theme, presenting it in a condensed form (yet maintaining its comprehensiveness), and thereby enabling it to be published at a lower price.

Since *What Saith the Scripture?*—the author's first essay in theology—was published, various other essays on kindred subjects have appeared from his pen. He therefore takes this opportunity of tendering his cordial thanks to his numerous readers in all parts of the English-speaking world, many of whom have, either personally or in writing, expressed their high appreciation of his writings and the great benefit they have received from them. It is thus clear our studies have been guided and blessed from above, and so given a success which was never for one instant anticipated at their commencement.

# “The Times of the Gentiles”

## CHAPTER I

### THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

IN the creation of the universe God had a plan which was to operate throughout the ages, and this plan has been manifest, not only in such creation, but also in the evolution of the world's history and in the progress of revelation. This purpose and this revelation are set forth in His written Word by the mouths of His inspired Prophets, who both “forth-told” and “fore-told” events which were to be fulfilled by different stages and in different eras, in the rise and fall of different nations, but especially in the destiny of one particular race, which was to become a blessing to the whole world and the means of revealing God's purpose towards mankind.

Prophecy is usually regarded as a *foretelling* of events. It is, however, more than this. To consider prophecy solely, or even chiefly, as such is to render oneself liable to confuse it with soothsaying and divination, and various other methods of prying into the future. “*Prophecy is not given to enable us to prophesy, but as a witness to God when the time of fulfilment arrives*” (Dr. Pusey). This axiom clearly defines the real purpose of prophecy, and well expresses the difference

between the true calling of the prophet and mere divination, a procedure against which the Bible sternly warns. To pry into the future has always been a weakness of the human race, from the earliest times to the present. "There shall not be found among you anyone . . . that useth divination" (Deut. xviii, 10). Such was the command of Moses to the Israelites, followed by the denunciation of no less than *seven* other methods of prying into the unknown, including a "consulter with familiar spirits." The Israelites are then warned that all such "are an abomination unto the Lord," and that it was because the nations, whom they were about to dispossess in Canaan, practised these things that they would be driven out from before them. Notwithstanding Moses' injunction and warning, the Israelites themselves did later resort to these practices, thereby bringing down punishment upon their heads.

The prophet's primary function was to instruct his hearers by revealing God's law to them, and to unfold His future dealings with them, particularly as a warning against the resulting disobedience and idolatry. The foretelling of events in the future, and stating, often in the language of symbolism, when such would take place, of great importance as it was, must be considered, from the viewpoint of those to whom the prophet was immediately addressing himself, less so than the revelation of God's purpose.

It is important to note, in this connection, that the prophetic office was strictly limited to Israel and Judah—that is, to the Hebrew race. With the single exception of Jonah, there is no instance of any prophet being sent to a heathen nation. Many predictions, however, refer to the *fate* of heathen nations (e.g. Babylon,



Persia, Media), but they are always bound up with the destinies of Israel and Judah, and were never proclaimed as a gospel or message *to* those nations. Thus Daniel's visions and prophecies were given in Babylon, which at that time was the home of the Jews.

Further, that the utterances of the Hebrew prophets, which were invariably accompanied by an unmistakable sensation which convinced the Prophet that God had spoken to him directly, and had given a command to proclaim the message received, were far removed from divination or soothsaying, is clear from their own words. They constantly emphasise that it is "*the word of the Lord*" which makes them give utterance: they were the mouthpieces of God's revelation, and in many instances, particularly in their more remote prophecies, had little—if any—understanding of the real meaning of the message delivered through them. This was particularly the case with Daniel, whose prophecies cover the whole period of the "Times of the Gentiles" right up to their close (see Dan. ix, 22-23; xii, 8).

The book of Daniel, indeed, is one of the fullest revelations of the future contained in the Bible. It is unequalled for the variety and minuteness of its historical detail, and for its breadth of range, both geographical and chronological. It is closed, too, by this remarkable injunction: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased . . . none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Dan. xii, 4, 10).

This passage seems to warrant three inferences of importance.

1. That though the Almighty saw fit to give this revelation of the future at a certain date, yet He

did not intend it to be understood for many centuries.

2. That even when, after the lapse of ages, the meaning of these prophecies should become apparent to *some*, it should still remain a mystery to others who would not understand.

3. That the comprehension or ignorance concerning these prophecies, when the time for their understanding should arrive, would depend rather on the *moral and spiritual* state, than merely on the intelligence, of those who should study them. Both the wise and the wicked might be equally intelligent, but only the former should understand. This is confirmed by our Lord's words in Matt. xi, 25 and xiii, 11.

We can distinguish, too, a distinct difference between the aims of Bible prophecies. While never employed to satisfy mere idle curiosity, yet we find many short-timed predictions which were fulfilled against those to whom they were at the time addressed (e.g. the false prophet of 1 Kings xiii, 11-23; the fate of Jezebel in 2 Kings ix, 10-37; and many others); others contain a blend of near and far fulfilments (such as Isaiah's predictions of Sennacherib's invasion, while their far view is of "the day of the Lord"); while yet again we have the type of prophecy, such as those of Daniel, already referred to, which carries us right to the close of prophetic time.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the style of language employed varies according to the aim of the prophecy. When the predicted event is close at hand, the words of the prophet are so clear and unmistakable, as a rule, that there can be no doubt about recognising the event when it takes place as the subject of the prediction (see, for example, the two instances referred to above). When, however, we come to a prophecy

the fulfilment of which is very remote, we find an altogether different mode of expression. In such a case, the prophet is confronted with the difficulty of delivering a message or vision which, being due for fulfilment in the remote future, has little or no resemblance to contemporary conditions, in words which would be intelligible to his listeners. Hence the use of symbols such as we find so freely employed in Daniel and Revelation : in the latter, indeed, the symbolic language used is such that it has been practically a sealed oracle until recent times, with a result that the interpretations put upon it have been as wide apart as the poles. And when we remember that the East has always been—and particularly those regions covered by Bible history—the land of imagery, symbolism, and parable, it is not surprising to find this method of interpretation employed in the Scriptures. Our Lord used it in all His parables and teachings ; and does not a fable or story impress its moral upon the mind of the oriental far more effectively than a mere recital of bald facts ?

Our Lord, also, in His parable of the sower, tells His disciples, in answer to their question, “ Why speakest Thou unto them in parables ? ” that He used this form of discourse for the very purpose of concealing truths which it was not deemed prudent his listeners should yet know. “ It is given unto you (the disciples) to know the mysteries (that is, a previously hidden truth, now divinely revealed, but in which a supernatural element remains in spite of the revelation) of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance : but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables : because they seeing see not ;

and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive (Isa. vi, 9-10): For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." (Matt. xiii, 11-17. See also Mark iv, 10-12; Luke viii, 9-10.)

Prophecy being essentially a revelation of the future, it is of course intended to be understood, but it does not follow that it was designed to be comprehended immediately it was uttered, nor by everyone who became acquainted with its announcements. In foretelling, for example, the first advent of Christ, its *results* might have been predicted as clearly and unmistakably as the event itself. But to have done so would have interfered with the free agency of man, and would have had the effect either of preventing the sacrifice of our Lord, or else have given the Jews of that day a valid excuse for bringing about the crucifixion in order to fulfil the prophecy.

On the other hand, not to have foretold the results at all would have been to deprive the Christian religion of one of its chief pillars of evidence, the fact that the life and death of Christ were predicted long before

they took place. Also, it would have justified present Jewish unbelief. The alternative was to reveal our Lord's life on earth, but in such a manner that those responsible for His death were quite unconscious they were the instruments whereby that which had been determined beforehand was duly fulfilled. The predictions were full and definite, yet capable of being misunderstood ; as a fact, they were not understood even by the disciples at first, nor are they understood to this day by the Jewish race. They *ought* to have known Him, but because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets read in their synagogues every sabbath day, they fulfilled them in condemning Him.

## CHAPTER II

### *" Search the Scriptures "* (John v, 39)

NOT only is the subject of Prophecy an absorbing and fascinating one, but it serves also to put us on our guard against evil influences and movements, the ultimate development of which is made manifest in the prophetic word.

There are, however, certain aspects of its study which should be put before the reader, in order that he may more clearly understand the attitude in which it should be approached. A wide distinction exists, and should be recognized, between those who soberly " search the Scriptures " with a view to reaching conclusions of which common sense can approve, and others who pose as prophets, and presume to foretell the future with the certitude of a time-table. While no employment of human intelligence is nobler than an investigation of the revealed purposes of God—" which things the angels desire to look into " (1 Peter i, 12)—few things, on the other hand, are so puerile as a presumptuous pretence of predicting the future, apart from such careful and cautious study of Divine Revelation. " The rash and fictitious theories of well-meaning interpreters, which have abounded in all ages, are responsible for much evil, and . . . have tended

for generations to discredit prophecy as a subject for serious investigation " (J. G. Taylor).

In the following pages the author has endeavoured to steer clear of any such theorising, his object being to elucidate the meaning and application of certain prophecies of world significance, and to rescue the study thereof from the discredit which a certain type of investigator has brought upon it. It is, no doubt, due largely to the continued falsifying by events of these rash predictions, that the idea has spread abroad that the study of prophecy is not only unpractical, but highly presumptuous. This notion, too, has been encouraged by passing, but ill-informed, allusions to the subject from platform and press, often made by those who know little or nothing of it, or its effects.

That, on the contrary, it was intended that Prophecy should be the subject of earnest and devout study is clearly indicated in our Lord's admonition to " search the Scriptures " (John v, 39), and not merely a portion of them, while St. Peter expressly tells us we do well to take heed to the " more sure word of prophecy . . . as unto a light that shineth in a dark place " (2 Peter i, 19). Furthermore, a special blessing is attached to such study in the closing book of the Bible, as if to emphasise its importance by this final exhortation (see Rev. i, 3).

It is surely, also, a serious reflection upon the wisdom of the Almighty to suggest it is wrong to study a subject to which the Bible gives such prominence—one-third of Scripture consists of prophecy—and of which the prophets themselves, who wrote by divine inspiration, were devout students. On the other hand, it is well calculated to make those who pursue it both practical and devout Christians. It makes clear events

which otherwise appear unaccountable, and above all instils optimism for the future, a quality never so necessary as it is to-day in a world seething with unrest and discontent.

In both the Old and New Testaments are we assured that the prophetic writings were given for our enlightenment. St. Paul frequently comforts his readers with this assurance (1 Thess. v), and in the Old Testament Amos, the prophet, says: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret to His servants" (Amos iii, 7).

Our Lord Himself implies that not mere idle curiosity is intended to be served by the study and unfolding of prophecy in the words of Matt. xxiv, 24-26, spoken to His disciples when revealing the tribulations which would come upon this world in these "latter days," and emphasises His warnings by adding the words, "Behold, I have told you before," thus marking the importance of regulating thereby our actions and beliefs. He also adds words of encouragement to those who are willing to profit by these warnings which prophecy conveys: "See that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass" (Matt. xxiv, 6: See also Mark xiii, 7, and John xiv, 27).

Notwithstanding the clear evidence the Bible itself thus discloses regarding the importance of a study of its prophetic record, it is common knowledge that the Church as a whole almost totally disregards it. For every discourse on prophecy that is delivered, a thousand, or more, moral or doctrinal sermons are preached.

"Authenticated by Jesus Christ and by the inspired writers of the New Testament; quoted, declared to be in many respects fulfilled, but holding also a far



larger body of prediction as yet unfulfilled ;<sup>1</sup> called by the Apostle Peter ' a light that shineth in a dark place ' to which we of this age ' do well to take heed,'—there is yet a neglect of the prophetic writings which has no parallel in our attitude towards any other great and serious literature. It is impossible to overstate the loss to spirituality, to comprehension of God in Himself and in His inimitable purposes towards the earth and the race of men, resulting from this neglect of nearly one-fourth in bulk of the Bible " (Dr. Scofield).

It should be unnecessary to urge the importance of this subject, or draw attention, as Dr. Scofield above, and numerous other writers thereon have, to its neglect by the very people whose first duty it should be to expound it.<sup>2</sup> The Bible is far more than being merely a text-book of theology and morals, written for our religious instruction and guidance, yet this is the standpoint generally adopted in nearly all sermons preached from our pulpits. *It is also, and more especially, a record of all the salient facts respecting such world-movements in history as have been concerned with the welfare*

<sup>1</sup> This is the Futurist view of prophecy, which will be discussed in a later chapter ; as a fact little of prophecy now remains to see its fulfilment, most of it being already a matter of history, or else is being rapidly fulfilled by current events.

<sup>2</sup> " True prophetic study is an enquiry into those unsearchable counsels, those deep riches of Divine wisdom and knowledge. Beneath the light it gives the Scriptures are no longer an heterogeneous compilation of religious books, but one harmonious whole from which no part could be omitted without destroying the completeness of the revelation. And yet the study is disparaged in the Churches as being of no practical importance. If the Churches are leavened with scepticism at this moment, their neglect of prophetic study in this its true and broader aspect has done more than all the rationalism of Germany to promote the evil. Sceptics may boast of learned Professors and Doctors of Divinity among their ranks, but we may challenge them to name a single one of the number who has given proof that he knows anything whatever of these deeper mysteries of revelation."—(The late Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.)

*of the covenant seed of Abraham* ; a record of the progressive revelation the Almighty has vouchsafed to man, and the Divine history of our race in connection with such revelation. Some may regard it only as the religious literature of the Jewish race, and of the Christian Church in early Apostolic times, but the diligent student will find therein the great scheme of God's purpose working out its course from the beginning to the close of man's activity on this planet.

Errors of interpretation, and a " jumping to conclusions," which a certain type of exponent falls into, are often due to the disregard of another Scriptural exhortation respecting prophecy contained in the words of 2 Peter i, 20 : " No prophecy . . . is of *private* interpretation " ; that is to say, no prophecy must be regarded *solely by itself*, but in conjunction with other prophecies bearing on the same subject. Prophecies frequently unfold themselves only by stages, and to find their full significance often requires searching the utterances of more than one prediction. To judge what the significance of any particular world-event may be requires more than a single quotation from some supposedly applicable text, and the disregard of this principle has, without doubt, contributed towards bringing the study of prophecy into disfavour, owing to inability to understand its purport. This is nowhere better shown than in the almost total misapplication of those prophecies relating to the destiny of Israel and Judah. Hence, also, the popular and easy method of spiritualising them away.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> " It is high time for the Church to awake out of its sleep about Old Testament prophecy. From the time of Jerome and Origen down to the present men have gone on in a pernicious habit of ' spiritualising ' the words of the prophets until their true meaning has been well nigh buried. . . . It is high time to fall back upon

On the other hand, a rational study of the subject enables us, by examining such prophecies as have been fulfilled by past history, or are being fulfilled by the development of current events, to draw logical conclusions therefrom, and deduce, by historical interpretation, what probabilities the future has in store for us. Further than this we have no right to go.

We cannot, for example, say when precisely the Second Advent, the next great event in the world's history, will take place: we are expressly told the actual day and hour are hidden from us (see Mark xiii, 32-33), and only the foolish attempt to be dogmatic. All prophecy, however, points to its realisation as *probably* falling within the next ten or twelve years and certainly in the lifetime of this generation, so that we

the good old principle that Scripture generally means what it seems to mean, and to beware of that semi-sceptical argument—such and such an interpretation cannot be correct because it seems to us carnal. It is high time for Christians to interpret unfulfilled prophecy *by the light of prophecy already fulfilled*.

"The scattering (of the Jews) was literal; so also will be the gathering. . . . The rejection of Israel was literal; so also will be the restoration.

"What right have we to say that the words Judah, Zion, Israel, and Jerusalem ever mean anything but *literal* Judah, *literal* Zion, *literal* Israel, and *literal* Jerusalem?

"For centuries there has prevailed . . . an unwarrantable mode of dealing with the word 'Israel'; it has been interpreted in many passages of the Psalms and Prophets as if it meant nothing more than Christian believers. Have promises been held out to Israel? Men have been told continually they are addressed to Gentile Saints. Have glorious things been described as laid up in store for Israel? Men have been incessantly told that they describe the victories and triumphs of the Gospel in Christian Churches. . . .

"Against that system I have long protested. . . . I protest against the habit of allegorising plain sayings of the Word of God concerning the future history of the nation Israel, and explaining away the fulness of their contents in order to accommodate them to the Gentile Church. I believe the habit to be unwarranted by anything in Scripture, and to draw after it a long train of evil consequences."—(The late Dr. J. C. Ryle, Bishop of Liverpool, in *Coming Events and Present Duties*.)

are not left in such ignorance concerning that day that it should come upon us as a thief in the night (see 1 Thess. v, 4). We must always remember, however, that the Almighty may see fit to delay or accelerate the coming of that day which shall usher in that new order of things for which mankind throughout the whole world is so sorely in need, and which politicians the world over have been vainly seeking to bring about out of the chaos which the late war has bequeathed us. The process of restitution and re-construction, however, will be brought about, not by unaided man, but by a Power from above, and the signs of its approach, which are manifesting themselves with such startling clearness to all those able to discern them (as the last two years—and the year 1926 in particular—have indicated in no uncertain manner), suggest it *may* be nearer than many, even amongst those who are looking for it, expect. This, at least, is the writer's belief, a belief founded on a comparison of current happenings, both in politics, domestic and foreign, and in the world of nature, with the corresponding " signs " set forth in Scripture as heralding its approach.

Dr. Grattan Guinness, in his *Approaching End of the Age*, has very aptly drawn the following analogy between the events of these " latter days " and the position of travellers at the end of a long railway journey, a simile which is even more appropriate to-day than when it was first written over forty-five years ago, and the reader cannot but be struck with its singular aptness. He says :

" We are in the position of travellers, approaching a large and to them, unknown city, at the end of a long railway journey. They are aware of the distance to be travelled, of the stations to be passed on the way, and

of the time required for the transit. The milestones have long shown them they are rapidly nearing their goal ; the time the journey was to occupy has elapsed, and they have observed that the station just passed was the last but one. Yet the terminus in the strange city may have several distinct platforms, separated from each other by short distances ; the train may draw up at one or two before it comes to a final stand at the last. . . . Still they have no hesitation in making their preparations for leaving the carriage . . . they would smile at the man who should dispute their conviction. . . . At any rate, the long journey lies behind, the desired goal is all but reached. It is easy to be patient, and not difficult to bear a momentary disappointment, because the main result is certain, and the end close at hand."

" The time required for the transit " is represented by the great " Seven Times " of prophecy, denoted in the New Testament as " the Times of the Gentiles " (Luke xxi, 24). The " last station but one " had only just been passed when Grattan Guinness wrote the foregoing, the fall of the Temporal Power of Rome in 1870 (*vide* our Chronological chart). *That we have now arrived in the terminus itself*, at the first platform of which our train has already drawn up, is proved by the fulfilment, in 1917, of our Lord's prophecy respecting Jerusalem through its capture by Allenby from the Turks. That city is now no longer " trodden down of the Gentiles," and this fact was to be a definite sign that the " Times of the Gentiles," or period of Gentile dominion in the world, which is to give place to the Kingdom of Christ on earth, were determined. *This is clear proof that the final platform in our terminus cannot now be far off.*

There is, again, another type of expositor who discredits the interpretation of prophecy by obscuring the meaning of plain words in order to force the prophecy to foretell some particular event, instead of waiting for the event to prove the prophecy.

Thus many people confidently connected the late war with the Armageddon of the Apocalypse, forgetting, however, that a "place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon," is situated not in France nor in Flanders, but in Palestine, where the decisive battle of this world's history has yet to be fought.

While the late world-wide war fell without doubt within the scope of prophecy, it was not in fulfilment of any particular judgment: to say, however, its *results* are in fulfilment thereof, and are happening as anticipated, is much nearer the truth. The further expansion of the British Empire, for example, coupled with our mandates over Mesopotamia and Palestine (though restricted in scope), the extinction of the former Turkish Empire (the remnants of which are now a Republic), and particularly the freeing of Jerusalem, are some of the results of that war duly foretold in Scripture.

True, there were many superficial features about it which, at first sight, seemed to warrant associating it with Armageddon: such as its world-wide embrace and the enormous numbers involved in it; the blasphemous utterances of the ex-Kaiser and his generals, the barbarities of his hordes; these marks seemed to identify him with the Antichrist of St. John and the Gog of Ezekiel. The last nine years, however, should by now have made clear to most people that the war to end all war has not yet been fought. Civil and international disputes, armed risings and insurrections,

necessitating the use of armed force to quell them, have been almost continuous in one part of the world or another ever since the date of the armistice ; while the declared intention of Bolshevia to bring about universal revolution and overthrow the existing order of civilisation, coupled with its open and undisguised propaganda and preparations to this end, should leave little doubt as to the direction in which events are moving.

## CHAPTER III

“ *Write the vision and make it plain* ” (Hab. ii, 2)

STUDENTS of Prophecy are generally adherents of one or other of two schools of prophetic interpretation, the *Historical* and the *Futurist*.

The last-named deny the historical significance of many prophecies by making them refer to events yet to take place *after* the Second Coming of our Lord, maintaining that the present Christian Dispensation is not recognised in prophecy, thereby implying a great hiatus or “ blank ” in Divine Revelation, a view which common sense alone will find it difficult to accept. To ignore thus a period of the world's history fraught with such far-reaching consequences to the human race, and to consider it as unaccounted for in prophecy and therefore of little or no consequence, is surely not only illogical, but renders the system practically valueless as any real guide to the elucidation of God's Word.

Futurists also interpret time, as well as much else in prophecy, *literally* (e.g. their view of Antichrist as an *individual* atheist who will reign for a *literal* three and a half years, just previous to the Second Advent, when he really represents a *system*<sup>1</sup>), when, on the other hand, it is only intended as a cypher or symbol. Did prophecy, which deals with events not to see their fulfilment till many centuries had elapsed after its

<sup>1</sup> This subject of Antichrist will be considered later.



utterance, proclaim itself literally, it would have defeated its purpose, which is to conceal or withhold the facts respecting the future and its development until the time approaches for the application and fulfilment of the prediction to take place. In order, therefore, to fulfil this essential condition, both of containing the truth and at the same time concealing it, the language of cypher and symbolism is used. It is inability to appreciate this point that leads so many expositors to spiritualise what really refers to literal facts.

If prophecy stated its facts in plain language such as all could understand at the time of its utterance, it would have lost all significance for the future, and would have nullified the whole purport of the prophet acting as the mouthpiece of the Almighty. God's purpose is to disclose the future only by degrees, and it is only in our own day that it may safely be said the light of prophecy revealed has become so bright that we may read it with assurance of understanding. The object of prophecy, therefore, is not to disclose the events of history in such a way that it could be understood respecting the time, place and circumstances of its fulfilment, before the time of such fulfilment drew nigh, but to *warn beforehand*, and give a general indication by the signs accompanying, when such events are about to take place. The lesson taught throughout all prophecy, and emphasised by our Lord, is *watchfulness*, and not to jump to conclusions concerning predictions which, while correct in themselves, are necessarily beyond our understanding until proved by their fulfilment.

Prophecy is thus the channel whereby God shows His fore-knowledge concerning the world and mankind which He created, and such is its intention (2 Peter i, 21). For if it proclaimed itself in language all could

read beforehand, man would, in cases where such prophecy seemed unfavourable to himself, alter the course of events to bring about the desired result. Alternatively, if man could read the future and see whither his efforts were leading, but be powerless to alter them, the world would have been plunged into such depths of fatalism and despair that all desire to progress, spiritually and materially, would have become lost.

Prophecy has been aptly described as similar to science in that both employ their own peculiar language. Therefore, to be able to understand prophecy and translate it into easily comprehended language, we must first make ourselves acquainted with the modes of expression it uses, just as to understand any particular science we must learn its peculiar terms and what they mean.

The *Futurist* view of prophetic interpretation originated in its present form at the close of the 16th century, and was adopted by the Jesuits to relieve the Papacy from the terrible stigma cast upon it by Historicists.

With the same purpose in view, and at about the same time, the *Praeterist* system was evolved, which refers these prophecies to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and to Rome *before* the adoption of Christianity; that is to say, they were fulfilled long ago in the past. This school flourished chiefly in Germany, while the Futurists gained most adherents in England and still have a large following. The Praeterist school, however, is now practically defunct and has no influence on current history.

The intermediate or *Historical* school is, in the writer's

opinion, the most rational and reasonable of the three, and, as a matter of history, is the oldest of them, being held with intense conviction of truth by the Reformers of the sixteenth century, while it originated as early as the twelfth century with those who, even at that early date, began to protest against the growing corruption of Rome. The other two systems, however, were merely inventions on the part of Rome in order to discover some means of nullifying the damaging effects of the Reformers upon the Papacy, and of diverting them into another channel. Both, therefore, are of Jesuitical origin, a fact which should at once render them suspect in the eyes of all true Protestants. Their aim was not to interpret the true meaning of Scriptural prophecy, as commentators would have us believe, but to invent plausible explanations which, while appearing to offer a solution, should, at the same time, divert its proper application.

The *Historical* system, on the other hand, which sees in the Church of Rome and in the Papacy the fulfilment of the prophecies of Babylon and the Beast, and which interprets the “ times ” of the Apocalypse on the year-day scale, presents a uniform, continuous, and consistent interpretation, from the earliest times all through the ages and down to the present, while it provides for a continuation of the same developments right up to the close of prophetic time. It makes clear that, from the days of the Babylonian Empire of Daniel’s Image—the era which saw the commencement of the “ Times of the Gentiles ”—until the Restoration of God’s Chosen People, re-united Israel, to the whole of the Covenant Land, everything has been provided for in Prophecy, and that the Almighty is working out His purpose. It is, also, the *only* system of interpretation which

satisfactorily explains Daniel's great prophecy of the " Seventy weeks," as we shall make clear to the reader when we come to examine that prediction in detail : and in addition it, alone of the three systems, provides a logical and satisfactory understanding of Antichrist. It is, moreover, impossible to alter the course of past history, which is simply fulfilled prophecy, and no method of prophetic interpretation can be wrong *which accurately corresponds with all that has so far transpired*. So much cannot be said of either of the other schools of interpretation ; in fact, while one says prophecy has been fulfilled in the past, the other asserts it refers to the future. Both, therefore, ignore or pass over nineteen hundred years of the world's history. On the other hand, there is strong evidence that that system which history has proved correct in the past, and which, therefore, cannot be disputed, will prove equally sound regarding what remains of the future.

There is, however, this very remarkable fact in common respecting both the Historical and the Futurist schools of interpretation, and it constitutes a wonderful testimony to the truth of Scriptural Prophecy and its fulfilment. Notwithstanding that the Futurists, by their system of interpretation, are wholly deprived of all guidance afforded by chronologic proof such as the Historicists possess, yet they, equally with their opponents, are convinced we are living in the last days of the " time of the end."

We have already alluded to some of the causes which have tended to bring about a neglect of prophetic study and make it fall into disfavour. Yet what can be expected so long as there exist two rival schools of interpretation, one of which says prophecy is being fulfilled almost every day, and the sands of time are

consequently fast running out, while the other, equally convinced of the truth of its method of interpretation, says the bulk of prophecy applies to the future and therefore concerns not the present generation.

Dr. Grattan Guinness, in his *Approaching End of the Age*, urged the great importance of clearing up the questions at issue between them in view of the vital character they bore with respect to the destiny of mankind. If the matter was urgent over forty-five years ago, it is much more so to-day, and as his warning is doubly necessary to the present generation, we need make no apology for repeating his words :

" We are strongly of opinion that the questions at issue between Historical and Futurist interpreters of prophecy should be both patiently studied and fully discussed . . . with a view to their removal.

" One system or the other must be erroneous ; surely it is not hopeless to discover which. No generation of Christians could ever have attempted the task with such a prospect of success as our own ; not only is there a special promise to the wise in the time of the end that they *shall* understand these things, but the very nature of the case makes it clear that if the Historic system be the true one, *we* are in a better position to prove it than our predecessors could be, for every fresh fulfilment that can be indicated strengthens the proof.

" ' The days are at hand,' . . . and the testimony of the Church on this great subject *should be as clear and as unanimous as possible*, for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for the battle ? The world will never give heed to the warnings of the prophetic word, while the ministers of that word differ diametrically among themselves as to its true meaning :

nor will Christians be roused to any such deep and real conviction of the nearness of the end as will produce practical results, by the exposition of varying and inconsistent views. At this eleventh hour, if ever, the predictions of the Word of God ought to be clear to wise and humble students, nor should such rest content without an honest attempt to compare and resolve their differences."

It seems hardly likely, in these rapidly closing days of the "time of the end," that such a consummation will be achieved, since these differences of opinion are just as acute as when Dr. Guinness first appealed for their settlement, and the time available in which to do so is so much shorter. The most we can hope to accomplish is to gather as many as possible during the days that remain to us into the fold of those who look for the nearness of the coming of the kingdom of God on earth, that they may be accounted worthy to share its joys.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. xxiv, 44).

## CHAPTER IV

*" A Light that shineth in a dark place " (2 Peter i, 19)*

THE principal themes of prophecy deal with : (i) Israel, the Covenant race by virtue of God's promise to Abraham, their captivities, dispersion and eventual restoration to be the first of all nations : (ii) The coming of the Messiah and His rejection : (iii) The Second Advent of Christ and the regathering of all Israel (i.e. Israel and Judah) : (iv) the great prophetic visions of Daniel and St. John which give in epitome the course of this world's empires to the close of prophetic time.

The whole period of time revealed in Prophecy, from Abraham to its conclusion at the close of the " time of the end," is apparently divided into two great parts of equal, or nearly equal, duration. Abraham lived in the 20th century B.C. ; we are to-day in the 20th century A.D. Prophetic time, therefore, appears to be equally divided into pre-Christian and Christian days : the former the time of the Covenant Promises which Christ, midway, came to confirm by the New Covenant, the Christian dispensation witnessing their fulfilment.

If to this period we add the 2,000 years back from Abraham to Adam, we have an era of six millenniums revealed in Scripture as the time of man's sojourn on earth—the story of humanity in relation to God. This is followed by a final period of a thousand years—

generally referred to as the Millennium—when the world will enjoy the ideal conditions consequent on Christ's Personal rule on earth, as a contrast to the previous six millenniums of rule by man with all its human failings. Herein we have an analogy with the six "days" of creation ending in the seventh "day" of rest. This is in accordance with an ancient Jewish tradition to the effect that from the creation of Adam to the Millennium is to be a period of 6,000 years.

To take the first heading under which we may consider the different themes of Scripture prophecy, those which are addressed to Israel, the Covenant race, and which occupy a leading place in the prophetic writings, we are at once confronted with the question, "What race to-day fulfils the conditions implied in these promises to Abraham which were made, not to him and his immediate descendants, but to his descendants *in perpetuity*?" Since also these promises were absolutely *unconditional*, they cannot have been withdrawn or abrogated, and while, too, the Almighty is often said to have "repented" in regard to threatened judgments, Scripture records no instances of His failure to fulfil a promise of blessing, such as was made to Abraham. They cannot, therefore (nor the prophecies arising therefrom), "remain as inspiring ideals of the future which God would fain see realised," as the late Dr. Driver has described them, but must see their accomplishment in some race or people *to-day*.

The answer to the foregoing is found in the teaching of British-Israel Identity, which makes clear that the prophecies specifically addressed to the House of Israel are confirmed in the past history and present-day status of the British Empire and its offshoot the



U.S.A., as distinct from those addressed to the House of Judah, the lesser branch, at present " broken off " (Rom. xi, 20).

The proofs and arguments upholding this truth can only be briefly enumerated here. To give them *in extenso* would entail increasing the length of this essay beyond what is desirable in view of its purpose : the reader is referred to the special literature of the subject which is now very extensive and deals with it from all possible points of view.<sup>1</sup> This identity is founded upon the belief that the Bible outlines the development of a race throughout the centuries, springing originally from the same parental stock as the Jews, but fulfilling after a certain date (the schism under Rehoboam) a mission *altogether different*. While all Jews are Israelites, *all Israelites are NOT Jews*. The latter derive their name from their father Judah ; the Israelites from their grandfather Israel (or Jacob).

That these two branches have been set apart to fulfil a different mission on earth is clearly proved by the national development of Israel, and the absence of such development in the Jew, the Bible description of the latter agreeing exactly with the Jew as found in the world to-day ; while the condition of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of the British Empire in particular, agrees exactly with what prophecy foretold should happen to the House of Israel. Israelite and Jew, then, have differing destinies, divinely and, therefore, unalterably pre-determined. For throughout the whole Bible Jew and Israelite are kept clearly distinct, and they are not synonymous terms for the same people.

<sup>1</sup> British-Israel Identity will be found examined and explained in the light of prophecy and history in Part I of the author's recently published *The Witness of the Great Pyramid* (Covenant Publishing Co. Ltd.).

Prophecies addressed to Judah apply only to Judah, and those to Israel only to Israel.

Far too many people still answer the question, "What has become of the people of Israel, who were to be so great?" by the reply, "They are represented to-day by a mere handful of Jews," an answer not only incorrect, but showing also a superficial acquaintance with Bible history and prophecy. It is commonly maintained—or suggested—that there is no Israel apart from the Jew. Yet Jews themselves—and they, if anyone, should know something about it—do not think so; they do recognise their lost brethren as a distinct entity in existence to-day somewhere, and pray in their synagogues at stated times for their welfare and eventual return.<sup>1</sup>

"Just as we must remember that the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah were totally distinct, and that the former was the true kingdom of the prophecies, the latter merely a temporary support of the expropriated throne of David, so also we must bear in mind that there were two entirely different fates in store for the two peoples of Israel and Judah." The foregoing, from Major Weldon's *Evolution of Israel*, succinctly states the great difference between Israel and Judah throughout the Bible, and what that difference implies.

The view of the Church, which may be described as the "orthodox" view, is that the Church has taken the place of Israel, who has been rejected; that is to

<sup>1</sup> "Make pleasant, O Lord, the words of Thy law in our mouth, and in the mouth of Thy people, the House of Israel, so that we and Thy people, the House of Israel, may all know Thy name."

"As for our brethren, the whole House of Israel, have mercy upon them, and bring them forth from trouble."

"Make peace for us, and for all Israel."—(From the *Authorised Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire*, 9th ed., 1912.)

say, all these *definite* promises and prophecies have been spiritualised, thereby seeking to find in them meanings other than the true grammatical and obvious meanings. To understand the Bible as meaning what it says, is, to-day, looked upon as heterodox.

Spiritualising God's promises implies that He did not mean what He so emphatically declared; yet passage after passage in the Bible distinctly states that the instrument whereby the Covenant was to be fulfilled was to be A NATION,<sup>1</sup> and that these privileges are reserved for the descendants of Abraham. Its final fulfilment is still in the future, but the Covenant holds good, now and for ever; it is an everlasting one.

“ My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips ” (Ps. lxxxix, 34). What words could be more definite than these, or those of Heb. vi, 13-18, which makes it as clear as possible that the Abrahamic Covenant was for the benefit of his future descendants, “ the heirs of promise,” and cannot possibly apply to an institution like the Church. Those who can only see the Church as an instrument of God's will on earth, considering a Nation-Church as an anomaly, overlook the fact that it is impossible to divorce the two; for a Church cannot exist alone, without a nation, but must be part of it, just as the body is the resting-place of the soul.

Some even, rightly refusing to accept this spiritualising method because their common-sense declined the idea that the Church of the New Testament is the Israel of the Old, yet seeing how specific and definite

<sup>1</sup> “ The Stone which the builders rejected (rejection of Christ by the Jews) is become the head of the corner : . . . Therefore I say unto you (the Jews), the Kingdom of God (Covenant Promises) shall be taken from you, and given to a NATION bringing forth the fruits thereof.”—(Matt. xxi, 42-3.)

the promises and prophecies concerning Israel were, but at the same time unable to see wherein they were fulfilled, have been obliged to reject the Bible altogether. It is a well-known fact, for example, that the historian Hume justified his unbelief, like Bradlaugh and others, by what he declared was the failure of God's promises to Israel. Had they possessed the key of British-Israel Identity, which opens the door to the right interpretation of prophecy, explains what at first sight appear to be contradictions and anomalies, and harmonises all the facts of history, they would not have been driven to such expedients. It fulfils the very letter of prophecy, explains our growth and development as nothing else can, and justifies our faith in the Almighty. It encourages the highest aspirations of our race, a spirit of hope in adversity, and of optimism for the future.<sup>1</sup>

The distinction between the ten-tribed northern kingdom of Israel and the two-tribed southern kingdom of Judah (Judah and Benjamin), a distinction which began before their final separation under Jeroboam and Rehoboam (under David and Ishbosheth—2 Sam. ii, 4-11, this temporary severance lasting seven and a half years), is never lost sight of in prophecy, though the majority of people have never realised it, but confuse the two houses of Israel and Judah together. Some passages, however, do refer to the whole *twelve*

<sup>1</sup> "If the British Empire is not Israel, then none of the prophecies concerning Israel are YET fulfilled! Then we are on the horns of a dilemma. First, God has failed in His promises; secondly, we shall lose all we have got, and God has been playing with us, for we hold all that Israel is supposed to hold, and yet there is some other nation not yet developed which is to take all this, as well as our unique character and reputation in the world (for Israel is to have it all), and if we are not Israel we shall have to give it all up, even the Coronation Stone itself."—(Bishop of the Falkland Islands, cited from *National Message* of Dec. 11th, 1926.)

tribes when speaking of Israel, as the Word does up to the time of Solomon, but such reference generally applies to their restored and re-united state at the close of the " Times of the Gentiles," the preliminary stages of which are being enacted to-day by the return of Jews to Palestine under our protection.

That the so-called lost ten tribes exist somewhere few who give any thought to the matter can doubt. If, under the age-long persecution which has been the lot of the remnant of Judah ever since the sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Jews have yet multiplied so that to-day they number about 14 millions of people, what must be the number of the far larger original kingdom of ten tribes? Ten tribes of the same (Hebrew) stock, equally virile, but who have spread themselves over the face of the earth without having had to face the persecution which has been meted out to Judah and Levi. Surely it is only logical to affirm they must be somewhere in their multitudes which can hardly be numbered. Yet when people have tried to look for them, they have generally searched amongst Afghan tribes, Red Indians, Lapps, and other insignificant races, who at most number but a few thousands! In fact, they have searched everywhere and anywhere rather than in the right place—the Anglo-Saxon community of English-speaking peoples, *who alone, of all the races in the world, fulfil in every particular the conditions laid down in Scripture regarding Israel in the " latter days."*

Both Israel and Judah became idolatrous, and both kingdoms were punished by being taken into captivity : Israel by the Assyrians in 720-717 B.C., and Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon in 585 B.C. These two captivities are thus separated from one another

by 135 years in point of time, and by over 350 miles in point of distance. A *portion* of Judah (the Jews) returned from their captivity, though history has since lost sight of Israel, but British-Israel truth is as " a light that shineth in a dark place," proving to thousands every year that they (Israel) are not lost as most people would have us believe, but are in existence to-day fulfilling the part appointed them.

The last historical reference in Scripture to the kingdom of Israel as a distinct entity is contained in 2 Kings xvii, 6, 23: " In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. . . . So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day." What became of Israel after this Bible history does not tell us, but information thereon can be found in Bible prophecies provided they are correctly applied, and it is because expositors as a class have failed to do this that the former nation of Israel is described as lost, the popular conception being that Israel *and* Judah returned together to Palestine in the days of Cyrus (536 B.C.), and that Israel as such has since become merged in Judah.

This idea overlooks the point referred to above, namely, the great difference both in time and locality between the two captivities, to say nothing of the clear statement of Ezra i, 5, that only part of Judah, Benjamin, and certain of the Levites, returned from Babylon. It is quite likely, however, that a few individual families from the other tribes joined the Jews in their return, and it was probably their descendants who formed that small body which alone recog-

nised the Messiah when He came among them, such as Simeon and Anna (Luke ii).

The fact is also often overlooked that many of the tribe of Judah did not return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple under the decree of Cyrus, as this decree affected only that portion which had been taken captive to Babylon in 585 B.C. It is recorded in 2 Kings xviii, that, while the Assyrians took Samaria in the ninth year of Hoshea, King of Israel, and the sixth of Hezekiah, King of Judah, they also, eight years later, (“ 14th year of Hezekiah ”) captured “ all the fenced cities of Judah,” thus carrying away large numbers of the tribe of Judea into Assyria *as well as* the whole of the northern kingdom of Israel. These people, therefore, from the cities of Judah, never participated in the Babylonian captivity, and consequently never returned therefrom, but shared with the ten-tribed Israelites those migrations which eventually brought them into these “ isles of the west.” Thus are Israel and Judah partially united in the British Isles to-day. It would therefore be much more accurate to say that a large portion of Judah (to the number of 200,000, according to the monumental inscriptions), since it was removed to the same place of captivity, became absorbed in Israel, than to assert, as is generally done, that Israel has been merged—and so “ lost ”—in Judah. The modern Jew, in fact, so far from being all Israel, *is not even all Judah!*

The most frequent criticism advanced against British-Israel Identity by those who are hearing of it for the first time is that it is selfish, that it believes we are better than other nations, and on the ground that it teaches to look for Divine favour, personal and

national, by virtue of *race* rather than *righteousness*. " God is no respecter of persons " (Acts x, 34), it will be asserted, and no particular race or nation is privileged above others. These words of St. Peter, however, mean that all men have equal *spiritual* rights, a claim no believer in our identity would question for a moment, and such is the teaching of St. Paul in Gal. iii, 28. These passages apply to *individuals*, irrespective of race, colour, or sex ; it is a common error to make conditions apply to persons where nations are intended, and *vice versa*, as in this instance. We have been granted special favours and privileges simply to enable us to carry out certain responsibilities, and to fulfil the purposes intended by the Almighty, not for our benefit alone, *but for the ultimate benefit of the whole world*.

Further, it should be understood that we do not regard the British Nation—or, for the matter of that, any particular nation or people—as being specially favoured, as usually understood by that word. The Bible does *not* claim for any nation the special favour of God at *the expense of any other race or nation*. Favouritism, as generally understood and practised in this imperfect world, nearly always means that one person gains at someone else's expense, whether applied between individuals or between nations. This, however, is emphatically not the view which Scripture takes regarding Divine favour. Scripture nowhere claims the special favour of the Almighty for one nation at the expense or detriment of any other nation or people, but it *does* clearly assert that there is *one* particular nation that has been chosen, dedicated, and set apart, and blessed above all others, but only to the end that it might, in turn, be a blessing to all other nations. And that one nation is Israel.



Even as the craftsman has the perfect right to select his own tools, the builder his own materials, or the master his own servants, so has God the right to choose that nation which shall be the instrument of working out *His* purpose on earth.

It is not necessary, however, to be a believer in British-Israel Truth to know that the British Empire *has* been under the special guidance and protection of the Almighty. *The whole of history proves it.* It was solely on these grounds, and more particularly on the unique position of our Empire in the world since the accession of Queen Victoria, that the writer became convinced, even as a school-boy, over thirty years ago, and long before he ever heard of British-Israel teaching (in 1919), that, for some special purpose or other, Great Britain had been favoured above the rest of the world.

The question may also be asked, " If British-Israel Identity is true, why is it, then, after all these years, that the nation as a whole is still not only in ignorance of it, but many disbelieve in it and are open scoffers ? " The answer is found in Rom. xi, 25 : "*Blindness* in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."<sup>1</sup> The phenomenal spread of a knowledge of our real identity during the last few years, not only throughout the English-speaking peoples, but even in foreign countries, can only be due to the fact that but few years remain before " the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," when it will be

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the expression " the fulness of the Gentiles " is not the same as " the times of the Gentiles." The former is connected with Israel, and marks the completion of the purpose of God in this age in taking out from the Gentile nations " a people for His name"—Israel (see Acts xv, 14) ; the latter applies to the Babylonian succession of world empires revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. These two terms, however, synchronise.

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known to *all*. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped" (Isa. xxxv, 5).

"It was blasphemy to deny our birthright and responsibility. Our destiny in the world is no small one; we are peopling great tracts of the earth, and carrying thither our language and our customs. The migration of that peculiar tribe from Ur of the Chaldees, under the leadership of that splendid old chief, Abram, into a land of promise, was an event fraught in the long run with stupendous results to the human race" (Sir Oliver Lodge).

The British Empire expands, frequently without our intention or desire. We have often been compelled, as in the case of Egypt, for example, in the interests of civilisation, to intervene in the affairs of other nations, and when the immediate object has been attained, have been obliged to stay.

Again, the mandates over Iraq and Palestine—as over the former German colonies in S. Africa and elsewhere—were none of our seeking, and demands are made, from time to time, on the pretext of economy, that we should withdraw. Those, however, who realise our true identity, know that the *whole* of the Promised Land, which is much more than insignificant Palestine, to its last inch, will be eventually restored in its entirety to the Covenant Race, and that the operation of our mandates over Iraq and Palestine are but stepping-stones to the final achievement of the fulfilment of prophecy. To haul down the British flag in any part of the Promised Land, "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. xv, 18), would be not only false economy—as it would only

have to be eventually regained—but would be contrary to the will of the Almighty.

Our way is indeed hidden from us, but it is never hidden from God. All contingencies are provided for, and it is the knowledge of this fact that gives ground for confidence in the future, however uncertain it may seem at any given moment, and which makes all those who accept British-Israel truth confirmed optimists.

God has said in His Word that no weapon formed against us shall prevail, and since our final arrival in these " isles of safety," in 1066, it has been the historical fact that all attempts at invasion and conquest have failed, a record of which no other nation can boast, and should yet another attempt be made to bring us low, either by Communistic elements in our midst or by an enemy abroad, singly or in combination, it will achieve no better result. (See Isa. liv, 17.) See also Isa. xli, 8-13, particularly verse 11, the truth of which history has proved not once, but many times. Spain, Holland, France and Germany have, in the past, been " incensed " against us, only to " be ashamed and confounded " as a consequence. All those who have warred against Great Britain have become " as a thing of nought." " For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand saying unto thee, Fear not ; I will help thee."

## CHAPTER V

### " SEVEN TIMES "

BEFORE turning to consider the prophecies which forecast world events falling within the great period known as the " Times of the Gentiles," we will introduce the subject by an explanation of the symbols and cyphers used, and their interpretation, as this is necessary to their understanding.

From the earliest days, statements of time have been an important element in Divine predictions. The 120 years that should elapse before the Flood (Gen. vi, 3), the 400 years' affliction of Abraham's seed, the forty years in the wilderness, the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity, all these, and many other periods were announced beforehand. Similarly, in the New Testament, Christ foretold the period He would be in the grave, saying " the third day He shall rise again." These and such-like predictions, given simply to reveal the future, are accompanied by plain, literal statements of time. But there is also another type of prediction, in which a *double* object may be traced, namely, to reveal and at the same time *conceal* some future event. This is particularly the case with the revelations of Daniel and St. John which relate to the events of this dispensation. They are not couched in ordinary language, but in the language of cypher and symbolism which require to be translated before they can be understood. This does not, however, mean they are therefore incomprehensible, for incomprehensible pro-

phesy could serve no conceivable purpose. But prophecy which would be obscure for a time, and clear only after the lapse of ages, would serve the double object of concealing from one generation that which it was not desirable for it to know, but revealing it to a future one to whom the knowledge was essential.

These prophecies, as revealed to Daniel and St. John, may be likened to miniature representations of future events which the prophet reproduces in a verbal description: they are, in fact, analogous to a geographer's representation of the surface of the earth. They must, therefore, like the latter, employ some definite scale for purposes of reference, otherwise they will be unintelligible. Further, if the representation is to be correctly in proportion throughout, the scale must be a uniform one. This scale is given us in Scripture itself as "a day for a year" (Ezek. iv, 6: see also Num. xiv, 34: also Luke xiii, 32-33, where our Lord uses the same cypher to denote the term of His earthly ministry). A "week," therefore, will represent seven years, a "month" thirty years, and a "time," or year, 360 years.

The great prophetic period of "Seven Times," therefore, revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the Image, which gives in prophetic form the time during which the earth would be subject to Gentile domination, is  $7 \times 360$ , or 2,520 years, and is known as the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi, 24). Half this period is described as "time, times, and a half" (or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times 360 = 1,260 years), as "time, times, and the dividing of time" (Dan. vii, 25) and as "forty-two months" (Rev. xi, 2; xiii, 5).

The great span of time embraced in the era of the "Seven Times," and the fact that it leads up to the millennial rule of Christ on earth, constitute it the

most important of all prophetic periods. Arithmetically, also, it is a most remarkable number, as distinct from all other numbers as the circle is geometrically distinct from all other forms. It is not a number that could possibly have been selected by chance for the leading position it holds in prophecy. Its use in preference to all other numbers which might have been selected can only be explained as an indication of Divine intelligent design. The omniscient God has purposely passed over all other conceivable numbers, any one of which might have been made the basis of chronologic prophecy, in order that He might select one particular number which is altogether unique. 2,520 is the least common multiple of the first ten numbers; that is to say, it is the first in the entire series of numbers which is exactly divisible by all the first ten numerals; every number from 1 to 10 will divide into it without remainder.

Now ten, it should be noted, is a natural numerical radix, so that the first ten numbers form a complete and fundamental series, and their least common multiple is likewise a great fundamental number in arithmetic. It is capable, by its very nature, of numerous regular divisions, and harmonises in itself several periods of different orders and magnitudes in a way no other number could do.

To find out from what date in the past the period of "Seven Times" is to be reckoned we turn to Lev. xxvi, 18-24, wherein is set out the warning addressed to *all* Israel; the warning was unheeded, and the chastisement of "seven times" (not seven different punishments, but *one* punishment of long duration) was visited upon them.

Now the punishment of Israel and Judah did not begin on any one day nor at the same time, but was spread throughout several generations. The downfall of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel came about in 717 B.C.<sup>1</sup> with the capture of Samaria by the Assyrians under Sargon, and their taking into Assyria as captives, to be followed by the punishment and captivity of Judah between 604 and 585 B.C. Therefore, for 2,520 years from these dates, both Israel and Judah should be in banishment from the Covenant Land, during which the world would be under Gentile dominance until such time as they are restored again to their inheritance at the termination of this period.

Judah, indeed, was restored after seventy years, but this was only to enable them to fulfil the prophecy that they should bring forth the Messiah. But even this temporary restoration was under the yoke of foreign rulers, until they were finally banished in that great dispersion which began with the sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the end of which is not yet accomplished, but is rapidly nearing its close.

To make the foregoing clear, let us take a few dates from the captivity era and find the corresponding dates in the present.

The captivity of Judah began in 604 B.C.,<sup>2</sup> we would therefore expect that the equivalent year in the terminal era would mark an important stage in the lightening of their " seven times " punishment ; 2,520

<sup>1</sup> Vide page 345 of Messrs. Davidson's and Aldersmiths *The Great Pyramid* (vol. i) for confirmation of this date instead of the hitherto accepted one of 721 B.C. (See 2 Kings xviii, 9, 10 ; siege of Samaria, three years, 720-717 B.C.)

<sup>2</sup> This date is two years later than that generally given (606 B.C.), but Ptolemy's Canon of Kings, which historians have always hitherto adopted as basis, gives dates for the reigns from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus inclusive, all two years too early.

years from 604 B.C. bring us to A.D. 1917, the very year which saw the fulfilment, through the instrumentality of her sister nation, Israel, of our Lord's prophecy respecting Jerusalem in Luke xxi, 24. When Allenby delivered that city from the rule of the infidel and Gentile Turk, Jerusalem was no longer "trodden down."

No event in modern history has proved more conclusively than this that, coupled with our mandate over Palestine and Mesopotamia (the Covenant Land), Great Britain is none other than latter-day Israel, for if we are not, then Jerusalem is still being trodden down, and it remains for some other nation to expel us and lift this curse from it.

The end of the punishment will be 2,520 years from 585 B.C., the year which saw the last captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, and the mid-date of the final siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple taking place in August, 584 B.C. This event was foretold by Jeremiah, who at the same time predicted the eventual restoration of Israel and Judah under one king as they were in the time of Solomon, and the Millennial Advent of Christ (see Jer. xxxii and xxxiii) ; 2,520 years (solar) from 584-585 B.C. bring us to A.D. 1936 as the final year of the "Times of the Gentiles," and that which marks the end of this age as predicted in Matt. xxiv. This year also will prove conclusively that *whatever nation, in company with the Jews, then holds Palestine and Jerusalem must be the Covenant Race*, and will be identified to the whole world as the "stone" Empire of Daniel, which completes the destruction of the Gentile Image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream at Armageddon.

Let us now consider the "seven times" punishment of Israel. As this began earlier than that of Judah it



therefore ends correspondingly sooner, but the house of Israel cannot enter into its full benefits as the Covenant race till the final year of the “ Times of the Gentiles ” is reached, which we have seen will be 1936.

The final taking into captivity of the kingdom of Israel occurred in 717 B.C., and “ seven times ” thence bring us to the year A.D. 1804. It is a remarkable fact that it was the opening years of the nineteenth century which saw the commencement of the great expansion of the British Empire, and its invincibility by land and sea. It was also the period of freedom, science and discovery, the era of missionary enterprise, and the abolition of slavery, a cause inaugurated and championed solely by the Anglo-Saxon race. These important facts certainly justify the assumption that the “ seven times ” punishment of Israel terminated with the opening years of the last century.

With respect to the correct determination of this period, we wish to point out an error certain interpreters of prophecy fall into through not giving proper regard to a very essential condition, and one vital to a correct understanding of the prophecy's intention. This condition is that the terminal date of any prophecy must be reckoned from its corresponding *final* date of origin, and not from an earlier or intermediate one. Disregard of this fact has led some to assert the “ Times of the Gentiles ” ended in 1914, reckoning this year as 2,520 years from the date of the *first* siege of Jerusalem, overlooking the second and third captivities altogether, which extend the “ Seven Times ” at least another twenty-two years. Apart from this, also, the date 1914 is incorrectly determined in any case, and should be 1917 as already stated above.

## CHAPTER VI

*"Thou, O King, sawest . . . a great image"* (Dan. ii, 31)

DANIEL is pre-eminently the prophet of the "Times of the Gentiles." His visions present to us a comprehensive and consecutive narrative of the history of five great empires from his own day till the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom on earth, an epitome, in fact, of the whole course of Gentile world-rule to its end in the final battle of Armageddon. It is, indeed, the vast period surveyed in his series of visions which makes the book of Daniel so remarkable; they are all consecutive, and one follows another in further revelation and explanation.

It is, also, this particular characteristic of Daniel which has caused him to be the target Modernists have specially singled out for attack and destruction. It contains a detailed narrative of some of the most striking events recorded in the Bible, and a series of prophecies so wonderfully accurate as to their fulfilment that, if its genuineness can be proved, the whole case for Higher Criticism falls to the ground. The fact that the prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, and like him a Jewish captive in Babylon, refers to Daniel in company with Noah and Job, as one singled out for righteousness (xiv, 14), and again, in chapter xxviii, 3, when censuring the vanity and presumption of the prince of Tyre, refers to him on account of his

wisdom and faculty for revealing secrets, is sufficient proof of the authenticity of his writings. In addition, our Lord sets His seal upon Daniel in Matt. xxiv, 15, by citing him as an authority, and not merely by a passing quotation from a prophecy.

" The prophecies of Daniel stand pre-eminent amongst all others in their evidential value. It is an astounding fact that not only does this brief book give a fore-view of twenty-five centuries of Jewish and Gentile history, including the first and second advents of Christ, but that it also fixes the chronology of various episodes of the then unknown future with a simple certainty which would be audacious if it were not Divine.

" Would any man dare to foretell not only a long succession of events lying far in the remote future, but, in addition, the periods they would occupy? This Daniel has done, and the predictions have come to pass." (H. Grattan Guinness, in the preface to *Light for the Last Days*.)

The opening chapter of Daniel tells us what befell himself and his companions at the Court of Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon, and how they surpassed in learning and wisdom " all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm " (verse 20). The second chapter gives us the story of the forgotten dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, which Daniel reproduces and interprets with the assurance that the revelation as to its meaning came to him directly from God Himself. " The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure " (ii, 45).

There is practically general agreement amongst students of prophecy and expositors as to the identity

of the first, four kingdoms of the vision, from Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's own kingdom, the head of gold, through that of Medo-Persia, the breast and arms of silver, to Greece (brass) and, finally, Rome, represented in the legs and feet of iron and clay. We know these four powers arose, reached their zenith, declined, and finally passed away exactly as Daniel foretold they should: history bears witness to the truth of the prophecy. Rome is represented as a mixture of iron and clay to symbolise its undivided imperial strength, and secondly the same empire in its divided condition in its decline and fall.

Then we come to the fifth kingdom, which is no part of the image, but, on the contrary, smites and destroys it utterly.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, neither shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (verse 44).

What, then, is generally understood by this "stone" kingdom? Theologians, as a class, and expositors generally, have long ago decided—and still maintain—that this is purely a spiritual kingdom—the Church. Even the late Grattan Guinness upheld this view (see p. 29 of his *Approaching End of the Age*). While all students of prophecy are deeply indebted to him for his writings on this subject (he has been aptly described as the Newton of prophecy exposition, while Prof. Birks before him was the Kepler), had he realised the facts of British-Israel truth, they would have been even more valuable.

At first sight such seems quite a reasonable explanation; that a "stone cut out without hands" is an

appropriate emblem of the Church, and it is this particular expression which leads so many to infer a spiritual kingdom is meant. When, however, we come to analyse this particular passage from Daniel, we are then met with statements which are insufficiently explained by such application.

Firstly, it states that it is to be set up " in the days of these kings," that is, during the existence of the previous four empires.

Secondly, it " shall not be left to other people," thereby implying that it was given in the first instance to some *particular* people or nation, and did not pass—as all the previous empires did—from one nation to another. The Church, on the other hand, is universal, and embraces all peoples, and is not the prerogative of one race more than another, while, under our first heading, it should be noticed that it did not come into existence till three of the empires of the image had passed away. Clearly, therefore, it was *not* set up " in the days of these kings " (or kingdoms), but a long time afterwards. Clearly, also, the Church could not therefore have broken the image in pieces (verse 45), while so far from breaking the power of Rome, that empire, on the contrary, did its best, by its persecution of the early Christians, to exterminate the Church, while its successor, the apostate Church of Rome, has made martyrs of millions.

Again, since Daniel interprets the first four monarchies as earthly, what reason is there for supposing that the fifth—and last—should be any different? Since, also, the vision is an epitome of the world's history from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the image, till the close of the " Times of the Gentiles " and the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth,

why should it ignore the greatest empire in the world, and one larger than all the preceding empires combined?

The late Sir Robert Anderson, whose works take a deservedly high place in the literature of prophetic exposition, and who generally accepts the "Futurist" method of interpretation (he explains Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" on this basis) appears to adopt a non-committal attitude concerning the identification of this "stone" kingdom. Unlike the great majority of Futurists, he sees this fifth kingdom is not to be a spiritual one, but that it is some kingdom to be established *in the future*, expressing, however, no opinion as to what kingdom it does foreshadow.<sup>1</sup> "The only questions," he writes, "which arise relate, first to the *character* of the final catastrophe symbolised by the fall and destruction of the image, and secondly to the *time* of its fulfilment; and any difficulties which have been raised depend in no way upon the language of the prophecy, but solely upon the preconceived views of interpreters." If more theologians and expositors would lay to heart the foregoing sound statement of Sir Robert Anderson, we should hear less of the baneful spiritualising away of Scriptural prophecies, and these words apply in no case better than in the particular prophecy now under consideration.

"We are here dealing," he continues, "not with prophetic theories, *but with the meaning of plain words*; and what the prophecy foretells is not the rise and spread of a '*spiritual* kingdom' in the midst of earthly kingdoms, but the establishment of a kingdom which 'shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.'"

Those, too, who identify the Church with the "stone"

<sup>1</sup> Vide *The Coming Prince*, 9th ed., 1909.

kingdom overlook the fact that it is not the mission of that institution to demolish kingdoms and empires, or break anything but the *spiritual* powers of evil. Kingdoms and empires do not meet their doom through the Church's agency—on the contrary, it seeks to regenerate them—but by some human agency chosen of God for the purpose.

It is upon this very verse from Daniel describing the rise of the "stone" kingdom that is based the argument applying it to the Church. Thus, Dr. Scofield, in his *What do the Prophets say?* quoting Dan. ii, 44, says, " It is from this passage that the designation ' Kingdom of Heaven ' comes, the logic of which statement appears to be that because the God of heaven sets up a kingdom, therefore it must be *in* heaven, that is, a spiritual one." Yet in the very first verse of the interpretation of the dream Daniel says, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar's own kingdom of Babylon, " the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom " (verse 37), that is, an earthly and temporal kingdom. As a matter of fact the designation " kingdom of heaven " appears only in the New Testament, and is first used by John the Baptist (Matt. iii, 2).

The Futurists are thus obliged to interpret the "stone" kingdom spiritually because they assert prophecy ignores the whole period of the Christian era between the first and second advents, and since the fourth empire, Rome, was at its zenith when Christ was born in Bethlehem, no room is left for another. Stated in another way, this is equivalent to saying Daniel's prophecy foretells the events of five centuries of this world's history *before* Christ, but ignores a period, *anno domini*, which has already lasted nearly four times as long. Common sense alone should be sufficient to

refute a system of interpretation so much at variance with ordinary logic. Also, did the "stone" kingdom mean one set up by Christ at His second advent, Daniel would not have described it as "set up in the days of these kings." It is admitted by all expositors that the first four minerals represent four literal and earthly empires, there is, therefore, no sound reason for not applying the same interpretation to the fifth, while Daniel's own interpretation gives no justification for not doing so.

This fifth empire is none other than the British Monarchy, which was "set up in the days of these kings," when the Israelites commenced that migration on their escape from Assyrian bondage (c. 610 B.C.), and which eventually ended in A.D. 1066, with the last wave of immigrants (Normans) to these "isles of the west." This date marked the genesis of the "stone" kingdom in *"the isles."*

Strictly speaking, the beginnings of the "stone" kingdom commenced considerably earlier even than 610 B.C. The tribes of Dan and Simeon were the seaboard and seafaring tribes of Israel, and before the time of Solomon had established trading colonies both in Britain and Ireland. Though the downfall of the Northern kingdom is generally reckoned from the siege and capture of the city of Samaria, 720-717 B.C., actually it took the Assyrian kings Sargon, Tiglath Pileser, and Esarhaddon, over sixty years to complete the deportation of the ten tribes, and during this period the tribes of Dan and Simeon made good their escape after first burning their towns and villages. Simeon settled in the south-west of Britain and Dan in the north of Ireland, while a colony from Judah, which had previously settled in Spain, afterwards migrated to



Ireland, so that both branches, Israel and Judah, were there represented. These colonies were therefore the nucleus of the " stone " kingdom in " the isles of the west."<sup>1</sup>

Britain, also, was " cut out " of the Roman Empire, being voluntarily abandoned by Flavius Honorius (A.D. 384-423) owing to the onslaught of the Goths who overran Italy and laid siege to Rome itself. Further, Britain was also " cut out " from the map of Europe, when, ages ago, it was made an island ; literally " cut out without hands," like a stone detached from a mountain, exactly as described by Daniel.

It is different, also, as Daniel foretold, from any of the preceding empires, and in this respect is unique in history, in that it did not come as a successor to any other kingdom or empire, but has been built up entirely upon its own foundations. Each of the previous four

<sup>1</sup> While this volume was passing through the press, the writer came across the following excerpt from *British and Jewish Fraternity*, by Rabbi Eliezer Bassin, Ph.B., cited by Henry Proctor in an article in the *British-Israel Herald*, July, 1927: " I then began to trace the Keltic Britons, and found them to be the first Israelite emigrants, who migrated from Palestine to Spain (then called Tarshish) perhaps as early as 1280 B.C. . . . There can be no doubt that there were Hebrew colonists in Spain during Solomon's reign, for we read in 1 Kings x, 22, that Solomon had at sea a navy of Tarshish. To the fact of this Hebrew colony there exists the testimony of Philo, Josephus, Seneca, and Cicero. Bishop Titcomb also mentions the remarkable fact that a monument, found at Saguntum, in Spain, had an inscription in Hebrew characters, thus: ' This is the tomb of Adoniram, the servant of Solomon, who came to collect tribute, and died there ' (1 Kings iv, 6 ; v, 14).

" From the voyage of Jonah we learn that merchant ships traded regularly between Tarshish and the coasts of Palestine (Jon. i, 3), for he found at Joppa a vessel ready for the voyage at the moment he wished to sail. And why should Jonah flee to Tarshish, if no Hebrew colonists existed there ? After collecting all the information I could get on the subject, I came to the conclusion that some Israelites escaped to Spain at the time of the Assyrian invasion (720 B.C.) to join this Hebrew colony, and that the Spanish Kelts, who were Israelites, migrated to Cornwall and Ireland."

empires, however, was destroyed in turn by the one following: Medo-Persia superseded Babylon; Greece overcame Persia; to fall in turn before Rome; and in every case it was the representatives of the exiled and wandering Israelites, the nucleus of the "stone" kingdom, which supplied the energy and backbone, as they trekked west and north, that enabled each empire in turn to wrest the power from its predecessor. This is why the "stone" kingdom is represented as falling on the feet of the image to destroy it; its destruction is gradual, from the head of gold (Babylon), through the breast and arms of silver (Persia), belly and thighs of brass (Greece), to the legs and feet of iron and clay (Rome).<sup>1</sup>

In the vision the image is described as standing erect; in its interpretation it is considered as lying prone upon the earth, with its head (Babylon) in the east—

<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is interesting to note that in the expression "smote the image upon his feet" (ver. 34), the word translated "smote" implies a *succession of smitings*, like a clapping of hands, and this precisely conveys the correct description of the method by which the "stone" kingdom has, throughout its age-long history, gradually broken the nations comprising the great image. Now the feet of the image are represented by Spain and France, the most westerly portions of it, and both these nations in turn attempted to unite the various countries formerly belonging to the Roman Empire—at that time allied by a common allegiance to Papal Rome, its successor—with the object of overthrowing England. Their designs, however, were effectively thwarted by a long series of "smitings," France alone, from Cressy to Waterloo, having been subjected to over two hundred, this being the number of battles fought between that country and ourselves within that period.

Germany who, through the Kaiser, declared her intention of restoring the Holy Roman Empire,\* united three empires against us, but again was the image smitten and scattered as dust. (None of these empires remain as such to-day.) The image receives its death-blow, through the instrumentality of the stone kingdom, at Armageddon, thus completely fulfilling Dan. ii, 35.

\* "If we gain—as we must gain—a new Empire will arise, more splendid than the world ever saw, a new Romano-German Empire which shall rule the world."—(The ex-German Emperor, November, 1914.)

the most easterly power—and its feet (Rome) in the extreme west—the Roman Empire at its greatest extent reaching to the shores of the Atlantic—with Persia and Greece midway between. Nebuchadnezzar, in his dream, does not see the "stone" kingdom destroying each empire in turn as it proceeded ; he is only allowed to see the final great crash on the feet which completes the destruction of the whole image.

One interpretation of the vision sometimes put forward is that, as the king saw the image destroyed altogether by the stone smiting it on the feet, so does it mean that these are four kingdoms which are to arise and combine, thus becoming the terrible image of the dream, which will only be destroyed by Christ in Person at His second coming.

This view, however, is entirely fanciful ; it puts a spiritual interpretation upon the "stone" kingdom which we have shown to be illogical, and further, was the image to be destroyed *as a whole* at *one* blow, surely the fatal stroke would have been delivered *at the head*, the most vulnerable part of the body, rather than at the feet, the least susceptible to vital injury. The four empires dominated the world successively, and in turn came to their end beyond all possibility of their resurrection, and in view of the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon race in the world to-day, no combination of other powers is possible as could become such a menace as portrayed in the image. It will also be obvious that four kingdoms could not, if only by reason of mutual jealousy, dominate the world at the same time ; history cannot point to such an occurrence having been successful, and to-day is less likely than ever.

The logical sense of Daniel's interpretation is that, before they should finally pass away and the last one

become extinct, another would be established which would be perpetual and never destroyed. If it were possible to destroy the British Empire by human force it would have been done ere this. The experiment has been made by Spain, by Holland, by France, and by Germany, and if anyone had a more favourable opportunity than another to accomplish this end, it was the last-named, which found us in 1914 totally unprepared for a war of any magnitude, while Germany herself had been preparing for it steadily for a generation past.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that the attempt will not be made again; prophecy suggests that the forces of evil will yet make a further effort, the greatest ever attempted, which will meet its doom in the real Armageddon, when Christ will appear in Person and reveal to the world the identity of the "stone" kingdom, which He will claim as His kingdom upon earth, and through the instrumentality of which the whole of mankind will be brought to acknowledge the Almighty. Christ will then reign as King over the whole earth, and we shall at last see fulfilled the words of our Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come: Thy will be done *in earth*, as in heaven."

The passage quoted above (see p. 37) from Matt. xxi, if continued to the next verse, supplies clear proof from Scripture identifying the "nation bringing forth the fruits" with the "stone" kingdom of Daniel. Every power which has "fallen" upon the "stone kingdom," from the time of its final settlement in these "isles of safety" in 1066, down to the present, with a view to conquest, has been broken in the attempt. To say, however, that Daniel's "stone" kingdom represents an earthly and material kingdom, does not negative

the belief that it is *also* Christ's kingdom on earth. Even as Israel was the predominant nation in Old Testament, pre-Christian, times, so also is Israel, restored and identified as the " stone " kingdom, to be the dominant nation in the world's golden age of the millennium.

That Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image symbolises the great period known as the " Times of the Gentiles," the duration of which was to be " seven times," or 2,520 years, is indicated by the history of his second vision and its fulfilment, and also by the typical character of that monarch.

In this second vision Nebuchadnezzar sees a great tree, which Daniel interprets to denote the king himself, and he hears a great voice declare it should be hewn down and stripped, yet the stump and the roots should be left (Dan. iv, 15-16). " Let his heart be changed from a man's heart, and let a beast's heart be given unto him, and let *seven times pass over him.*" This sentence on the tree was fulfilled in the period of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity which, though nowhere definitely stated to have lasted seven years, is, by the context and nature of the case, fairly obvious to have done so. A shorter period, seven days, weeks, or months, would clearly have been insufficient punishment. His madness, therefore, of seven years of *days*, prefigured the seven years of *years* of the image of his former vision of which his kingdom was the head.

Nebuchadnezzar, also, both in himself and his empire, was typical of the long succession of Gentile rulers who were to succeed him till the coming of the Son of man. Two prominent characteristics of these rulers have been *idolatry* and *persecution* of God's saints; these also were typical of Nebuchadnezzar.

His image-making and image-worshipping (Dan. iii) typified the idolatry which has been so indelibly stamped on all the four great empires, *and on none more so than on the modern spiritual Babylon, his antitype.* His " burning fiery furnace " for the three faithful witnesses who refused to worship the image he had set up in the plain of Dura, typified the persecution which has been inflicted on God's people by each of the four powers in turn, and particularly by the last phase of the image, the Papacy. These two characteristics, idol worship and persecution, debasement and cruelty, are appropriately symbolised as wild beasts to represent these empires. Thus, also, Nebuchadnezzar is presented as a beast; his degradation to a bestial condition typified the moral degradation, through idolatry, pride, and self-exaltation, of the Gentile kingdoms of the image.

The image, the king himself, and the wild beasts, are but three types of one and the same thing under different aspects. Thus the duration of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity becomes symbolical of the duration of the " Times of the Gentiles," during which power on earth is, *by the Almighty*, vested in Gentile rulers, instead of in the seed of David.

" I do not except the ' seven times ' specified in Nebuchadnezzar's vision as the appointed time of the royal tree continuing cut down, from the category of chronological prophecies to which the year-day principle is to be applied. The tree itself symbolised Nebuchadnezzar, and as there was nothing of a *miniature scale* in the symbol as compared with what it symbolised, the seven years might, without violation of propriety, symbolise an equal period of desolation to the monarch. But did he experience this extraordinary

judgment and recovery simply in his individual character, *or as a symbolic man?* . . . Considering the extraordinary nature of the judgment, the fact of its being so fully recorded by Daniel, the circumstance of Nebuchadnezzar being addressed, on the occasion of another prophecy, as the representative of his nation (' *Thou art this head of gold* '), and that of the symbolic tree, when cut down, being bound with a band of BRASS and IRON (Dan. iv, 23), the metals significant (in the four-fold image) of the Greek and Roman Empires, which did for ages hold sway over the prostrate region of Babylon ; all these considerations induce me to believe that the seven times 360 days that passed over Nebuchadnezzar in his madness, represent the 2,520 years of the ' times of the Gentiles.' " (Rev. E. B. Elliot in *Horæ Apocalypticæ* cited by Grattan Guinness in *Approaching End of the Age.*)

## CHAPTER VII

*"The truth of the fourth beast"* (Dan. vii, 19)

WE now turn to the second great prophecy of Daniel in the seventh chapter of his book, the vision of the four great beasts which correspond to the first four empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the second chapter. The earlier vision is seen by the king and interpreted by Daniel; the second the prophet beholds and an angel interprets.

The subject of both visions is the same though presented in different forms, but Daniel's vision has many additional features. While the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar emphasises one leading characteristic, image-worship and idolatry, Daniel's vision lays stress upon the other feature of the Gentile empires, cruelty and persecution, symbolised by the wild beasts.<sup>1</sup> Similarity is also shown by the order of succession, the rarest metal, gold, and the noblest animal, the lion, take the lead in each series. The fifth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which has no part in the Gentile image, the everlasting "stone" kingdom, is symbolised in almost identical language in Dan. vii, 14,

<sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar saw the imposing outward power and splendour of the Gentile Empires, Daniel gives us the true character of Gentile world-government as rapacious and war-like, established and maintained by force. It is remarkable that the heraldic insignia of the Gentile nations are all birds or beasts of prey, particularly the eagle which is the insignia of the modern Gentile nations, Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Russia.



which reveals it as Christ's kingdom in the millennial era.

It is interesting to notice that in the chapter immediately following Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, that potentate sets up his image of gold in the plain of Dura, and commands universal worship to it. There is little doubt that Nebuchadnezzar, whose vanity had been flattered by Daniel's words, "Thou art this head of gold," was thereby inspired to reproduce his dream as far as possible in a concrete form, and, by commanding all peoples to worship it, institute universal homage to himself.

The chief difference between the two visions is that the second one presents us with an enlarged and more detailed view, particularly of the fourth power. In the vision of the beasts but one verse is allotted to each of the three first empires, a lion (Babylon), a bear (Medo-Persia), and a leopard (Greece),<sup>1</sup> and in the interpretation which follows but one verse is given to them, whereas four verses (23-26) are necessary, in response to Daniel's request to "know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others," to describe the last-named.

In the vision of the image this fourth power is shown in two distinct stages, first undivided, and later in a divided state. In the fourth beast we are vouchsafed a further stage, that represented by the dominion of the

<sup>1</sup> Note how apt are the symbols employed to represent Persia and Greece. The first-named is symbolised by the slow moving bear: history corroborates this figure in the slow advance of her huge armies, sometimes numbering millions of men. In the bear's mouth, between her jaws, she is portrayed as carrying the three nations (indicated as ribs), Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt, which she had subdued but was never able properly to assimilate (see Dan. vii, 5). The lightning-like conquests of Alexander, who pounced on his enemies almost before they knew of his presence, are well pre-figured in the swift and ferocious leopard.

*little horn*, which arises out of the fourth beast, the symbol of the Papacy as carrying on the succession from Rome Imperial to the close of the seven times. Hence the ten horns on the fourth beast (verse 7) corresponding to the ten toes of the image of the previous vision, and amongst these ten horns another, described as a "little horn," arises, which subdues three of them so completely that the separate identity of the kingdoms which they represent is destroyed. The reader is referred to the author's "Foretold and Fulfilled" for a detailed exposition showing how this vision of Daniel exactly foretold the rise of Papal Rome upon the ruins of the Roman Empire, and how history has proved that the features herein delineated as characteristic of the Papacy do apply in every detail, and can apply to no other power. These characteristics are further amplified by St. John in Revelation, hence the appearance of the ten horns again in the Apocalypse (Rev. xvii, 12) to correspond to the ten toes of the image, proving the visions of Daniel and St. John refer to the same power.

Verse 25 gives us the duration of the little horn of the Papacy, as "time and times and the dividing of time," or 1,260 years, that is, half "seven times," a period given in Rev. xiii, 5, under the cypher of "forty-two months" ( $= 42 \times 30$  'days' = 1,260 years). This period commenced in A.D. 607, when the Emperor Phocas conceded to Boniface II the headship over all the Churches of Christendom, thus creating him the first Pope. Phocas died in 610, and 1,260 years from 607-10 bring us to 1867-1870, the years which saw the extinction of the Temporal Power of the Papacy. Thus has the prophecy regarding the duration of Papal *power* been fulfilled to the very year. As a

*religion*, which rose gradually and declines gradually, its actual limits are, of course, greater than this ; hence its existence before 607 and after 1870 to continue till the final year of the " seven times." The 1,260 years of prophecy constitute the foretold and fulfilled period of Papal dominion over Christendom, as forming part of the great Gentile image.

Both Daniel and St. John foretell that the final destruction of this last form of the Gentile image is connected with the personal appearance of Christ to establish His millennial kingdom (see also 2 Thess. ii, 8). But in each prophecy it is also intimated that a consuming and destroying process would go on for some time *previous* to the end, so that its once mighty power would be weakened and impoverished before being finally taken away for good.

" They shall take away his dominion, to *consume* and destroy it unto the end " (Dan. vii, 26). " As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away : *yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time* " (verse 12).

Pharaoh and the Egyptians were similarly wasted and consumed by the ten plagues before being overwhelmed in the waters of the Red Sea. The consuming process upon Papal Rome is prefigured in the Apocalypse as taking place under the outpouring of certain vials of wrath on the kingdom of the Beast and on his followers.

The facts of history are so notorious that it is unnecessary to detail them here in order to show that this exactly describes what has happened to Rome since the time of the Reformation. The political power of the Roman Pontiffs, once a dread reality throughout Christendom, is gone for ever, and its territorial

possessions have likewise vanished. And it is worthy of note that the means by which this conspicuous and undeniable "consumption" of Papal power has been accomplished are precisely those mentioned by St. Paul in 2 Thess. ii, 8. He says this evil power shall be consumed "by the spirit of His mouth," that is, by His Word, Holy Scripture being the form in which the word or spirit of the Lord's mouth retains a sensible existence and influences mankind. "The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John vi, 63).

Does not the extreme jealousy with which the Papacy has always endeavoured either to forbid the reading of Scripture altogether—as in the famous bull *Unigenitus*, 1713—or, what amounts to the same thing, to bury the Bible in an unknown tongue, or to distort its teachings by false interpretation, betray its inveterate antagonism to the power destined to consume it? "There is an instinct of apprehension, a consciousness which, antecedent to experience, divines danger; it seems discernible in the alarm with which Romanism recoils from Holy Scripture" (Grattan Guinness).<sup>1</sup>

Wherever the Word of God has free course, the power of Popery is at an end. The Reformation sprang from a recovered Bible, and to-day we are in peril of losing what that movement gave us because we are rapidly losing the Bible, with the result that Romanism once

<sup>1</sup> The following extract from the *Larger Catechism for Higher Classes*, prescribed by Pius X in 1906, shows that Rome, even in the twentieth century, is just as anti-Scriptural as she was in the Middle Ages:

Q.—"What ought a Christian to do if a Bible should be offered him by a Protestant?"

A.—He ought *indignantly to spurn it, because it is forbidden by the Church*; and if he should have accepted it without adverting to what it was, he should at once *pitch it into the fire*, or fetch it to his pastor."

again lifts up its head in the land. Wherever the popular mind is imbued with Scripture Romanism has no chance. It is the absence of Bible knowledge that enables Popery to retain such authority as yet pertains to it in those countries that still remain predominantly Romish.

When the four symbolic beasts were presented to Daniel, it was the *fourth* that arrested his gaze, and it was the " little horn " of that fourth empire which particularly attracted his attention, while the angelic interpreter dwells with tenfold fulness on the power represented by this symbol. Similarly, when St. Paul predicted the future of the Church on earth, it was the rise, domination, and decay of this same power which he presented, as being the chief event to intervene before the " rapture of the saints." So also, when St. John received " the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him," the central symbol which occupies the most prominent place in his prophecy was one of this same power, " the beast," the great antagonist of the Lamb and His followers.

One of the characteristics of this fourth beast which seems to present greater difficulty than others to many commentators to explain, are the ten toes or ten horns which arise out of it. This is particularly the case with expositors of the Futurist school of interpretation who, as they project so much of prophecy—particularly the visions of Daniel and Revelation—to the future, look upon this fourth beast as a Roman Empire revived again, and it is this revived empire which they say an autocrat—Antichrist—will seize and domineer over the world for a *literal* period of forty-two months, or three and a half years. Not two expositors of this school seem to agree as to what countries or peoples will thus

federate ; some appear to think the league at present sitting at Geneva will eventually, by a process of elimination, form such a body of ten nations.

With the trend of events in the recent history of the League of Nations, coupled with the now known attitude of the Papacy towards that body and the use which it expects to make of it (see the author's *Foretold and Fulfilled*, pp. 70-71), it does not seem at all unlikely—after Great Britain and her Dominions have withdrawn from it, as will undoubtedly happen before long—that the *attempt* will be made on the part of some Mussolini amongst the Latin races to form it into a league of the nature herein described. But that such a league will ever become the terrible power portrayed in Daniel's fourth beast is precluded by the very symbolism employed. The image having reached its tenfold state, it is smitten upon the feet and broken in pieces. Not only are the feet broken in pieces, but the nations symbolised by the ten toes " are become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them " (Dan. ii, 34-35). Such is the end of the fourth kingdom, beyond the slightest hint of its resurrection. Daniel's words can only imply its final extinction as a political power of any real consequence, a condition which was fulfilled when the Papacy lost its temporal power in 1870, thereby completing its allotted span of 1,260 years.

It should also be noticed that the destruction of this power is not effected by Christ Himself at His second Advent, such as Futurists maintain respecting this revived league led by Antichrist, but by the repeated blows, or " smitings " of a new kingdom which, commencing as a mere stone—an apt symbol of Britain

compared (in size) to the continent of Europe from which it was, long ages ago, detached—crushes the image, while its own bulk increases as a mountain until it fills the whole earth. This fifth empire, therefore, grows at the expense of the preceding empires, and particularly of the fourth, which is exactly what it has done, *and is to have no successor* (Dan. ii, 44), thereby proving, in addition to verses 34-35, that the resurrection of the fourth " beast " is an impossibility.

If, too, the reader will bear in mind the *form* of the symbol employed, and remember that the prophecy does not refer to a distant future, he will find no difficulty in seeing that history in this instance, as in others, is prophecy fulfilled. Whatever fanciful interpretation may be put upon the exact symbolism of the ten toes or the ten horns, whether signifying nations that are past, exist now, or are to arise in the future, the *historical fact* remains that, after the downfall of the Roman Empire, there did arise, upon its ruins, those European kingdoms which for over twelve centuries owed allegiance to Rome spiritual as embodied in the Papacy.

Daniel's image being in the form of a man, its toes must be ten in number, therefore, where this prophecy is described and amplified elsewhere, as it is in Revelation, this same number must be retained. But it does not necessarily follow that, because the number of toes on the feet are ten, therefore the number of kingdoms they symbolise must also be exactly ten.

This point is made clear by Bishop Wordsworth, a former Bishop of Lincoln (*d.* 1885) in his work on the Apocalypse.

" It seems unnecessary," he writes,<sup>1</sup> " to specify *ten*

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of the Age*, p. 162.

particular kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided ; or even to demonstrate that it was divided into precisely *ten* kingdoms. The most ancient passage of Scripture in which the Prophecy of the future division of the Roman Empire is found, is the vision of the image (Dan. ii, 42), where these kingdoms are represented by *the toes* of the image. Being toes they must be ten. Hence, when this dismemberment is described in other successive prophecies, this denary number is retained : and thus the number *ten* connects all these prophecies together, and serves to show that they all point to the same object."

" This empire " (the Roman), writes Dr. Guinness, " is represented as existing first in an undivided state, and secondly in a divided *tenfold* state. As a matter of history, it is notorious that the Roman power has done this. From its rise to the fourth century it was one and undivided, since its decline and fall as an empire, it has been broken up into many independent sovereignties, held together by a common submission to the Popes of Rome.

" The number of distinct kingdoms into which the Roman Empire in Europe has been divided has always been about ten, at times exactly ten, sinking at other times to eight or nine, and rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but averaging on the whole *ten*. This is generally admitted, and indeed cannot be denied ; the fact lies on the surface of the history of Europe since the break-up of the Roman Empire, and serves as an important clue to the true scope and fulfilment of these predictions."

History, in fact, with no uncertain voice, has proclaimed, in accurate detail and application, the literal truth of the prophecies of Daniel and St. John.



## CHAPTER VIII

*"A little horn . . . understanding dark sentences"*  
(Dan. viii, 23)

WE now come to the third prophecy of Daniel, in his eighth chapter, that of the ram and the he-goat, given two years after the preceding prophecy ("in the third year of the reign of the king Belshazzar"). While his previous vision particularises the fourth beast of the prophecy—Rome—his later one deals with the second and third world-kingdoms of the Gentile Image, Medo-Persia and Greece; the silver and brass of Dan. ii; the bear and leopard kingdoms of Dan. vii.

This vision is notable in that, as in the previous vision, a second "little horn" is introduced as a symbol of a particular power, but it is clear these two little horns do not indicate the same in each case.

Daniel is here describing a contest between a ram and he-goat, the latter with "a notable horn between his eyes" (verse 5). The result is a complete victory for the goat, which we are clearly told represents the Greek Empire, while the ram symbolises Medo-Persia (verses 20, 21).

The "great horn" of the goat becomes broken at the height of his power (verse 8), whereupon four other horns arise in its place, and out of one of them was to come forth "a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, towards the south, and towards the east, and

towards the pleasant land (Palestine) " (verse 9). This symbolises the rise of the Greek empire under Alexander the Great by his defeat of the Persians at the battle of Issus, 333 B.C. (the victory of the goat over the ram), while the breaking of the goat's "great horn" and the rise of four other horns in its place, was fulfilled by the fall of Alexander at the battle of Ipsus, in Phrygia, 300 B.C., after which his empire was broken up into the four kingdoms of Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, and Thrace, each ruled over by one of his former generals.<sup>1</sup> The "little horn" which arises from one of these four horns is the Greek Church. As the Church of Rome carries on the prophecies of Rome Imperial, so does the Greek Church carry on continuity with the former Greek empire for the remainder of the duration of the great image.

Many expositors identify this little horn with Mohammedanism and the history of Turkey, but there are several objections, both on geographical and historical grounds, which can be advanced against such identification. It is described, for instance, as waxing great towards the south, towards *the east*, and towards Palestine, and these geographical boundaries tally exactly with those of the Greek Church. Mohammedanism, on the other hand, *arose* in the east, and spread *west*, reaching to the shores of the Atlantic and at one time eating its way into the very heart of Europe. Historically, too, such a connection is weak, for the period of 2,300 "days" inserted in the vision is further proof it cannot possibly refer to Mohammedanism, as the era of Hegira—the earliest possible date connected

<sup>1</sup> The rise of Alexander, followed by the break-up of his empire into four separate kingdoms, is also predicted in Dan. xi, 3-4. Subsequent events in two of these kingdoms of the disintegrated Greek Empire, Egypt and Syria, are portrayed in verses 5-20.

with that power—only commenced in A.D. 622; 2,300 years, by whatever form of reckoning, would carry us far beyond the final year of the "Times of the Gentiles"—or even the Millennium—the limit of the present dispensation in prophecy. If, however, we reckon this period in prophetic years (= 2,268 solar) from the date of the rise of the Greek empire in Alexander, on defeat of the Persians in 333 B.C., we arrive at the year A.D. 1936, thus corroborating the previous forecasts respecting the final year of Nebuchadnezzar's image. Reckoning again 2,300 *solar* years, taking the longer scale to find the limit of the prophecy, from its later *terminus a quo*, the end of Alexander's empire in 300 B.C., we arrive at the year A.D. 2001.<sup>1</sup> The period, then, from 1936–2001, is that denoted in Dan. viii, 14, as the "cleansing of the sanctuary," the real period of reconstruction and "restitution of all things" (Acts iii, 21) preparatory to the establishment of the Millennium itself.

Neither Turkey, a power which sprang originally from Turkestan, as the name implies, which lay outside Alexander's Asiatic conquests, nor Arabia, the country of Mohammed, which he also failed to annex, owing to his early death, formed part of the Greek empire. It is true Constantinople, the seat of the Greek Church, in course of time became the capital of the Turkish empire, but it cannot on any grounds be said that that power arose there, and it is the *source of its origin* that we have to seek.

If the fact that Constantinople became the seat of the Turkish empire be held to maintain the connection,

<sup>1</sup> The apparent lack of symmetry between the B.C. and A.D. dates is due to our defective system of historical time (in distinction to true astronomical reckoning), whereby 1 B.C. is the year immediately preceding A.D. 1, there being no A.D. zero.

it must be remembered that by the time this event took place, two other empires, those of Rome (Eastern division) and Byzantium, had already passed over the ruins of the Grecian, while the long lapse of time, over fifteen centuries, further diminishes any relationship left between them.<sup>1</sup>

If, also, it be maintained that the Greek Church did not originate directly out of either of the four kingdoms into which Alexander's empire was divided after his death, since these came to an end before the Greek Church itself was established, the answer is that Daniel foresees the rise of a power, not from the Greek empire itself, but from a *geographical environment* of it, where Greek was the language, popular and religious, at the time of its rise, and this exactly describes the seat of the Greek Church.

It was Alexander's conquests which made Greek the language of the then civilised world, the language, indeed, of the New Testament, and gave to it a career independent of the fate of the Greek Empire itself. What then is more natural than to consider the Greek Church as the successor to the Greek Empire even more so than the Church of Rome represents the former Roman Empire. For the Greek Church arose only about a century after the fall of the Greek Empire, and is therefore considerably older than the Roman; she can claim direct continuity of speech with the earliest Christian times, and to read the whole code of Scripture in the language in which it was read and spoken by the Apostles.

Christianity was first expounded by the Greek fathers, and during the first five centuries the Greek

<sup>1</sup> The Greek Empire ended in 63 B.C. with capture of Syria by the Roman Pompey; Constantinople fell to the Turks in A.D. 1453.

(i.e., Eastern) Church may fairly be said to have comprised the whole body of Christianity. In fact the nucleus of the early Roman Church was but a colony of Greek Christians, the earliest popes were Greeks, as the very name of " pope " signifies, as it is not a Latin name at all, but is derived from the Greek "*papa*," a word used to designate *any* priest of the Greek Church.

This " little horn " is further described as " understanding dark sentences " (verse 23), an attitude not usually associated with Mohammedanism, but one which is well suited to a Church which prides itself on its " orthodoxy," as the Greek Church does, and which pretends to a profound knowledge of theological and ecclesiastical questions.

Again, even as the apostate Church of Rome in the west has its counterpart in the equally apostate Greek Church in the east, would it not be natural to find them both symbolised in prophecy by like emblems, rather than the *same* sign should be used to denote the churches of two entirely *different* religions ?

Symbols, we know, must not be interpreted literally, otherwise they would cease to be symbolical. But, on the other hand, unless there be a definite relation between the objects symbolised and the symbols, the latter are useless ; that is to say, *like* symbols must represent *like* objects or powers.

Further, the power of Mohammedanism is symbolised elsewhere in prophecy under the sign of the river Euphrates ; if, on the other hand, it is also indicated by the second " little horn," the Greek Church is then apparently ignored in prophecy. But, since Antichrist of Scripture refers to a system rather than to an individual, and as the Greek Church exhibits all the

characteristics of Antichrist as strongly as does the Church of Rome, it would be surprising, indeed, if prophecy took no notice of it.

" That the Greek Church is equally apostate with the Church of Rome needs no demonstration. It is true it substitutes the worship of pictures or icons for that of images, requires marriage instead of celibacy in the case of beneficed clergy, denies the universal supremacy of the Pope, and in some other minor points differs from the other little horn. But in arrogantly fulminating anathemas against all without its pale ; in placing tradition on a level with the Scriptures ; in the worship of saint and angel intercessors, especially of the Virgin Mary, and of idols in the shape of pictures, relics, and sacramental water ; in exalting human mediators in the person of the priest to the alone office of Christ ; and above all in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which is essentially the mark of Antichrist, the Greek Church bears upon its dark face the brand of apostasy " (Rev. James Niel, M.A., in *Palestine Re-peopled*, 8th edition). Like the Church of Rome, also, " he shall stand up against the Prince of Princes ; but he shall be broken without hand " (Dan. viii, 25).

The late Sir Robert Anderson in his *The Coming Prince*, from which we have already quoted at page 56 *ante*, refers to this vision of Daniel in the following words. Speaking of the goat as the symbol of the Greek Empire, he writes :

" Out of one of these horns came forth a little horn, representing a king who should become infamous as a blasphemer of God and a persecutor of His people.

" That the career of Antiochus Epiphanes was in a

special way within the scope and meaning of this prophecy is unquestioned. That its ultimate fulfilment belongs to a future time, though not so generally admitted, is nevertheless sufficiently clear. The proof of it is twofold. First, it cannot but be recognised that its most striking details remain wholly unfulfilled (I allude to the 2,300 days of verse 14). And, secondly, the events described are expressly stated to be ' in the last end of the indignation ' (Dan. viii, 19), which is the ' great tribulation of the last days ' (Matt. xxiv, 21), ' the time of trouble ' which is immediately to precede the complete deliverance of Judah " (*vide* Dan, xii, 1).

Sir Robert Anderson thus appears to consider the horn of Dan. vii, and that of Dan. viii, as both referring to the individual he represents as Antichrist, " the Coming Prince," of whom Antiochus Epiphanes is the type, and bases his argument on the fact that as " the old Scriptures taught the pious Jew to look for a personal Christ—not a system or dynasty, but a person " (p. 197), so also is Antichrist to be an individual.

This view of Antichrist is a characteristic of most expositors who follow the futurist system of interpretation. A few, however, such as the late Rev. James Neil, M.A., who explains Daniel's " Seventy Weeks " on this basis, agrees with historicists in identifying Antichrist with a *system*, the Papacy.

If Antichrist was to be, as Futurists maintain, a single individual to appear immediately before the Millennium, how is St. John's statement, that even in *his* day there were *many* antichrists, to be explained?

" As ye have heard that antichrist shall come *even now are there many antichrists* " (1 John, ii, 18) ; that is to say, that Christians even in those early days believed,

as do the Futurists to-day, that a personal Antichrist would appear " in the last time." St. John, however, reminds them antichrists are always with us, and that his coming is not *necessarily* an adjunct of the final days of " the time of the end."

No doubt many will deny and disbelieve in the doctrine of the Saviour's personal advent on the threshold of the millennium, that is to say, deny His coming " in the flesh," even as He so came at His first Advent ; the denial of one event is virtually, by implication, a denial of the other, and such is a mark of antichrist. The emphasis is on the *nature* in which He is to come. St. John clearly states this in the following passages :—

" Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : *because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

" Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh* is of God :

" And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God : *and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world*" (1 John, iv, 1-3).

" Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not (deny) that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. *This is a deceiver and an antichrist*" (2 John, 7).

St. John thus uses the term [antichrist in a *collective* sense to designate *all* false teachers who, in the name of Christ, teach doctrines contrary to Christ and His Gospel, just as the word " king " may be used to designate any monarch in the line of succession, and not necessarily the reigning sovereign. Futurists interpret Antichrist as being solely *against* Christ, whereas



he is only so in a secondary sense, the primary meaning of "*anti*" in composition being "in the place of"; that is to say, Antichrist is one who sets himself up as a counterpart of the true Christ, usurps His name and place, and makes use of Christian doctrines and institutions, a *professing* Christian, while his Church is a *professedly* Christian Church, but *in practice* is something quite different. And these attributes exactly fit the Roman Church and hierarchy. The Antichrist of prophecy, therefore, is not any particular individual—an atheist, but a *system*, a *political system* which hides its real purpose—universal dominance and power—under the cloak of religion.

We have mentioned above (ch. iii, p. 29), in connection with the Historical School of interpretation, that it is actually the oldest of the different systems of prophetic exposition, having originated as early as the 12th century with those who, even at that early date, recognised in the growing corruption of Rome the Antichrist of St. John. An interesting passage upon this very identification has just come to our notice in Sir William Whitla's introductory chapters to his edition of Sir Isaac Newton's *Daniel and the Apocalypse*. He says: "Doctor Newton, Bishop of Bristol, writing soon after Sir Isaac, tells us that a treatise was published as early as A.D. 1120, that is not long after the Norman Conquest, in which was advanced the view that Antichrist had already long ago arrived; he was not, however, represented by a single personage, *but by the men then constituting the Church*" (our italics).

Sir William continues: "But I find in history a much earlier record of this interpretation of Antichrist . . . and that from a source less to be expected than any other under heaven. For we get the earliest and

perhaps the truest decision on this debatable subject from Rome herself. . . . We must go back to the 6th century, to the time of . . . Gregory the Great, who died in the year A.D. 604. . . .

" When the site of Empire was shifted from Rome to Constantinople, there was a Bishop (or Patriarch) in the city on the Bosphorus. There was also a Bishop at Rome, and between these two worthy ecclesiastical authorities there were some not very edifying struggles for supremacy. These culminated towards the close of Gregory's last years of the Roman Bishopric, when the Bishop of Constantinople (known as John the Faster) attempted to assume the title and office of Universal Bishop over all Christendom. Gregory, the Bishop of Rome, considered it to be his duty to fulminate against this outrage on the Church ; he boldly affirmed that whoever took the title of Universal Bishop ' doth forerun Antichrist.' Writing of his rival, John the Faster, he says : ' By this pride of his, what thing else is signified, but that the time of Antichrist is now at hand ? The king of pride (that is Antichrist) approacheth and that is wicked to be spoken, an army of priests is prepared.' "

Three years after Gregory's death, Phocas conferred the title of Universal Bishop, or Pope, upon Boniface III ; subsequent history has proved in no uncertain fashion the truth of Gregory's affirmation. The Papacy, with its army of priests, has fulfilled to the uttermost every identification which Scripture says would be the mark of Antichrist.

Another characteristic of Antichrist is " a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies " (Rev. xiii, 5), fulfilled not only in papal bulls and utterances, mediæval and modern, but also in their ceremonies, such

as the *Ceremoniale Romanum*, in which, after investiture, the new Pope is conducted to the altar, before which he prostrates himself in prayer, bowing as before the seat of God. He then rises, and, wearing his mitre, is lifted up by the cardinals, and *placed by them upon the altar to sit there*, when but a moment before he had approached it as a suppliant!

Like the previous interpretation of Antichrist, this characteristic had likewise been anticipated by Rome herself! Thus Gerbert, Bishop of Rheims in the 10th century, and afterwards himself Pope (Silvester II, A.D. 999-1003)—a fact which adds piquancy to his words—asked:<sup>1</sup> "What do you suppose this man, sitting on a lofty throne, glittering in purple clothing and gold, what, I say, do you conceive him to be? If he is destitute of charity, and is puffed up by knowledge alone, he is Antichrist, *sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God.*"

Another identification of Antichrist, which Futurists apply to this term, will be examined in a later chapter dealing with Daniel's prophecy of the "Seventy Weeks."

<sup>1</sup> Cited by the Rev. H. C. Robertson in *The Revelation of St. John showing the Four Visions of Time* (Central Asian Mission, London), an interesting essay which elucidates the visions of the Apocalypse in parallel tabular form in a novel and original manner. The Historical method of interpretation is followed.

## CHAPTER IX

*"He shall come to his end and none shall help him"*  
(Dan. xi, 45)

DANIEL'S next vision is recorded in the tenth and eleventh chapters,<sup>1</sup> and gives further details respecting the powers symbolised by the ram and the goat of ch. viii, viz., Persia and Greece. The rise of Alexander the Great is given in xi, 3, and his fall and the dismemberment of his empire into four kingdoms in the following verse, "but not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion wherewith he ruled." This prediction was fulfilled by the death of his son whereby his generals divided his kingdom between them. The verses that follow (5-20) give, in prophetic and symbolical language, the events which take place in two of these kingdoms, Egypt and Syria.

The prophetic angel then breaks off in order to describe the events of the "latter days" (see x, 14), taking the period of Antiochus Epiphanes as a type or forecast; ch. xi, 21, to the end of Daniel describing the final war of Armageddon. Verse 31 prefigures Rome and the desolations which the Jews suffered under the Emperors of Pagan Rome till the advent of Constantine, the Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus raised by Hadrian, A.D. 132, on the site of Solomon's Temple,

<sup>1</sup> Note that Daniel does not record his prophecies or visions in chronological order, as they were vouchsafed to him. That recorded in his ninth chapter, the vision of the seventy weeks, is later than those given in the following chapters.

being the first " abomination " (verse 31), which prefigured the greater—because more enduring—" abomination " denoted by the Mosque of Omar erected on the same site in A.D. 639, after the Mohammedan conquest of Jerusalem two years previously.

This leads us to a consideration of the last of the Gentile powers who are to have dominion during the period of the " Seven Times "—Mohammedanism, revealed prophetically as Edom, Esau, and Dumah, symbolically as the river Euphrates, and historically as Turkey. Though this power is not specifically revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's Image, yet the words of Luke xxi, 24, clearly denote Turkey as a Gentile power, since it has precisely fulfilled this prophecy as to the duration thereof, and has been the power which has " trodden down " the Holy City.

In Rev. xvi, 12, we read : " The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up." The Turkish Empire has gradually shrunk, like a lake or river in a hot climate, from the circumference to the centre, as it has lost its furthestmost territories first, each loss driving it back towards that centre—Asia Minor—from which it originally arose, and to which it is now almost wholly confined, the very small area now left it in Europe, in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, being politically negligible.

Even as the final destruction of the two little horns of Dan. vii and viii precedes the ultimate redemption of the Promised Land, so does the last drying up of the river Euphrates take place at Armageddon : " He shall come to his end and none shall help him " are the prophetic words of Dan. xi, 45. To find when this will happen we turn to Dan. xii, 11-12.

The 1,335 years of verse 12 is equivalent to 1,260

lunar—or Mohammedan—years plus 75 years, commonly called the "epact," or the difference between 2,520 lunar years and 2,520 solar years. 1,260 lunar years is equivalent to 1,222 solar years (omitting fractions); and A.D. 639, when the "abomination that maketh desolate" was set up, plus 1,222 years, plus 75, equals A.D. 1936!

Daniel's 1,335 years is also the year of Hegira, dated from the flight of Mohammed (A.D. 622), and is equivalent to A.D. 1917, the year of Jerusalem's delivery, and the fulfilment of Luke xxi, 24, which indeed proved a blessing as the angelic interpreter foretold.

The 1,290 years of this prophecy is the above 1,260 years plus an additional 30 years, or a total of 1,292 solar years, which, reckoned as before from A.D. 639 brings us to A.D. 1891. From A.D. 1891 to 1936, then, is the period of the "consummation" of Dan. ix, 27, the period in modern history "when all these things shall be finished" (Dan. xii, 7), and its length is 45 years, which is the difference between the epact of 75 solar years and the additional 30 years of Daniel's 1,290 "days" over the 1,260 years of Dan. xii, 7, expressed as "time, times, and a half." 45 years is also the difference between the two periods of verses 11 and 12 in ch. xii expressed as "days."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested to the writer that it is hardly legitimate to combine lunar and solar years together when applying them to prophetic forecasts of time. This criticism, however, overlooks the fact that the difference between 2,520 years by solar reckoning and the same period by lunar is 75 solar years, and *this difference*—or Epact, as it is termed (which denotes the excess of the solar year above the lunar year)—*must not be regarded otherwise than as SOLAR years*. That is to say, the maximum period of the "Seven Times" is 2,520 lunar years (the scale used by Daniel—Jewish and Mohammedan reckoning) *plus* 75 solar. For the same reason Daniel's 1,290 years is 1,260 lunar + 30 solar years for the *maximum* period. (See Nos. 12 and 13 in Chart at end.)

Turkey is again referred to under the symbol of the river Euphrates as the second woe of Rev. ix, 14-18, in the following words: "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."

This prophecy, both in manner and time, has been most strikingly fulfilled. The four angels aptly prefigure the four Sultanates of Turks bordering on the Euphrates—at Baghdad founded in 1058; at Damascus and at Aleppo, both in 1079, and at Iconium, in Asia Minor, in 1080.<sup>1</sup> These were eventually banded together by Ortogrul and his son Othman (whence the term Ottoman Turks), who was born in the city of Sugut in 1258, where they had settled, the forerunners of that terrible host, symbolised by the two hundred thousand thousand of St. John's vision, whom he saw loosed from the upper streams of the Euphrates, and which carried for "a day, a month, and a year"—or 391 years—death and destruction to all who refused to embrace Mohammedanism.

The period of 391 years during which Islam was to conquer and slay "the third part of men," was also strikingly fulfilled in the time between the first victory under Ortogrul against a Christian state by his capture of Kutani from the Greeks in 1281, to the conquest of the Cameniec territory from the Poles in 1672, which victory marked the limits of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>2</sup> It remained but a short time at this high-water mark, for its "drying up" began in earnest in 1699, by the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. H. C. Robertson (quoted above), citing Bishop Newton on the *Prophecies*.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Robertson, citing Bishop Newton (as above).

Treaty of Carlowitz, following the wars with Russia and Austria, and it has never ceased to recede ever since.

The words of Rev. ix, 18, " by fire, by smoke, and by brimstone, which issued out of their mouths," aptly portray the cannon and gunpowder which the Turks during that period, and particularly at the siege and taking of Constantinople in 1453, found of such signal service to them. Though it is debatable whether they were the first to use cannon (Edward III is said to have used cannon of some description in his wars against the Scots in 1327 and again at Crecy in 1346), the Turks certainly used larger and more effective weapons than their opponents, a fact which contributed very largely to their sweeping victories, and was the main factor in their capture of Constantinople.

This event contributed more than anything else to the extension and maintenance of the Mohammedan power. We should therefore expect to find that the 391 years of the prophecy would mark an important date therefrom in the " drying-up " process of the Turkish Empire. By lunar reckoning (Mohammedan) we arrive at 1832-3, when it was nearly broken up by the rebellion of Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, who conquered Syria, and, but for European intervention, would have eventually taken Constantinople itself! The same period by solar (or Christian) reckoning gives us the year 1844, when the Sultan was compelled by the Christian powers<sup>1</sup> to sign the decree of *Hatti Hamayoun* granting religious toleration to all his Christian subjects, giving them, in fact, their Magna

<sup>1</sup> Note the coincidence by which the two forms of reckoning apply to appropriate events, the first through Mohammedan influence (Mehemet Ali), the second through Christian agency.



Charta, and abolishing for ever Turkey's characteristic and sanguinary practice of executing Mohammedans for conversion to Christianity—a decree against all the principles of the *Koran* and contrary to the practice of Mohammedanism since its inception. This compulsory sheathing of the persecuting sword of Mohammedanism was clear proof that Turkey's independence was gone, and marked the termination of the period for which the angels were loosed.

There is also the remarkable fact respecting the year 1844 that it is also 1,260 years (" Time, Times, and a Half "—the duration of the Papal power which exists alongside the Mohammedan) from A.D. 622, the year of *Hegira*, by lunar reckoning; while the same period by solar reckoning from *Hegira* ended in 1882, the year of British intervention in Egypt, marking the virtual expulsion of Turkey therefrom, which the results of the late war have now made absolute.

## CHAPTER X

### DANIEL'S VISION OF THE "SEVENTY WEEKS" (ch. ix)

PROBABLY no prophecy in the whole Bible has given rise to so much literature in explanation thereof as has that known as Daniel's vision of the "seventy weeks." No prophecy, too, shows more clearly the great differences in interpretation between Futurists and Historicists, and none also vindicates better the correctness of the latter, for it foretells an event—the coming of Messiah—which has now long passed into the facts of history. It is true Futurists have to admit so much of the vision has been completed, and, in the main, so far agree with Historicists; it is more particularly in the application of the 70th and final "week" of the prophecy that there is so great a divergence of opinion.

This vision of the "seventy weeks" may be considered as a continuation of the *literal* seventy years of the Jewish captivity in Babylon, terminated by the edict of Cyrus in 534 B.C.<sup>1</sup> In the opening verses of Dan. ix, we learn that Daniel "understood by the books the number of years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. xxv, 11), that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations

<sup>1</sup> First captivity of Judah, 604 B.C., to "first year" of Cyrus the Persian, 534 B.C. = 70 years. This must not be confused with the 70 years "Divine Indignation" of Zechariah i, 12 ("three-score and ten years"). This period dates from the departure of the Shekinah (Ezek. x, 18) from the first Temple, previous to its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, to the founding of the second Temple in second year of Darius (590 B.C.-520 B.C.).

of Jerusalem." Then follows his earnest prayer to the Almighty to pardon Jerusalem, and his supplication is rewarded by the revelation of a further prophetic period of seventy weeks of years which would finally lead to a deliverance from sin for all mankind, though Judah should be given the special privilege of accepting this deliverance first, and of being made the instrument of extending the gospel to the world at large, an offer which they rejected by their betrayal of the Messiah. Their full restoration, therefore, was to be delayed till the final " time of the end," though still at first remaining in obstinate unbelief, until such time as Christ appears a second time " when every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him " (Rev. i, 7).

The vision itself is given in verses 24-27, and is announced in two parts; firstly, the total period of the vision (70 " weeks " = 490 years); secondly, the period to elapse between the command to restore the Temple and the coming of Messiah, 69 weeks = 483 years. Verse 26 gives the events taking place in the final (or 70th) week, which Futurists affirm awaits fulfilment in a future age.

Futurists not only detach the 70th week from the preceding 69, but they also cut up the 69 weeks themselves of verse 25 into a period of 7 weeks (49 years), and another of " three score and two weeks " (434 years), making the 49 years refer to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the 434 years to the time between its completion and the first Advent. Yet it is plain from the context that the expression refers to *one definite and continuous* period; seven weeks plus three score plus two weeks, or 69 in all, the prophetic equivalent of 483 actual years.

This method of expressing a sum total when denoting

a measurement of time, distance, or area, is frequently used throughout Scripture, and to divide it up in the fashion Futurists do in this prophecy would be in every instance both meaningless and illogical. To do so in this particular vision, and also to transfer the final portion to some distant future, is to convert a definite prophecy of seventy weeks into an *indefinite* one of many *hundreds* of weeks. A measurement of any definite amount, such as is implied in the number seventy in this instance, irrespective of the value of the units employed, ceases to be such if you are allowed to cut it up into parts, and connect them, so to speak, by an elastic cord which can be stretched to an indeterminate amount. This vision, on the other hand, is an entirely fulfilled prophecy, which history has proved to have been correctly predicted in every detail.

Justification for this procedure on the part of Futurists is claimed from the fact that, in 1 Kings vi, 1, the period from the Exodus to the founding of the Temple is given as 480 years, whereas according to Judges (and St. Paul in Acts xiii, 18-31) it was actually much longer, the difference being accounted for by the various periods of servitude recorded in the Book of Judges when Israel was " sold into the hands of their enemies," *which are not taken into account in the 480 years of 1 Kings, vi.* Therefore, claim the Futurists, just as the record of these servitudes is omitted and blotted out, so is the punishment of Israel (they mean, of course, Judah) for their rejection of Messiah by banishment from the Covenant Land during the present dispensation also not taken into account. Fulfilment of prophecy is thus " tided back " until the term of their punishment is completed. (*Vide* Sir Robert Anderson in *Unfulfilled Prophecy*).

Ingenious, but not convincing. The most reasonable explanation of the difference of length of period from Exodus to Solomon, in the two records of it, is given by the great probability that in several cases the oppressions and the judgeships overlapped one another, being referable to different portions of the land, while textual criticism makes St. Paul's words refer to a period *before* the time of the Judges, starting, possibly, from the birth of Isaac, which was the beginning of the fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham. Mr. Davidson, in his work on the Great Pyramid in which he co-ordinates Babylonian, Egyptian and Hebrew records, shows how similar apparent inconsistencies respecting dates and length of periods are due to such overlapping of reigns, which will cause, in course of time, a considerable chronological difference. The dynasties of Egypt, for example, and the chronology deduced therefrom, illustrate the results of such overlapping to a very marked degree.

The important verses of this vision are the following :

Verse 24.—" Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."

Verse 25.—" Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks ; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Verse 26.—" And after threescore and two weeks

shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself ; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary ; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Verse 27.—“ And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week : and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

The central element of the prophecy, then, is the prediction of a Messiah who was to come, and would be cut off after the lapse of 434 years since the rebuilding of Jerusalem. No Christian doubts but that this Messiah is Jesus Christ, and that consequently so much of the prophecy has been fulfilled. Note particularly that while more than one Hebrew prophet foretold important events in our Lord's life from His Birth to His Ascension, so that, collectively, they present us with a wonderfully complete picture thereof, Daniel is the only one who supplies us with the one detail hitherto lacking, the exact *time* of His advent. This, however, cannot be determined without first fixing the date of the event from which it is reckoned, viz., the restoration of Jerusalem.

We must therefore begin by determining the date of the decree referred to in verse 25 : “ to restore and build Jerusalem,” that is the *city itself*, not only the temple. Of the various decrees of the Persian monarchs conferring privileges upon the Jewish exiles, the first was that of Cyrus, who, immediately after conquering the kingdom and city of Babylon, issued an edict (534 B.C.) allowing the rebuilding of the Temple at

Jerusalem, an event prophesied by Isaiah, who not only foretold this, but also predicted the coming of Cyrus himself (see Isa. xlv, 28).

This decree of Cyrus, however, was lost and forgotten, but was eventually found at Ecbatana in the palace of Darius the Mede (Darius Hystaspes), who confirmed it by the issue of a new one to advance the building of the temple, which was completed in the sixth year of his reign (515 B.C.).

Previously, however, Ahasuerus<sup>1</sup> had issued a decree annulling that of Cyrus—under which only the foundations of the temple were laid (thus fulfilling Isa. xlv, 28)—owing to opposition on the part of the inhabitants of Judea (see Ezra iv, 4-6, 17-24), with the result that all work on the temple ceased till " the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia " (the " troublous times " of Daniel).

Then we come to the decree of Artaxerxes of 457 B.C. recorded in Ezra vii, granted to Ezra himself, after an interval of nearly sixty years, during which apparently all work had ceased, otherwise there would have been no necessity for Ezra's request (verse 6). This long interval was no doubt due to further interference by enemies of the Jews such as had caused the previous lapse in the reign of Ahasuerus,<sup>2</sup> and would be sufficient to render the decree of Darius to continue the building of no effect, requiring a new command if the city was ever again to be completed.

This command of Artaxerxes, however, merely gave permission and aid for decorating the Temple and

<sup>1</sup> Cambyses in secular history, Artaxerxes in Ezra iv.

<sup>2</sup> Note that the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv is not the same as that of chapter vii, this latter is Artaxerxes Longimanus. The name Artaxerxes is really a title, like Pharaoh, or Emperor, and might be taken by any monarch in succession.

carrying out certain ceremonial rites in connection with its services, rather than with the actual building of the city and walls. A second command was made by this same king, fourteen years later, this time at the request of Nehemiah, " that thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, *that I may build it*" (Neh. ii, 5), particularly specifying that timber be granted him " for the gates of the palace . . . and *for the wall of the city* (verses 7, 8), proof that the walls were still incomplete in his day, while in chapter vi the date of their completion is announced on " the 25th day of the month Elul (September), in fifty and two days," in spite of strenuous opposition from their enemies (verse 15).

This second decree, then, of Artaxerxes, was the only one which allowed the returned Jews to rebuild the streets, walls, and moat of the city of Jerusalem. Therefore, in strict adherence to the words of Daniel, this must be taken as the starting point of the 69 weeks as laid down in verse 25: " From the going forth of the commandment *to restore and build Jerusalem* shall be 69 weeks (483 years) unto the Messiah, and it shall be built again, *with street and moat*, in troublous times."

The final completion of the city, however, was deferred for another ten years, for Nehemiah tells us in chapter vii that, though the walls and gates were completed, the houses within were not yet built."

"Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not yet builded" (verse 4). Completion appears to have taken place in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes, as Nehemiah returns to Babylon at that date (Neh. xiii, 6), but makes another journey to Jerusalem later to carry out certain necessary reforms in administration.



The point, therefore, from which the 69 weeks is to be reckoned is the date of the *second* decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, in the twentieth year of his reign, 445-444 B.C., and this period expressed in lunar—or Jewish—years from that date terminates in A.D. 26-27, the year which saw the commencement of our Lord's Ministry in His 30th year (Luke iii, 23—“ *about* thirty years of age ”), immediately after His Baptism and Temptation, when He “ came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled* ” (Mark i, 14-15). Christ Himself thus announces the fact that the prophecies of the Old Testament made concerning Him and His Ministry on earth had come to pass. Though there is no absolute proof that Daniel's words “ unto the Messiah ” mean to the birth of Christ, to His Baptism, or to the commencement of His Ministry, the presumption that it is to the latter date is borne out by the reference to St. Mark just quoted. Sir Robert Anderson makes it refer to the date on which our Lord entered Jerusalem just before His Passion amid the acclamations of the populace, the only day in His lifetime when He permitted Himself to be proclaimed as the Messiah. The date of this event, however, A.D. 30 (Sir Robert gives it as A.D. 32) would seem to be just beyond the termination of the 69 weeks. Reckoned in *prophetic* years, however, of 360 days each, this period would terminate in A.D. 32, but this is two years later than the now generally accepted date of the Passion.

## CHAPTER XI

*"Messiah shall be cut off"* (Dan. ix, 26)

AFTER predicting the coming of Messiah, Daniel then goes on to state that, "*after sixty-two weeks*" (434 years) from the restoration of Jerusalem, "*Messiah shall be cut off*" (verse 26). Taken in conjunction with the previous verse this means that at some time after 69 weeks from the date of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, our Lord would suffer death, that is, during the course of the 70th or final week. This does not necessarily mean in the exact bisection of that week (that is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years) as many appear to think. Daniel refers to a period of seven years in the *course* of which "He shall confirm the covenant with many (Israel)," but shall suddenly "be cut off." This is precisely the sequence of events that occurred in our Lord's life, His death taking place during the third year of His Ministry, in the spring of A.D. 30.

The remainder of the week represents the time during which the Gospel was continued to be preached to the Jews (Acts ii), until its extension to the Samaritans (Acts viii), and later to the Gentiles (Acts x, 45—Peter's sermon at house of Cornelius), thus proving that the special privileges of the Jews were now at an end and the "seventy weeks" fully determined. This sentence on the Jewish nation was confirmed by Paul and Barnabas when preaching at Antioch, in the follow-

ing words from Acts xiii, 44-47 : " The next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should *first* have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (See also Isa. xlix, 6.)

It is this final " week " of Daniel's prophecy which Futurists transfer to a (perhaps) still distant future, maintaining that, as the Jews still remain in obstinate unbelief, their transgression is not finished nor their sin ended, and that consequently the everlasting righteousness (Dan. ix, 24) foretold cannot be brought in till the second coming of Christ.

Such interpretation, however, limits the doctrine of the Atonement to the Jews only ; but apart from this, what precisely did Christ's death upon the Cross signify ? Surely exactly what Daniel foretold. Did not our Lord thereby make an end of sins and full reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness ? Also, did not that event seal up and complete Daniel's prophecy ? The Atonement was accomplished not solely to make amends for the sins and transgressions of the Jews only, as Futurists seem to imply, but for all mankind, and by its inauguration of the Gospel Age prepared the way for the *eventual* bringing in of everlasting righteousness.

We have now the remainder of verse 26 to consider. This is another passage of great importance to students of prophecy, in that it also illustrates very clearly the great difference between the two methods of interpretation, historical and futurist.

This passage reads : " And the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood." To make clearer what we shall have to say in elucidation of the foregoing, we should continue to the next verse : " And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."

Futurists read this " Prince " as meaning a future personal Antichrist, who is to be some atheistic individual, and it is this misrendering of it that suggested to the late Sir Robert Anderson the title of his book, *The Coming Prince*, the type of whom he sees in Antiochus Epiphanes, " the Antichrist of the Old Testament." In his *Preface* to the seventh edition of this work he concludes, " To prevent any possible misconception as to the meaning of the title (*The Coming Prince*) in which some are said to have suspected an allusion to Messiah, the head of Antiochus Epiphanes, ' the Antichrist of the Old Testament,' has been placed upon the title-page."

As the late Rev. James Neil, a leading authority on Bible language, points out, the words which both the A.V. and R.V. translate " *the* people of *the* prince " should be " *a* people of *a* prince " (there being no definite article in the original), and may be rendered " a princely people," that is, a people ruled over by a prince. This verse, in fact, foretells the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in A.D. 70, who was the son of the reigning Emperor Vespasian, and therefore correctly described as a

" prince," and it also predicts that event as taking place after the death of Messiah.

" He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week " (verse 27). Futurists affirm that the " He " in this verse refers to the " prince " (their Antichrist) of the previous verse, but if the reader will carefully examine the whole four verses of the vision and analyse them, particularly noting the punctuation, it will be apparent that the subject of this verse is the same as that of the whole prophecy, namely Messiah.

As explained above, Christ *has* fulfilled the predictions contained in verse 27, and the Futurist interpretation thereof is not only unconfirmed elsewhere in Scripture, but is also illogical in virtue of the parenthesis theory thereby implied.

Thus they explain the 70th week of the prophecy as the final week of this era, signalled by the advent of some atheistic individual who will seize the reins of authority and make a seven years' treaty with the Jews (Zionists) guaranteeing them national rights, with special reference to the observance of the rites of their religion.<sup>1</sup> And in the middle of the week, that is, after three years and a half, he will violate the treaty by the desecration of the Temple and suppression of their worship, this persecution lasting the remaining three and a half years (the 42 months of Rev. xiii, 5), only to be terminated by the Second Appearance of Christ.

Note that in making Rev. xiii, 5 apply to their " Prince " of Daniel they break one of the first rules of prophetic interpretation ; that where time measurements are employed, the cyphers used must conform

<sup>1</sup> To be able to carry this into effect, however, would mean first removing the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem and rebuilding the Temple on its ancient site. (See in this connection page 295 of the author's *Witness of the Great Pyramid*.)

to the same scale throughout, as explained above in Chapter V. While they correctly designate Daniel's week as a week of years, to St. John's "forty-two months" they apply a literal scale of a day for a day.

The Futurists also, in order to uphold this interpretation, will affirm that this verse cannot apply to our Lord because He "made no covenant with many for one week." Daniel, however, does not say this, but "He shall *confirm* the covenant"—which is not at all the same thing—that is, the Abrahamic Covenant. And not only did Christ confirm the old covenant, but He amplified it by the new covenant (see Luke xxii, 20), as corroborated by St. Paul in the following words: "I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*" (Rom. xv, 8).

There is, therefore, no authority for saying that this covenant refers to some Antichrist who is to make an agreement with the Jews for a definite period, and in the middle of it suddenly break it by violating the Temple and suppressing the Jewish sacrifices. The Antichrist of Scriptural prophecy represents the Papal *system*, which, as pointed out in an earlier chapter (viii), has, during the 1,260 years of its political dominance (the 42 months of Rev. xiii, 5, and the "time, and times, and half a time" of Rev. xii, 14), fulfilled every identification and committed every deed which prophecy predicted should be its especial mark.

To neglect the evidence of past history, which proves this identification practically beyond dispute, and to speculate instead upon some problematical *literal* fulfilment in the future as the intended accomplishment of these *symbolic*—and largely *Divinely-interpreted*—prophecies, is to deprive them of their practical im-

portance and render their warnings thereby conveyed illusory. It is also misleading by substituting unwarranted conjectures about some future individual who, in the short space of but *three and a half years*, is to exhaust these Divinely-given predictions which have engrossed the minds of Christians for *over nineteen centuries*.

It further means that they were indited, not for the benefit of the countless numbers of God's saints since the commencement of the Christian era, but exclusively for the guidance of a single generation at the very end of this age, thus passing over unnoticed that world-wide power which has ruled Christendom with the utmost despotism, and with the most evil results, for over a thousand years, *in order to describe in detail, and many times over, the doings of ONE man who has not yet appeared!* Commonsense alone ridicules the idea.

The Futurist view of Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks and of the Antichrist of St. John is well summed up by the Rev. H. C. Robertson in the essay already referred to. He points out that the distortion which this view entails is due to their efforts to escape the correct identity of Antichrist with the Papacy, adding, "*But that the Futurist view entails such distortion is its own confutation; for Scripture itself condemns want of symmetry in a parable as the work of a 'fool'* (Prov. xxvi, 7)."<sup>1</sup>

"Again," he concludes, "the Prophecy of Revelation declares that it speaks of 'things which must shortly come to pass.' Is it possible to reconcile that with an 1,800 years' interval, from the time of its delivery up to a mere seven years' point of time, in

<sup>1</sup> "The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools."

which a grotesque and monstrous fulfilment of all is to be compressed? And clearly the 'opening of the Book' by the Lamb (ch. v), and His showing its contents to John for the instruction of His other servants, is the reversal of the Sealing of the Book, 600 years before, by Daniel, because the time was *then* distant."



## CHAPTER XII

*"The Battle of that great day of God Almighty"* (Rev. xvi, 14)

WE now come to that great event which marks the culmination of the "Times of the Gentiles," and which immediately precedes the second coming of our Lord, when the kings of the earth and of the whole world are gathered to the battle of the great day of God Almighty (Rev. xvi, 14). This final conflict is generally referred to as the war of Armageddon, but, as we shall show later in this chapter, the "gathering" of verse 14 and that of verse 16, in this xvth chapter of Revelation, are not necessarily the same. This was first pointed out by the Rev. Pascoe Goard in his wonderful address at the Royal Albert Hall on the evening of March 1st, 1927—supplemented by a further address on the same theme at the Central Hall, Westminster, a week later—<sup>1</sup> and in view of certain difficulties which arise in connection with the usual meaning given to the term Armageddon, and with its location, when applied to such a vast conflict as the final battle will be—difficulties which have somewhat puzzled the writer in the past, but which are entirely met by Mr. Goard's explanation—we entirely concur with his interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Report of Albert Hall Address in the *National Message and Banner* of March 12th, 1927.

That this battle forms the climax of this present age, or dispensation, is a belief upon which there is practically unanimous agreement amongst students of prophecy; in fact, the prophecies of the Bible are so numerous and so emphatic thereon that it would be surprising if there was any considerable diversity of opinion concerning it. Even Futurists agree on this point with the Historicists, but identify as their Antichrist the leader of the forces which invade Palestine and lay siege to Jerusalem. While he is antichrist, that is, an enemy of Christ, he is not *the* Antichrist in distinction to any other individual, past or future, to whom this term might be applied. That is to say, he is not the *particular* Antichrist of prophecy: the leader of the Antichristian forces of Rev. xvi, 14, is not symbolised under this name, but under the name of Gog. Gog it is who gathers the nations together against Palestine, invests the Holy City, and is defeated by the hosts of the Almighty.

To seek enlightenment upon the events which are to be unfolded in this final act of the world's drama, we must turn to the prophet Ezekiel, who, in chapters xxxviii and xxxix, predicts the rise and fall of Gog and Gomer, together with all the various nationalities allied with them.

Practically all expositors are agreed that "Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal" (Ez. xxxviii, 2, [R.V.])<sup>1</sup> represents Russia—the people of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal being the original progenitors of the Muscovite race—while Gomer means

<sup>1</sup> Amongst orthodox Jews, those Jews who instituted the present Bolshevist régime in Russia are known as *rosch*, or "outcasts." Gog is, therefore, fittingly described as "prince of Rosh, Moscow and Tobolsk" (the modern equivalents of Meshech—the capital of Russia in Europe—and Tubal, the capital of Russia in Asia).

Germany, and these two powers have been in secret military alliance since 1922 (by the Treaty of Rapallo), now confirmed by the Treaty of Berlin concluded in April, 1926. The mention of Persia, Lybia, and Ethiopia (or "Cush" in R.V.) amongst Gog's armies, seems to imply he will draw recruits from part of Africa and the countries forming ancient Assyria, and in this connection it should be noted that the enemies of Israel are often spoken of as the Assyrian, particularly in Isaiah. With respect to this latter identification, it is significant that the inhabitants of modern Germany are the descendants of migrants who originally came into Europe from Asia about the beginning of the Christian era, and from that part which once formed the ancient empire of Assyria. And in modern Germany we witness the same attitude of that country towards us as the Assyrians of old regarded the Israelites, while recent history has proved unmistakably that the gods whom Germany worships, blood and frightfulness, are just those to whom ancient Assyria bowed the knee.

Germany is still the world's mischief maker at heart—whatever attitude she may present openly to the world by joining the League of Nations—just as much as she was previous to the late war. The mentality of a nation does not change in a few years, and her defeat in a war on which she had staked everything has only left her all the more bitter: she lives for a war of revenge, but is far too cunning—even if circumstances permitted—to raise undue suspicions by any action she might take in her own country towards that end. The conditions in Russia to-day, however, coupled with the avowed aims of its Soviet rulers, and the fact that her actions are not in any way hampered by membership

of the League of Nations, are affording Germany all the opportunity—free, too, of foreign observation—she can desire towards preparations for such a war. The facts under this head, obtained from German workmen returned from munition factories in Russia, recently reported in the *Morning Post* from one of its foreign correspondents, showed that these preparations *going on in Russia to-day, under German technical control, on behalf of that country and Germany, have already reached a scale not surpassed by Germany herself at the height of the late war.*<sup>1</sup>

With her wonderful and undoubted talent for organisation, Germany, through her military and technical instructors, is to-day (as the writer forecasted in 1920 would happen) reconstructing Russia and exploiting its enormous man-power and resources in the hope that she and her ally will some day attain their dream of world dominance. The destruction of the British Empire was the avowed aim of Germany in the late war; it is equally the avowed aim of Bolshevism to-day. All efforts to destroy the Stone Kingdom—Britain—in the past have failed; what, therefore, is more natural than that those two powers, whose one common object is to bring this about, should league together in the hope that, by thus uniting forces and

<sup>1</sup> In reply to questions addressed recently (March 15th, 1927) to the Secretary for War in the House of Commons, the fact was revealed—and it is something to know that the Government are at least aware of these facts respecting Russia, even if they do not see their significance—that the study of gas warfare was being actively pursued in Russia, the manufacture of poison gas being—according to Sir L. Worthington-Evans—*on a much greater scale in that country than anywhere else in the world!* The same authority also stated that, according to the latest available information, the standing army of Russia was 650,000 men, increased to over a million by the addition of the militia, while the reserves supplied *another eight millions* on the top of these figures!

material on a scale hitherto undreamed of, they may at last succeed.

It may be asked why should they specially single out Palestine for attack? Because they realise that the focus of world-power is shifting, and that, in future, the Power which establishes itself in the Middle East will be able to dominate the world, *for this region is the centre of the land surface of the globe*. Owing to the development of rapid transit by air, maritime communications will gradually lose that position of supremacy which they have hitherto conferred. Supremacy in the future will be governed by territorial position rather than by maritime. It is for this reason that Jerusalem, restored and greatly enlarged, will become, in the new era following Armageddon, the political and commercial—as well as the religious—centre of the world, the capital of the everlasting Stone Kingdom.

Germany and Russia, then, foreseeing these coming changes, are making preparations to reap the advantages thereby accruing, but they are planning to bring about in the near future what is ordained shall happen *after* Armageddon, and by so planning they hope to supersede the British Empire, but actually they are encompassing their own destruction.

What will give them their opportunity? Probably preoccupation on the part of our naval and military forces with some serious situation in the Far East, such as is taking place at present (April, 1927) in China, while it is common knowledge that these political disturbances—now in one part of the globe, now in another—are purposely engineered by Bolshevist agents with the main object, speciously disguised, of dissipating our resources and handicapping our efforts to meet attack nearer home. These were the tactics

employed by Germany previous to the outbreak of the late war: Bolshevia is to-day using the same means for a like purpose, but on a much larger, more extended scale, and in a more intense degree. For Rev. xvi plainly indicates that world-wide unrest and political chaos will lead up to the final war of Armageddon. During the outpouring of the sixth vial (verse 12), the evil spirits of Bolshevism, Communism, atheism and unbelief, " go forth unto the kings (i.e. Kingdoms) of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to battle " (verse 14), Armageddon taking place under the seventh vial.

Even as this age began, nineteen centuries ago, with a visible manifestation of God on earth in the person of His Son Jesus, so will it end with a visible manifestation of Satan, who will perhaps arise in the same region, the Near East or Levant. The anti-Christian spirit, so much in evidence to-day, will, before long, come to its head in the person of one who will be the very antithesis of Christ, and who will unite together all the Bolshevist elements out of Europe and Asia—and perhaps, also, from North Africa—to destroy the one nation, Great Britain, which bars the road to his universal domination. This is the individual Futurists designate as Antichrist, but whom we have shown is typified in prophecy under the name of Gog, though it is quite likely that, while Rev. xiii, 4-5—which Futurists appear to apply *solely* to this particular Antichrist—refers to the Papacy as its principal theme on the prophetic scale of " a day for a year," it *may also* prefigure, on the short scale of a day for a day, *and as a lesser type* of its main subject, this final Antichrist, who will wield power for an actual three and a half years.

In view of the war which the leaders of Bolshevism are to-day waging against Christianity, and in the light of their blasphemous utterances against the Almighty, Gog will certainly fulfil the words of Rev. xiii in commanding worship from all under his rule and in " speaking great things and blasphemies." That he will also probably be some dictator risen from the masses, such as are the Soviet leaders in Russia to-day, is indicated by Dan. xi, 21; from this verse to the end being (as pointed out above in our ch. ix) a prophecy respecting Armageddon, wherein Gog is symbolised under the term " king of the north," while the previous verses describe events relating to earlier " kings of the north " (i.e., Syria) after the break-up of Alexander's Empire. The first part of Dan. xi, therefore, is introductory to the main prophecy describing events in the " latter days," of which the history of Antiochus Epiphanes is taken as a forecast, verses 21 and onwards correctly describing his career. Thus he did not come to the throne in his own right—being the youngest son of Antiochus the Great—but " obtained the kingdom by flatteries," after expelling the usurper Heliodorus who had seized the crown after murdering Seleucus, elder brother of Epiphanes. The ambition of Antiochus then led him to undertake various campaigns against Egypt (171–168 B.C.), and the complete conquest of that country was prevented only by the intervention of the Romans (Dan. xi, 24–30).<sup>1</sup>

On his return from his second Egyptian campaign (170 B.C.), he made his first assault on Jerusalem in which the Temple was plundered and a terrible massacre

<sup>1</sup> Chittim, of verse 30, corresponds to Cyprus, which at that date was Greek. The connection is that it was in ships from Chittim that the envoys of Rome sailed, who compelled Antiochus to leave Egypt.

took place. Two years later he sent another expedition to occupy Jerusalem and fortify it, this time availing himself of the help of the traditional enemies of the Jews. The decrees then followed which have rendered his name infamous. The Temple was desecrated, and the observance of the law forbidden. "On the 15th day of Cisleu (the Syrians) set up 'the abomination of desolation' (i.e. an 'idol altar, which was upon the altar of God': verse 59) on the altar" (1 Macc. i, 54). Ten days later an offering was made on it to Jupiter Olympus. (See Dan. xi, 31):<sup>1</sup> verse 34—"shall be holpen with a little help"—evidently refers to the resistance offered by Mattathias and his sons to these decrees as recorded in 1 Maccabees.

Antiochus next turned his arms to the east, towards Parthia and Armenia, but his attempts in this direction were thwarted and he retired, first to Babylon and then to Tabae in Persia, where he died, 164 B.C., the victim of superstition, terror and remorse, but not before hearing of the successes of the Maccabees in restoring the Temple-worship at Jerusalem (see 1 Macc. vi, 1-16).

The remainder of this chapter of Daniel, from verse 36 onwards, appears to apply solely to events at the end of the age; for while Antiochus certainly "came to his end and there was none to help him" (verse 45), he did not fulfil any of the other conditions. Verse 36, for example, implies some power which shall continue (such as the Papacy, the Greek Church, or Mohammedanism) "till the indignation be accomplished," that is,

<sup>1</sup> As mentioned above at chapter ix, p. 86, the deeds of Antiochus also prefigured the later persecution of the Jews by the Romans, during the first and second centuries of the Christian Era. Thus Hadrian, A.D. 132, repeated the "abomination" of Antiochus (overthrown when the Temple-worship was restored just before his death) by erecting on the site of the Temple, which had been totally destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70, a Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus.



till the close of the "time of the end." Neither did Antiochus "plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas" (the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean) on Mount Zion, but it is quite possible Gog will attempt to do this.

This eleventh chapter of Daniel, therefore, deals with events which are fulfilled in the near future and in the distant future, reckoned from the time of the prophecy, while its middle portion is a blend of both, like Isaiah's prediction of the invasion of Sennacherib, the far view of which refers—as does this one of Daniel—to Armageddon.

Allied to Gog and Gomer, as the third member of this confederacy to overthrow Israel, is Turkey (Togarmah of Ezek. xxxviii, 6)<sup>1</sup>, who will see therein an opportunity to recover her lost possessions in the near East (Ezek. xxxv, 10), while it is well known Russia also covets the Holy Places. Since the Crimean war, Russia, under the Tsars, has acquired various sites from time to time around Jerusalem ostensibly for hospitals, and has erected thereon buildings which might much better pass for forts. These buildings were invested in the Russian Church, and in this connection the following report from Jerusalem towards the end of 1926 is significant:—<sup>2</sup>

"The Greek Orthodox community here is much exercised over the report that the Patriarch of Jerusalem has recognised the ecclesiastical organisation set up by the Soviet Government in opposition to the Orthodox Church in Russia. It is feared the Soviet may make an attempt to acquire Russian Church

<sup>1</sup> "Togarmah of the north quarters" implies Tartars and allied peoples, Turkestan, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in the *National Message and Banner* of Dec. 11th, 1926.

property in Palestine on the plea that, as the estates belonged to the former Imperial *régime*, the present Government in Moscow is entitled to them." (Russia may well attempt to acquire them *by force* if other means fail.)

This league, then, which represents the last stage of the Gentile image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, invades Palestine when that country is at profound peace, and very probably without any warning or previous declaration of war (Ezek. xxxviii, 9). Jer. vi, 22-23, portrays this invasion ("Behold, a people cometh from the north country (Russia); . . . they are cruel and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; *and they ride upon horses*"<sup>1</sup>), the people making it and the means whereby they will effect it—*on horseback*. Such is also clearly portrayed in Ezek. xxxviii, 15-16: "Thou (i.e. Gog) shall come up from thy place out of the north parts (Russia can invade Palestine only from the north), thou, and many people with thee, *all of them riding upon horses*, a great company, *and* a mighty army."

"And thou shall come up . . . as a cloud to cover the land; *it shall be in the latter days*, and I will bring thee against My land."

Besides confirming Jeremiah respecting Russia as a nation of horsemen and that Gog will fight on horseback, Ezekiel indicates another important characteristic respecting this invasion; namely that, not only

<sup>1</sup> See also Jer. ch. 50, verses 41-42: "Behold, a people shall come from the north, . . . and many kings shall be raised up (i.e., many races will be in Gog's armies); . . . they are cruel, and will not show mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, *and they shall ride upon horses*, everyone put in array, like a man to the battle." Russians are notable for their fine and powerful voices, and, with Tartars, are the finest nation of horsemen in the world.

will his army consist of mounted troops instead of the usual infantry, but “ a great company ” of non-combatants will follow in its wake. Considering that this invasion under Gog is not merely a campaign to subdue the country and then retire, but will be made with the intention of establishing a permanent occupation and settlement, we see the significance of this additional “ great company ” in Ezekiel’s prophecy. The Middle East is to-day thinly populated ; to develop it requires population, and Germany in particular, who is overcrowded at home and has to-day no outlets for her surplus population, and knowing, too, the importance this region will acquire in the near future, sees there the goal of her desire, “ On to the East ! ”

In these days of the rapid mechanicalisation of armies, the foregoing prophecies concerning the wide use of horses in the final war may appear puzzling. Turn to the map, however, and see the enormous physical difficulties Russia will encounter in an overland invasion—an invasion by sea is obviously out of the question—of Palestine ; the great mountain ranges which she will have to cross—the Caucasus, Taurus, anti-Taurus, and Lebanon—the impossibility of constructing railways through them in the time available, capable of conveying and keeping supplied the immense armies she will mobilise for her attack ; then it becomes clear why Russia will have to rely on horses. Countless numbers of horses and mules will alone provide the requisite transport for Gog’s immense armies under the conditions with which Russia and her confederates are faced in any contemplated invasion of Syria and Palestine, *and such are exactly the conditions for which she is at present feverishly preparing.* In addition to possessing already at least—if not more than—half of

all the world's horses, Russia is purchasing them by the thousands, particularly from North America, and the type is one best suited, not for farm or draught purposes, but for work in mountainous districts—like the Rockies of British Columbia—wiry and sure-footed. Also, they are being sent to the south of Russia, whence Gog's armies will start on their long march.

Such are the hosts that will be gathered "to the battle of that great day of *God Almighty*" (Rev. xvi, 14). Their approach to Jerusalem, which is their objective, is described in Isa. x, 28-32, the places mentioned lying round it on the north, from which direction the inspired prophet sees Gog's hordes pouring down, just as he saw the Assyrians doing at the time of Sennacherib's invasion (699 B.C.—this prophecy was made about 713 B.C.), this chapter of Isaiah, as already noted, containing a blend of both near and distant fulfilment.

Who will oppose these hosts? The writer, in common with practically all expositors, has hitherto regarded the British Race—revealed under "Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof" (Ezek. xxxviii, 13), and as "the kings of the east" in Rev. xvi, 12—as the opponent of Gog.

Careful collating, however, of the various prophecies respecting the battle of Armageddon (so-called)—Ezek. xxxviii, 18-23; xxxix, 1-4; Joel (ii, 11; iii, 9-16); Zechariah (xii, 4-9, xiv, 3); Rev. (xvi, 14; xix, 17-19)—appears to make it plain that, while the "Kings of the East,"<sup>1</sup> as soon as they receive intelligence of Gog's

<sup>1</sup> This term need not apply solely in a geographical sense, and is here probably intended as a contrast to the nations under Gog—"Kings of the west," the east signifying the right hand (positive, or good—the sheep); the west the left (negative, or evil—the goats). (See in this connection Matt. xxv, 32-33.)

invasion (note what we have said above regarding the secrecy with which Gog makes preparations, and that his invasion is made suddenly and without any previous warning—see Ezek. xxxviii, 10-13), mobilise their forces against him, *it is JEHOVAH HIMSELF who goes out to meet and destroy Gog*, who, however, overcoming local resistance before our main forces can reach the scene of operations, does effect a partial destruction of Jerusalem (see Zech. xiv, 2). "*Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations*" (*ibid.*, verse 3). It is clear, also, that the destruction of Gog takes place not at Megiddo in the plain of Esdraelon as is generally supposed—for it does not require a military strategist to know that the "field of Megiddo" is much too restricted for a battle on the scale such as this will be—but round about Jerusalem, "on the mountains of Israel," "in the valley of Jehoshaphat," or "the valley of decision" as it is very appropriately described in Joel iii, 14. Gog and his hordes will be destroyed *by the hosts of heaven*. "Thither cause *thy mighty ones* to come down, O Lord," is the prophetic prayer of Joel (iii, 11), and was it not "a mighty one" that destroyed Sennacherib's army *in one night* as it was preparing to take Jerusalem? And as this former attempted assault upon Jerusalem failed by the intervention of God Almighty, so will the coming greater assault, prefigured by that under Sennacherib (see Isa. x), be brought to naught in a like manner.

The means by which this will be accomplished are vividly portrayed in Ezek. xxxviii, 21-23, while the accompanying physical phenomena are revealed in Zech. xiv, 4-8, Joel iii, 15-16; Rev. xvi, 18, 21. Gog's destruction is brought about by his armies being smitten with plague and pestilence (Zech. xiv, 12-15),

by terrific rain and hailstorms and sulphurous fires (Ezek. xxxviii, 22),<sup>1</sup> and in addition earthquakes and volcanic fires will take their toll so that *five-sixths* of his combatants, numbering millions, will be destroyed. Such appalling carnage will produce a terrible panic among both horses and riders, so that the latter in their frenzy will slaughter one another, while their horses will be "struck with astonishment"!; thus implying something worse than merely a frightened horse, for while such is nothing extraordinary, one "struck with astonishment" is difficult to imagine (see Ezek. xxxviii, 21, and Zech. xii, 4).

So great will be the slaughter that *seven months* will be required to clear the land of Gog's slain multitudes encumbering the ground (Ezek. xxxix, 12-16), and large numbers will be continually employed searching for dead bodies amongst the wreckage of war; while SEVEN YEARS will be the time required to destroy Gog's enormous military equipment! (see Ezek. xxxix, 9). Seeing that Russia commenced organising for this war immediately the Armistice was signed in November, 1918, and seeing that to-day she already possesses an army and an air force, with corresponding equipment, larger than all the rest of Europe combined, these figures from Ezekiel are no mere fantasy.

<sup>1</sup> The writer has witnessed in the course of his travels, and on more than one occasion, hailstones of such a size that trees, in full foliage, were swept in a few moments as bare as if the woodman's axe had stripped them, while the noise of the storm's approach was like the distant roar of a heavy surf on the seashore. It is not difficult to imagine what the results of a prolonged bombardment upon massed and panic-stricken troops by a storm of this nature, with hailstones as large as golf-balls, would be. The "hail . . . about the weight of a talent" (57 lb.) of Rev. xvi, 21, may, however, refer to a shower of meteorites, often popularly referred to as "thunderbolts," quite a likely accompaniment of the volcanic and other physical phenomena which will be in evidence.

Remember, also, that Russia, by the mouths of her leaders, and by cartoons in her press, has openly boasted that, in her war against Christianity, she intends to carry it into Heaven itself and dethrone even the Almighty ; SHE HAS CHALLENGED JEHOVAH HIMSELF, AND GOD HAS ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE ! Nay, more than this. God, by the inspired mouth of His prophet Ezekiel, *accepted the challenge 2,500 years ago!* (Ezekiel's prophecies were given between 595 B.C. and 575 B.C.). It will therefore be no mere human machine that Gog will have to face in that " great and terrible day," but the hosts of Heaven itself, the " mighty ones," captained by Michael, " the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Israel) "—Dan. xii, 1. And who will these mighty ones be? Angels? No. They are " the elect," gathered together from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other " (Matt. xxiv, 31)—the risen saints who have been taken out of this world and those who are " caught up " alive at the " rapture "—transfigured human beings.<sup>1</sup> What a host!

THIS is the host " gathered together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon "—the " strong place," or " fortress," the rallying point of the forces of the " Kings of the East " and of the Heavenly hosts ; in modern military language, our G.H.Q. Megiddo stands on the southern edge of the plain of Esdraelon in a commanding strategical position guarding the pass leading to the hill country beyond.

<sup>1</sup> See in this connection Rev. xix, 9-10. St. John here sees one whom he takes for an angel, and falls at his feet to worship him. " See thou do it *not* : *I am thy fellow-servant*, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God." St. John's visitor, therefore, was one who, like himself, had at one time trodden this earth as a human being, now one of the " mighty ones."

It is thus a "fortress" or "strong place," which is the correct meaning of Armageddon, but which commentaries generally describe as the "*hill*" of Megiddo, a designation which, from the situation of Megiddo—in a plain—has always puzzled the writer. Armageddon is not a place of carnage, as nearly all expositors have hitherto supposed, *but a place of safety*, a place of rescue and strength, for the people of God! (see Isa. xxvi, 20–21). It is the headquarters of the forces of righteousness gathered there as to a place of safety, under the protecting guns of our Fleet, and, as if for this very purpose, the port of Haifa, as a base, is being developed to-day.

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said" (Joel ii, 32).

It is clear also from the various prophecies respecting this war against Gog, that it will be accompanied by great physical changes—which may, of course, be brought about in stages—which will profoundly affect the whole of Palestine and adjoining territories. Thus a severe convulsion—the greatest ever experienced since man appeared on the earth—which, no doubt, will play its part in causing terrible havoc amongst Gog's hordes, will cleave the Mount of Olives in twain (Zech. xiv, 4), and at the same time cause the waters of the Mediterranean to break through, probably near Joppa, and flow past Jerusalem into the Dead Sea by way of the valley of Shittim (Joel iii, 18). This river will continue on, down the Wady-el-Arabah, into the Gulf of Akabah, while another branch will flow out eastwards, across the desert, into the Euphrates, thereby linking up the Mediterranean with the Persian Gulf. (See Ezek. xlvii,



8-12, wherein these changes are foretold, and the " healing " of the Dead Sea so that it teems with fish. Also Zech. xiv, 10, " All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon . . . ; it shall be lifted, and inhabited in her place." Geba—or Jeba—lies about six miles due north of Jerusalem, and Rimmon about 45 miles south, not far from Beersheba.)

## ADDENDUM TO CHAPTER XII

### RUSSIA AND GERMANY

In view of what we have said in the preceding chapter respecting the principal nations identified under the leadership of Gog, the following extract from one of the series of interesting articles which appeared during March last from the pen of Mr. Edgar Wallace, in the *Morning Post*, under the title " These Germans," affords an illuminating commentary, by a particularly shrewd observer, as to the close understanding existing to-day between Russia and Germany, and the attitude of the former country towards the rest of the world.

" Moscow interferes very little in Germany's internal affairs. Have you ever noticed that, when the Soviet leaders fulminate against the capitalistic nations and the constitutional Governments of Europe, no mention is ever made of the great country on the other side of the frontier? There are no diatribes against Hindenburg or Stressmann, or whoever happens to be on top in Wilhelmstrasse; no furious directions for a world revolution which is to begin in Berlin. Nor do Red leaders come daringly to Berlin to air their views on the tyranny of capital.

" The truth is that between Germany and Russia there is something which is neither friendship nor sympathy, but rather an instinctive understanding which has largely

removed all causes of friction, *and which one day may develop into a more significant alliance* (our italics).

"For remember this, that at the moment Russia is supremely independent of restraint. The whole world has been taught to be afraid of her. You may fire diplomatic Notes into Moscow until your typewriters fall to pieces from overwork; you may threaten and plead, and Moscow puts its fingers to its nose. Russia is unresponsive to the machinery of diplomacy. There never was in the world's history a country which could openly defy and insult the world, could rally within its borders the forces of organised anarchy, and interfere actively in the domestic affairs of other nations without fear of reprisal. . . .

"Germany . . . may not do this and she may not do that. *But Russia can do as she pleases.* Nobody bothers about the size of the Russian Army, no Council of Ambassadors rises and tears its scanty locks if Moscow orders a new artillery. She may build and equip an armament factory that will out-krupp Krupp, and Europe will twiddle its thumbs and smile helplessly."

The following extract from the *Morning Post's* correspondent at Geneva, under date April 24th, 1927, anent the disarmament discussions at present before the League of Nations, is also of interest in view of our remarks above respecting the real mentality of present-day Germany :

"Of the greatest significance is Count Bernstorff's fresh utterance respecting the Versailles pact. The Germans committed themselves without qualifications to securing the recognition of the Versailles pact as a bilateral document. Unless real disarmament is commenced immediately she will take steps to rid herself of the onerous features of the peace treaty which prevent her rearming herself.

"The seriousness of the threats by Berlin is not concealed by the League or the national delegations here. Either Versailles or the League's future is at issue, and disarmament is the rock upon which Geneva is liable to

founder unless Versailles is sacrificed or France agrees to disarm. Italy has taken the most logical stand, and is now demanding equality of armaments, regardless of how high or low the standards are fixed. All consider that crucial weeks are ahead."

The Peking correspondent of the same journal (April 19th), writing in connection with the raid made by the Chinese authorities on the Soviet premises in that city, says :

" Circumstantial evidence points to the fact that Germany is manoeuvring against the British in China, and is in league with the Soviet. The nature of the campaign indicates instructions from headquarters, the intention evidently being to create panic in foreign circles leading to evacuation, while the German Legation and nationals intend to remain in Peking, although other Legations leave.

" Germans are conducting sales of munitions to Chinese, probably to be used ultimately against foreigners. Only last week a German here sold three million rounds of ammunition to a Chinese war lord for an unknown destination."

## CHAPTER XIII

*" The Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath "*  
(Rev. xii, 12)

IN Matt. xxiv, 22, we are told that " except those days should be shortened (that is, the days of the final tribulation), there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." This passage, taken in conjunction with the promises and prophecies of Divine protection afforded to the Covenant People throughout their whole career—and which history has borne out in the past—seems clearly to imply that this country, as latter-day Israel (to whom *alone* the term " elect " in the Old Testament is applied in this sense—Isa. xlv, 4; xlii, 1; lxxv, 22), together with the United States and other Protestant countries, will escape to a very large degree the almost universal reign of terror (such as is happening in China to-day) immediately preceding—and accompanying—the final war.<sup>1</sup> For in the same way did England, during the horrors of the French Revolution, which was a type, or forecast, of the greater world Revolution now being stirred up by Bolshevik agents everywhere, the beginnings of which we saw in the Russian Revolution of 1918,<sup>2</sup> escape that scourge and become a safe asylum for all who could reach her shores. The fact, also, that

<sup>1</sup> See in this connection the author's *Witness of the Great Pyramid* (pp. 203-205), wherein is given corroboration of this protection from the symbolism of the Great Pyramid which specifically applies to the British Race.

<sup>2</sup> On January 18th of that year the Bolsheviks, by dissolving the Russian Constituent Assembly, set themselves firmly in power.

Great Britain will be the chief opponent of " the King of the North," indicates she will resist the spread of anarchy and atheism, such as was brought out in no uncertain fashion on the occasion of the attempted general strike in May, 1926, when it was made very clear, and in a way which evoked world-wide admiration, that the British people are strongly—and constitutionally—averse to such methods.

This reign of terror is indicated in Rev. xii, 12. " Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," that is, before he is bound and rendered harmless for the space of the millennium.

While enemy agents, as was the case during the late war, particularly in its earlier stages, will attempt to disorganise our operations by fomenting strikes and unrest amongst our workpeople—to repeat, in fact, the General Strike of May, 1926<sup>1</sup>—we do not anticipate

<sup>1</sup> This particular strike was engineered by Bolshevia, and its intention was what naval and military manœuvres are compared to serious operations; to test the anti-British organisation which is being prepared against the final clash which will culminate in Armageddon,\* and to discover what its effect would be upon the country generally. In order that Gog and his allies may win the first move in the next war, upon which so much will depend, it will be essential that Great Britain should be so handicapped at home as to render it difficult for her to send adequate forces to the Near and Middle East to frustrate it. The present crisis in China (March, 1927) necessitating the dispatch of troops and naval units to protect our interests there, is clearly another move engineered by Russian agents for precisely the same purposes as the late General Strike. The latter was to test our resources to cope with a serious situation in our very midst; the disturbances in China are intended to disclose our ability to counter attacks upon us at a distance. The lessons Bolshevia learns from these manœuvres, the tactics employed being as different as possible, will, no doubt, have a highly important bearing upon her plans when she launches the real conflict.

\* We here (and elsewhere) use this term in the sense in which it is generally understood, and in which people have become accustomed

the dire calamities such as some students of prophecy—generally Futurists—predict will overtake this country, in common with the rest of Europe. This they do because they transfer to the *future*, and apply to their Antichrist, passages which refer to the now *past* persecution of Christians under pagan Rome and the Protestant martyrs of Papal Rome. Further, Gog's attacks are mainly directed against the Jews restored to Palestine, "the land of unwallled villages; that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates" (Ezek. xxxviii, 11), their prosperous condition exciting his wrath and cupidity.

This country, on the other hand, so far from falling under the dominion of the "king of the north," will be a haven of refuge, as in the time of the French revolution and on other occasions (e.g., the Huguenots in the 16th and 17th centuries), for those fleeing hither for safety from the Red Terror in the countries of Europe.

We have cited the French Revolution as a type, or forecast, of the greater Revolution which is rapidly evolving before our eyes to-day, a preliminary phase of which is revealed in the present anarchy in China. What was one of the outstanding features of the French Revolution? It was the bitter hatred of all religion displayed by the revolutionaries, and their fury against the Church of Rome, and its priesthood, Christianity, indeed, being repudiated altogether by the National Convention. Such will be the result of the coming revolution brought about by the anarchists

to apply it, as one convenient in referring to the future conflict with Russia and her confederates. As pointed out in our previous chapter, the word Armageddon has really a different significance to that usually attached to it.

and atheists of Europe, symbolised under the sixth seal of Rev. vi, 12-17. For even as the revolutionaries of 1789-93 were imbued with a hatred of God and all religion, so are these latter-day Bolshevists.

This is foretold in Rev. xvii, 16, which predicts the final destruction of Babylon (Rome), the scarlet-coloured beast of verse 3 symbolising the Church of Rome, the dignitaries of which array themselves in scarlet robes. " The ten horns (symbolic of those countries which acknowledge the Pope) shall hate the whore (Babylon), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city (Rome), which reigneth over the kings of the earth " (Rev. xvii, 16-18).

In verse 9 the woman on the scarlet beast is described as sitting on seven mountains or hills, and Rome, the seat of the Papacy, which includes all who bow to its decrees, is so situated on seven hills, and is frequently described thus by Latin writers.

Even at the present day (and earlier) those nations which still support the Papacy and acknowledge her (nominal) sway, have already made her desolate and stripped her to a great extent, the most recent instance being that of Mexico, which has virtually forbidden the Roman Catholic religion altogether. No country of recent times has stripped her so utterly bare.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A similar conflict is at present in progress in Brazil, the policy of President Juarez being freedom of religion and of the press, the military and the priesthood to be under control of the civil power. Rome is thus being attacked in what have hitherto been regarded as her two principal strongholds still left her—Mexico and S. America—and where she has reigned with the utmost intolerance, even to the extent of burning heretics.

Prophecy also tells us that the Greek Church will meet its end at the same time, the religion of which is, in its essentials, the same as that of Rome, except that it does not acknowledge the Pope (see p. 80 *ante*) ; it is therefore an integral part of Babylon of Revelation. This seems to be implied in Rev. xviii, which also suggests that in the last days of the time of the end the Orthodox Greek Church and the Church of Rome will be united (or the former absorbed), a fact which gives rise to the boast contained in verse 7. And we believe it is the fact that, since the persecution of the Russian Church in Russia by the Bolshevist régime, the Church of Rome is rapidly supplanting it in that country.

It should be noted, too, that the Greek Church holds nominal sway over exactly those regions, Russia and the Near East, where the Atheist King of the North will exercise dominion and have the greatest influence, and wherein he will win his greatest victories before meeting defeat, while she has already been stripped naked in Russia itself, the largest area owning her authority. The paragraph, too, quoted above at p. 115 to the effect that the Patriarch of Jerusalem has recognised the organisation set up by the Soviet in opposition to the Orthodox Church, is, if true, significant respecting its fate in the Near East.



## CHAPTER XIV

*"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"*  
(Matt. xvi, 3)

"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matt. xxiv, 32, 33).

This was the warning, put in the form of a parable, which our Lord, after enumerating the various "signs," addressed to His disciples in answer to their question, put to Him privately when He had sought seclusion on the Mount of Olives, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the *age*?" (Matt. xxiv, 3).

Notice that our Lord did not reprove the disciples for wishing to know when His second coming might be (a sufficient answer to those who assert that it is not only vain, but wrong, to attempt to forecast the time of the Second Advent), but, on the contrary, He gave them the signs which would herald it.

Again, on an earlier occasion, when the Scribes and Pharisees came to Him with a similar question, "Master, we would see a sign from Thee," the answer they received was, "There shall no sign be given . . . but the sign of Jonah the prophet" (Matt. xii, 38, 39). Not only should the questioners of our Lord's day receive no other sign than that indicated by the

experience of Jonah in the belly of the great fish, because, if given a sign of Himself they would not discern it (see Mark viii, 12 ; Matt. xvi, 3), but *upon the historic record of that fact* He based the certainty of His death and resurrection, thereby proving the truth of what is to-day discredited by the majority of modern religious teachers, writers, and preachers, as unscientific and unhistorical—the sign of Jonah the prophet. It is not our purpose to discuss here the possibility of a person surviving Jonah's experience from the scientific point of view (this is done at pp. 92-95 of the author's *Which?—The Bible or Modernism?*), but it is impossible to believe our Lord would have used a fable to illustrate an event of such momentous import as His own resurrection. It must, too, have been considered historical by the Jews of that day, else it would not have been cited to them as a sign of a coming greater event.

These replies of Christ to the Pharisees and to His disciples when they asked for " signs " were given for our example and warning. If we would " discern the signs of the times," it can only be as we neither neglect nor reject the plain indications of Scripture itself. And we have less excuse for failing to discern them than did those Scribes and Pharisees in our Lord's day, and shall incur greater condemnation than even He passed upon them, who failed to recognise Him though the voices of the prophets which spoke of Him were read in their synagogues every Sabbath day, but whose testimony was often veiled and indirect, in contrast to the clear utterances of our Lord Himself and His Apostles which *we* have received.

It is often argued by sceptics that for ages past people have been predicting the end of the age, and indeed of the world itself, from what they term the

“ signs of the times ” ; yet the world still goes on as before, so that large numbers of people have come to disbelieve in any such event.

The main cause of this disbelief is that such predictions have been premature, and based upon but half-understood interpretations, due to the fact that it is the Almighty’s purpose to disclose the future *only by degrees*, and proves that the symbolic language employed has fulfilled its intended purpose by disguising, till near the time of its accomplishment, the true meaning of prophecy.

There is one passage in particular which sceptics invariably fasten upon to confound their opponents, and which has been triumphantly quoted to the writer as finishing all argument ; on one occasion with the added explanation that Christ did not know what He was talking about, but was merely relating a Jewish fable, a stock argument borrowed from the Higher Critics. This passage (which is also found in practically identical words in Matt. xxiv, 34, and Mark xiii, 30, which record this same discourse) is Luke xxi, 32, “ Verily I say unto you : This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.”

In this chapter Christ, using the coming destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans *as a type*, describes the scenes which will mark the termination of this present age, immediately preceding the millennium. The sceptic, reading it absolutely literally, argues that He was informing the people round Him, members of “ this generation,” that they would live to see His second coming “ with power and great glory ” (verse 27). As, however, history proves they did *not* live to see it, His reference to a second appearance on earth meant nothing.

This raises the question, "Is the Greek word translated "generation" (*γενεά*), correctly translated, and if it is, does it mean *only* what we mean when speaking of a generation as a period of thirty years?"

That it does not mean generation in this sense is proved by the verses which follow both in Matthew's and in Mark's account: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. xxiv, 36; cp. Mark xiii, 32). Christ would not have said that the day when these things would come to pass was known only to the Father in heaven, to whom a thousand years were but as a day, if the people who were listening to His discourse were to witness them in their lifetime. This clearly indicates that He here meant this "*nation*" or "*people*"—that is, the Jewish people—would not pass away and become extinct until the end of the dispensation *then only beginning*. During that period they would be scattered over the face of the earth, but would retain their separate identity and be always recognised as Jews; at its termination they would lose this identity and become merged once more in the "*whole house of Israel*."<sup>1</sup>

This particular discourse of our Lord answers a three-fold question: (i) "When shall these things be?"—i.e., the destruction of the Temple and city of Jerusalem (see Matt. xxiv, 2: Jesus, pointing to the Temple, says to His disciples, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down"): (ii and iii) "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, *and*

<sup>1</sup> Numerous passages occur wherein the word *γενεά* obviously has the meaning of "*nation*" or "*people*," e.g. Matt. xi, 16; xii, 39; xxiii, 36; Luke xi, 50-51; Acts ii, 40; Phil. ii, 15. In this last passage it is so translated ("in the midst of a crooked and perverse *nation*").

(the sign) of the end of the age? " To find the full answers to these questions, Matt. xxiv and Luke xxi should be taken together. Luke xxi, 20-24, saw its fulfilment, firstly in the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70, and more completely after Hadrian's conquest in 135. For a long time after its destruction by Titus, Jerusalem was left deserted, and practically disappeared from history, but during the reign of Hadrian it became the centre of an insurrection which cost Rome dearly to subdue. To prevent Jerusalem from again becoming a Jewish centre, he formed the idea of rebuilding it and colonising it with Roman veterans, in numbers sufficiently strong to defend a position naturally difficult of assault. On Hadrian's departure from the East, however, in A.D. 132, the Jewish revolt, long smouldering, broke out again, and the Jews, under the leadership of Bar Cocheba, became masters of the city, and attempted to rebuild the Temple. Owing to the ineffectual attempts of the Roman garrison to suppress the revolt, Hadrian was obliged to recall Julius Severus, his greatest general, from Britain to direct operations. Two years were spent in a fierce warfare before Jerusalem was taken, in the defence of which Bar Cocheba was killed. The Jews, however, still held out in the fortress of Bether, and only yielded when at length worn out by famine and disease in the summer of A.D. 135. Hadrian's first act on suppression of the rebellion was to raze to the ground the ruins which Titus had left, and to plough over the foundations of the Temple, thus fulfilling our Lord's prophecy that not one stone should be left upon another. A new city arose upon the ashes of the old, occupied by Roman colonists, to which the name of Aelia Capitolina was

given. Jews were forbidden to enter it on pain of death, and it was not till the time of Constantine that its original name was revived. With the exception of fourteen years during the 7th century when it fell under Persian dominion (A.D. 614-628), Jerusalem was under the sway of Christian Roman (Eastern) Emperors from the time of Constantine (converted to Christianity A.D. 312) to that of Heraclius (d. 641), during whose rule it was captured by Omar (637), thus commencing that "treading down of the Gentiles" which did not come to an end—with the exception of the interlude of 88 years during the Crusades, 1099-1187—till the eviction of the Turks by Allenby in 1917.

Matt. xxiv, 15-26 (cp. Mark xiii, 14-23) describes the final siege of Jerusalem by the armies of Gog, and the signs accompanying Armageddon, followed by the Second Advent (verses 27-31), the previous verses, 4-14—amplified in Luke xxi, 8-19—giving the signs warning us of the approach of these events and the closing hours of the "time of the end." In Luke the sign is the encompassing of Jerusalem by armies; in Matthew and Mark it is "the abomination of desolation," spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.

It is impossible to argue that the question put to our Lord by the disciples implied that the destruction of Jerusalem was to be identical with His second coming. They asked for information respecting two totally different prophecies, and the form in which their question was put does not suggest that they thought the two events would be contemporaneous. That they were not so is proved by the fact that the first part of the disciples' question was fulfilled by the destruction

of Jerusalem as we have just narrated, the first phase of which, in A.D. 70, did take place in the lifetime of many who heard Christ's discourse, but nothing happened after it which could possibly be described by the language of Matt. xxiv, 29-31, the approach of which is only now being indicated.

A careful reader will notice that our Lord purposely linked together a twofold forecast : the overthrow of Jerusalem and the end of the age, but He did not affirm they would be simultaneous. His declaration, " This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled " can have a two-fold meaning. Even as many of those who heard His words did live to see Jerusalem overthrown forty years later, and the events connected therewith, and even as the Jewish race should not cease to be a distinct people (*γενεά*) until His return to this earth, so will it be at the end of this age. That is to say, the generation which witnesses the beginning of the final tribulation, and the signs our Lord foretold should accompany it—and such as we are witnessing to-day—will certainly see its final accomplishment. It was so in one instance, and will, we believe, be equally true in the other.

Having said so much by way of introduction, let us see what some of these signs are which so unmistakably point to the nearness of the end of this dispensation.

It is clear these signs are to be of two kinds ; signs in nature (Luke xxi, 11, 25-26), and signs in the world of humanity (Matt. xxiv, 7, 21-24 ; Luke xxi, 9-10 ; see also Mark xiii, 7-8, 19-22) ; wars, revolutions, overthrow of monarchies and constitutions, and general unrest.

Investigators, too, such as the Abbé Moreux, the well-known French astronomer, and Dr. Tchijovsky (*vide* the latter's address recently read before the American Scientific Association, in Philadelphia, and reported in the American *Literary Digest*), have shown that disturbances in nature, indicated by abnormal seismic and volcanic outbreaks and similar phenomena, and which are due to unusual solar activity, invariably have a repercussion in the political world; that is to say, one set of signs is reflected in the other and has its counterpart therein, thereby producing just those conditions which will ultimately lead, as cause to effect, to the climax of Armageddon. Such are precisely the conditions being experienced throughout the world to-day.

Further, many of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the "last days" and the "time of the end," give unmistakable signs by which they will be accompanied and through which they should be recognised. Premature predictions regarding the end of this age, which, by their falsification, have made so many sceptics and brought the study of prophecy into disfavour, have doubtless been due to a neglect of the fact that *these signs are of a double nature*, and must clearly show themselves both in nature and in humanity, *not as isolated incidences, but be widespread and universal*. Too many people in the past have forgotten that "one swallow does not make a summer," one of the oldest proverbs in the English tongue (Heywood, 1546).

Let us consider first the signs in nature (Luke xxi, 11, 25-26). Abnormal phenomena, in the form of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, floods, and hurricanes, of unusual intensity and world-wide



incidence, have been characteristic of the last few years and of 1925 and 1926 in particular,<sup>1</sup> while the current year has already given ample proof, during its first six months, that it will certainly be no whit behind its predecessors in this respect.<sup>2</sup> The probabilities are, in fact, that these signs—together with their concomitants in the political world—will become intensified as each year passes till the climax is reached.

Neither have signs been wanting in the celestial sphere (Luke xxi, 25). The moon has, for several years past, been moving faster, so that it has been found necessary to revise our astronomical and nautical almanacs, while in 1921 it was found to have deviated twelve miles from its correct path, and astronomers have been unable to say what may have been the cause.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Specific instances are given in chapter i, part iii, of the author's *Witness of the Great Pyramid*, wherein the political aspect is also treated at length.

<sup>2</sup> As a fact, the tale of earthquakes, cyclones, tornadoes, volcanic outbursts and floods, from January to July, 1927, has established a record over any previous year since records have been kept, for a like period. Amongst these disasters the earthquake in Japan, on March 7th, caused a death-roll of over 3,000, with nearly 7,000 injured, and material damage estimated at ten millions sterling; while the Mississippi floods in April, in the volume of water, and area flooded, have surpassed anything of the same nature in historical times! The same region had already suffered great losses from a constant succession of cyclones. On July 11th there occurred an earthquake, described as the most disastrous on record for 1,200 years, in Palestine and Transjordan, the significance of which will not be lost upon those who study prophecy as revealed in the Great Pyramid, in view of the date of the occurrence. Round about this date, also, there was an extraordinary outbreak of cloudbursts and floods ranging from Europe to China and Australia. A week later, at Zarka, east of the Dead Sea, the crater of what was considered a long extinct volcano broke into activity.

<sup>3</sup> "Some unknown influences are acting on the moon, and we are at a loss to say what they are. . . . This is the more extraordinary because the position of the celestial bodies is determined with amazing accuracy, and their movement proceeds with almost unfailing regularity" (Dr. CROMMELIN, cited in *Daily Mail*, Oct. 20, 1921).

Just before the termination, also, of the late war—the first phase of the final tribulation marking the end of this era—a great new star suddenly blazed out for one brief fortnight in the constellation *Aquila* (the Eagle), on June 8th, 1918. Concerning this phenomenon, a correspondent in the *Times* of June 12th wrote as follows: " A great white star has swum into our ken, and it comes at a moment when humanity is looking for a new world. Certainly a new star of the first magnitude discovered by several eyes at once, and promptly vouched for by Greenwich, is a portent. A great white star of a character unknown in the records of literature or science. Surely here is an intimation of hope to mankind at large, even as the Star of Bethlehem was an intimation that a new age was opening for the wearied sons of men. The star comes at a moment not altogether incomparable with that moment of the birth of Christ, when the Roman world was sated. It has come when the world is again at a turning point." There were certain significant features about this astronomical phenomenon, particularly having regard to the time of its appearance, which deserve comment. Appearing just before the termination of hostilities it may well have seemed, as did the Star of Bethlehem, an augury of better days to come. That these hopes were not to be realised, however, has been proved by what has happened in the world since, and such was portended by the extremely brief life of the celestial body, while the constellation in which it appeared, and which signifies " the smitten one falling," was likewise ill-omened.

That all these portents in nature are causing men's hearts to fail them for fear, " and . . . distress of nations, with perplexity," is only too apparent, while

they turn in vain to scientists and meteorologists to allay their fears and give them some satisfactory explanation of the problem of all these alarming phenomena (vide *Morning Post* of 8-11-26). This the latter are quite unable to do, since they do not understand the primary cause. Their business is merely the ordered collation of ascertained facts on this planet of ours, not to search for some common cause which gives rise to them. The only persons who seek for that cause are those who search " the more sure word of prophecy " which alone is capable of giving the answer.

Other outstanding signs concerning the " time of the end " are :

(i) "*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*" (Dan. xii, 4).

That the present age is characterised by the desire of all classes literally to " run to and fro," on any and every pretext, and frequently for no reason at all except for the sake of being in motion, is too obvious to need proof. The statistics of railway and road transport companies reveal figures of passengers carried reaching to stupendous totals, while the thousands of *additional* motor vehicles put on the roads *every week* are rendering our roads more dangerous than the battle-field, and are producing conditions—particularly in and near our large cities and towns—which threaten to overwhelm the responsible authorities seeking to cope with them.

(ii) "*Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold*" (Matt. xxiv, 11, 12).

Of the almost universal departure from the true Faith there is unmistakable evidence around us to-day.

The Higher Criticism, with its emasculated Bible, a Bible not inspired and not divinely authoritative, from which even the doctrines of our Founder are eliminated, personifies the spirit of the age. Coupled with the present-day neglect of the Bible, is the fact that the Word of God is not consistently taught from our pulpits as it was in days gone by. Learned discourses or moral essays, based on some appropriate single passage or text, are plentiful, but God's *Law, as such*, in His dealings with mankind, is rarely expounded.

The Bible—on the grounds of so-called religious toleration—is practically unknown in our schools, whatever their grade, to-day, with the result that thousands of the present generation do not know what the Scriptures do say, and of those who do, many frankly disbelieve in them.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, *but of hearing the words of the Lord*. And they shall wander from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it. *In that day* shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst" (Amos viii, 11-13).

Many are being deceived to-day by the prophets of Spiritualism and Theosophy, which latter is nothing but a confusion of various religious systems borrowed from esoteric Buddhism, while Spiritualism, which professes to get in contact with the Beyond, is merely a modern revival of the old necromancy.

"Regard not them that have familiar spirits (mediums), neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them" (Lev. xix, 31) was the warning addressed to Israel by God through Moses, a warning which is very

much needed at the present day, and one which is frequently repeated throughout the Bible (e.g., *vide* Lev. xx, 6 ; xx, 27 ; Deut. xviii, 10-12 ; 1 Chron. x, 13, 14).

The following words of Isaiah exactly describe the practice of present-day spiritualism : " When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter ; should not a people seek unto their God ? for the living to the dead ? (Isa. viii, 19).

That Satan himself is the abettor of all this irreligion we have not the slightest doubt ; it is one of the clearest signs of which St. Paul said : " Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that *in the latter times* some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils " (1 Timothy iv, 1).

St. Paul repeats his warning in his second epistle to the Thessalonians wherein he expressly refers to the closing days of this age preceding " the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him."

" Let no man deceive you by any means ; for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first (*ἀποστασία*, apostasy), and that man of sin be revealed ; Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God *shall send them strong delusion*, that they should believe a lie : that they might all be judged (R.V.) who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness " (2 Thess. ii, 1, 3, 9-12).

This leads us inevitably to another portent :

(iii) *The universal love of pleasure, self-seeking and worldliness.*

Both our Lord and St. Paul prophesy this indication in no uncertain words :

" For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away ; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be " (Matt. xxiv, 38-39).

" This know also, that *in the last days* perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents (a characteristic very marked to-day, unfortunately, in the rising generation), unthankful, unholy ; without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce despisers of those that are good : traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (e.g. Sunday games and excursions, Sunday travel, and other Sabbath desecrations almost totally unknown a generation ago) ; Having a *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . . For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts ; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. iii, 1-7).

Were Christ and St. Paul on earth to-day, they would not require to alter one word of the foregoing to describe what is now going on in our so-called Christianised world. Just as eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, became a cult in the childhood of the human race, so has it again become a cult in these days, the last-named to end, as often as not, in the divorce court. Almost every day the newspaper

will give proof that the days we live in reproduce those in which Noah preached in vain to a world which refused to become wiser.

This ignorance of impending judgment is, in spite of the testimony of those who do search the Scriptures, and see therein the signs of the times, as characteristic of our own days as it was of those of Noah. " Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people " (Isa. lx, 2), and this is emphasised by our Lord in the passage from S. Matthew quoted in full above, " They knew not until the flood came and took them all away " (Matt. xxiv, 39).

The world at large is just as ignorant to-day, wilfully so in fact, as far as the great mass of it is concerned, yet has less excuse than did the generation of Noah which possessed not the knowledge vouchsafed to mankind to-day.

(iv.) *The increasing power of democracy and the growth of revolutionary doctrines*, with its accompanying unrest and lawlessness, symbolised in the " three unclean spirits " of Rev. xvi, 13.

This again is so evident that it is unnecessary to do more than cite it. There is, however, one feature which the last ten years have made clear, and that is, that the power of democracy does not make for strength in the government of any country, any more than it makes for righteousness. It has become apparent, even in our own country, that the Parliamentary system is breaking down. " Since the Great War," wrote Lord Sydenham recently in the *Morning Post*, " the outstanding fact in national affairs is the hopeless breakdown of democracy. Parliamentary institutions of the type which we have reached have failed everywhere, and proved incapable of pro-

ducing governments that can govern. The multiplication of parties entails shameless political bargainings. Transient cabinets, manœuvring for dear life, are farcical as expressions of national will, while elections, manipulated by organisations and apt to be decided by propaganda, are becoming more and more distrusted." The consequence is that Government, instead of being carried on in the fear of God, is almost solely influenced by political expediency, with results that are becoming only too obvious. The "divine right of kings" may not be everything that is claimed for it; but the divine right of the mob, which is the only right recognised to-day, is certainly *not* the doctrine of the Bible.

It is surely significant in this connection that, consequent on this failure of Parliamentary institutions, the nations are falling back upon dictatorship, which has become a political phenomenon peculiar to the closing hours of this age. Yet the constant revolutions in such countries, combined with repeated attempts on the lives of Mussolini, Riza Khan, Kemal Pasha, and others, and their frequent overthrow and supplanting by new dictators—as in Greece and Portugal, for example, to say nothing of the Central American Republics where such has become ordinary routine—seem to show that dictatorship is not turning out the success hoped for it. Thus is the way being prepared for that Dictator who shall "rule all nations with a rod of iron" (Rev. xii, 5).

If any ruler could be found who would regard implicitly the will of God—using his power solely for the good of others—swayed by no principles of selfishness or pride—having the wisdom and understanding to appreciate and apply the principles of God to all the details of life, then nothing could be more desirable



than that absolute power should be placed in him. Such a one *has* been found. There is ONE who came into the world, but “ the world knew Him not ” (John i, 11). And now, having been removed from the earth, He sits on the throne till His enemies have been made His footstool (see Matt. xxii, 44).

Government over the earth was entrusted, first to Israel, and then to the Gentiles, and it has failed. The period of delegation to the Gentiles is not yet ended, but is rapidly reaching its close. It must finish its course of evil until Judah has completed its period of banishment and dispersion for the rejection of Christ, and then the headship of the world and its administrative government will be concentrated in the person of Him who alone is worthy to hold and competent to execute that office. No earthly ruler can govern independent of the governed, save by leaning wholly upon God. But this no ruler has done.

As to the growth of revolutionary doctrines, this again is too obvious to require evidence in proof thereof. Such is prefigured by the great earthquake of Rev. xvi, 18, under the seventh vial, immediately preceding Armageddon, “ earthquake ” in Scripture symbolising revolutions and wars. The spread of Bolshevik propaganda, now particularly directed to the East, the results of which we see in the state of China to-day, and which is assuming serious proportions, are the preliminary rumblings, now frequent and highly disquieting, of this earthquake.

A corollary of this sign is another, of which the late war has given us most convincing evidence in

(v) *The overthrow of kingdoms and thrones*, as predicted by the prophet Haggai, in the following words :

## " THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES "

" For thus saith the Lord of Hosts ; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens . . . and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.

" I will shake the heavens and the earth ; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen " (Haggai ii, 6-7 ; 2I-22).

This prophecy is referred to by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews : " Now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, *as of things that are made*, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain " (Heb. xii, 26, 27).

Of all the thrones and nations involved in the recent war, of only one can it be said that, so far from being shaken, it has remained firmer than ever in the hearts of its people, and that one the British Monarchy, another proof that the British Empire is the everlasting Stone Kingdom of Daniel's prophecy.

Our Lord, no doubt, had this prophecy in mind when He was describing to the disciples the portents marking the closing hours of this age, the darkening of the sun and moon, and shaking of the powers of heaven, being understood in a *symbolical* sense to mean the downfall of kingdoms and rulers, similar language being used elsewhere, as in Daniel, Isaiah, and Revelation, in this connection.

(vi) *The preaching of the Gospel in all lands and great missionary activity.*

" This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations ; and THEN shall the end come " (Matt. xxiv, 14).

“ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people ” (Rev. xiv, 6).

One has only to read the annual reports of our great missionary and Bible societies, such as the S.P.G., and the British and Foreign Bible Society, to see how this sign is being fulfilled to-day. The latter society, for example, since its foundation in 1804, has issued over 355 *million* copies of the Scriptures, and in practically every language known throughout the globe. It is sometimes said that the end will not come before all people have been *converted* to Christianity, a condition from which we are at present very far removed. The Gospels, however, do not imply such a far-reaching command as this : but they *do* say that every nation and people shall be given the *opportunity* of becoming converted.

“ Go ye into all the world, and *preach* the Gospel to every creature ” (Mark xvi, 15) were almost the last words of our Lord to His disciples before He was “received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God ” (*ibid.*, verse 19).

The world has not been, and will not be, converted during the present dispensation ; it is not the divine purpose that it should ; such an event is reserved for the age of the millennium when reunited Israel will be the means of carrying it out. *Then* shall be the time when “ the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ” (Hab. ii, 14). All nations, however, have had the Gospel preached to them, and there is to-day hardly a single language, or dialect, throughout the whole globe, into which the Bible, in whole or in part, has

not been translated. More has been done, within the last fifty to a hundred years, for the evangelisation of the world than in all the preceding centuries since the time of Christ.

(vii) *Certain Chronological periods which are to mark the end of the age have run out, or very nearly run out.*

The outstanding example of this sign is the fulfilment of Luke xxi, 24, by the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Gentile rule of Turkey on December 11th, 1917.<sup>1</sup>

Another period which has been completed is the 1,260 years of Dan. vii, 25, predicting the length of the Papal Temporal Power, which began in A.D. 607-610, with the decree of the Emperor Phocas, constituting the Bishop of Rome head, or Pope, of all the Churches of Christendom, and ended between 1867 and 1870.

Reference to our Prophetic Chart at end will show that the periods respecting the Greek Church ("Little Horn" of Dan. viii, 19) and Mohammedanism—typified as the "abomination" of Dan. xii, 11—have now but few years to run.

We might indicate further signs such as (viii) *the increasing general consciousness and expectation*, in spite of what we have said under (ii) and (iii), of people everywhere, that we *are* on the eve of the supreme event in this world's history.

The Rev. Canon Horsefield, D.D., in his *Return of the King*, quotes two correspondents who both remark upon this universal expectation, even among Asiatics. One, writing from the Punjab, speaks of "the universal expectation that exists of the coming of one who should put an end to the present state of things, and

<sup>1</sup> Jerusalem was actually surrendered by the Turks on December 9th, Allenby entering it officially at noon on the 11th.

establish a reign of universal peace and righteousness. All sorts and conditions of men—from the Hindu, who has his 'gods many and lords many,' down to the Moslem who knows but one God—have this expectation."

The other, a lady in Colombo writes: "The chief thing which appears to occupy people's thoughts at the present time, is the expected advent of some great one, not only amongst Christians, but Mohammedans, Buddhists, and heathens too."

## CHAPTER XV

*"The sign of the Son of Man in Heaven"* (Matt. xxiv, 30)

WE now come to the final great sign which the whole world *must* regard, and which it will be impossible to ignore, however much it may disregard all others, a sign which has yet to appear—that of the 'Son of Man in Heaven' . . . coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv, 30).

All the "signs of the times," indeed, do but lead up to, and are the forerunners of, this final sign which will be conclusive proof that the "Times of the Gentiles" are determined. All previous signs are merely warnings of its approach; to take heed when it *does* come will be too late: "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. v, 2).

What is this sign? There are those who expect it will be some unusual astronomical sign, but the writer, for one, believes—without being dogmatic—that the "sign of the Son of Man" will be the actual appearance of Christ Himself.

For what does our Lord Himself say, interpreting the meaning of His own words?—"They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv, 30). And elsewhere we read, "Behold He cometh with clouds; *and every eye shall see Him*" (Rev. i, 7). Note, also, that in St.

Luke's account of the events of the last days in chapter xxi, we are told (verse 25) that celestial signs, such as we gave instances of in our last chapter, were to *precede* the actual coming of our Lord. "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars. . . . And THEN *shall they see the Son of man coming*" (verse 27). In contrast to the lowly state in which He came at His first advent, His second coming will need no such celestial phenomenon as guided the Magi to Bethlehem. *All*, even the blind, will witness the fulfilment of Matt. xxiv, 30, just as *all*, even the deaf, will hear the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God.

Other passages, again, such as Acts i, 9-11, seem to make it clear that "the sign of the Son of Man" will be the actual appearance in Person of Christ Himself. Yet, notwithstanding all the evidence of Scripture regarding this event, combined with the numerous warnings given respecting its approach, the Church as a whole not only displays an almost complete indifference to the subject, but frequently actually disbelieves it, the idea of a Return being ridiculed as visionary and its literalness argued away as a delusive hope founded on a primitive fancy which has never so far been realised, and, therefore, by inference, never will be.<sup>1</sup>

An examination of Scripture respecting the fact and purpose of the second coming only intensifies the extraordinary position revealed by the Church in particular and the Christian world at large, that an announcement of such momentous import, and such surpassing interest, should arouse so little response in the hearts of Christendom, and should meet, not only

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Report of Address by the Bishop of Birmingham (Dr. Barnes) before a meeting of the Congregational Group Movement, at Birmingham, December 8th, 1926, in the *Church of England Newspaper*, under the heading "Religious Degeneration."

with scant consideration, but even with incredulity from the leaders of His Church.

It is no argument to urge that this frame of mind arises from the fact that the doctrine of the second advent has no practical effect ; that in these strenuous and difficult times there is no demand or opportunity to discuss such theories. Such is an entire misconception of the whole subject. If, on the contrary, the second advent was a matter of real faith ; if men actually and literally believed that Christ might return at any moment, and put an end to the present order of things, it could not but affect every detail of their daily life. It would lead to greater purity and honesty in individual and national life, to greater zeal in evangelistic and missionary work. Men would think less of amassing wealth ; mere idle pleasure would lose its attraction, as being waste of precious time ; the performance of our daily duties would acquire a new stimulus and inspiration ; and a new element of joy and hopefulness, of which the world to-day is much in need, would be added to our daily life.

So far from being a mere idle theory, or a vain hope which will never be realised, such as it is regarded, apparently, by the majority of our ecclesiastics, it would quicken all our energies and banish all indifference and laxity. It would restore the Church, now under an eclipse, to be a real force in the land, and influence not only our public worship, but our attitude towards our fellow-beings, and restore that harmony which has been so conspicuously lacking during recent years, and which is largely at the root of our domestic and political troubles. Even the simplest daily tasks will be ennobled if performed in the light of the constant expectation of His coming.



The scepticism and unbelief so prevalent to-day concerning the doctrine of the Second Advent is, in itself, a distinct sign of the last days, as St. P  ter plainly foretells in the following words :

" Knowing this first, that there shall come *in the last days scoffers*, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming ? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii, 3-4.)

Christ also was prepared for this scepticism by warning his hearers that His Return would take place "in such an hour as ye think not " (Matt. xxiv, 44), thus implying that the world generally, as at His first advent, would not be expecting it, but, on the contrary, would regard it, under the conditions ruling at the end of the age, as not only very unlikely but well-nigh incredible, if not impossible.

Even as Christ's First Coming was both expected and unexpected, so is His Second Coming. There were some who watched and waited for Him over nineteen centuries ago, while the rest had no such expectation in spite of what the Scriptures foretold. It is the same to-day. While many look for His return, the great majority are heedless, a form of unbelief characteristic of the present generation as of no other. Yet with the experience of the past to guide it, the world to-day has far less excuse for this bold infidelity. For the approach of the close of former great dispensations of human history has invariably been announced beforehand by signs and portents. The close of the antediluvian age was thus indicated. Enoch was one of those signs ; Noah and the Ark were others. There were signs also before and accompanying our Lord's first Advent, marking the close of the Mosaic dispensa-

tion. Among them was the approaching fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy of the "seventy weeks"; the appearance of the star foretold by Balaam (Numb. xxiv, 17; Matt. ii, 9); the arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem; the preaching of John the Baptist; and finally the appearance of the Messiah Himself, proclaiming, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv, 21).

These and such like "signs of the times" are given us to understand those fulfilments of prophecy which indicate the particular stage of world history at which we have arrived; to tell us what time it is by God's clock—the clock that never fails, and always tells the correct time to those ready and willing to consult it.

The perennial hope for the world of all true Christians is that He who once came to the world, but who has been neither recognised nor received by the world, as such, shall come again to reign in power. *Then* shall all enemies be put under His feet, and He, as Lord of Lords and King of Kings, shall take the kingdom of this world as His own by right. To those who still "receive Him not," this hope is their dread, and at its fulfilment "all kindreds (or communities) shall wail because of Him" (Rev. i, 17).

This leads us to a particular aspect of the Second Coming; the previous gathering of the elect "from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. xxiv, 31).

In speaking of the Second Advent, this event is usually intended to refer to our Lord's appearance at the climax of Armageddon. This, however, was not the Second Coming which the early Christians so eagerly expected; the coming prophesied by Zechariah in the following words: "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations (gathered against Jerusalem

to battle), as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west" (Zech. xiv, 3-4); a prophecy which reminds us that, even as He ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, so " in like manner," and on the same spot, will He return.

No. The coming which inspired the hope of many an early Christian saint and martyr was that *preliminary* advent for His people, and *afterwards* will He be made manifest to the whole world *with* His saints, to overthrow the forces of evil and establish a kingdom of perfect righteousness and peace.

It is this *preliminary* advent which is to come upon us as " a thief in the night," and for which we are so repeatedly urged to watch and be prepared (see Mark xiii, 33-37). This " Rapture of the Saints," as it is often termed, is purposely not defined as to the time of its occurrence in prophecy, but it is indicated as taking place some time during the last phase of the final tribulation.

This preliminary advent, however, does not imply a " secret " rapture, as is sometimes advanced, though it will probably be invisible except to those expecting it. For it will be a world-wide event, which cannot possibly be secret, but must, by its very nature, arrest universal attention. We are told unmistakably that, in every department of life, " one shall be taken and the other left." Relatives, friends and acquaintances, not only at home, but in the business and commercial world, will suddenly be separated, causing a disorganisation and perplexity which will be felt throughout the world. No doubt after the first effects are past, the world will re-

adjust itself to the altered conditions, but many will thereby be compelled to re-consider their former lax attitude towards Christianity, and lay to heart the awful scenes they will have witnessed by the sudden loss of relatives and friends.

That St. Paul appears to have had a special revelation concerning this great theme is evinced by the number of times in which he refers to it. Thus, in 1 Corinth. xv, he writes: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye . . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (verses 51-52). The word translated above "mystery" (*μυστήριον*) means, not what cannot be understood, but something hidden, secret. St. Paul says, in fact, "I will reveal to you a secret," which is "that we shall not all die (sleep), but shall all be changed," and our present mortal bodies assume, "in the twinkling of an eye," immortality. He again refers to this subject in Philip. iii, 20-21.

This subject of Christ's preliminary advent naturally raises the two questions, (i) "Will it include *all* Christians?" ; and (ii), "Will it be visible to all who are alive at the time, or only to those for whom He comes?"

It is, of course, impossible to write dogmatically upon these questions any more than upon other problems which only the future will completely answer; we can only suggest what the probabilities will be, basing our conjectures upon what we can learn from the Scriptures.

To consider our first question, "Will the 'rapture' include *all* Christians?"

Christ's discourse to the disciples recorded in Luke

xvii, 22-36, seems to imply that it will not. Here are people represented in their varied daily occupations, eating, drinking, buying and selling, building and planting, marrying and giving in marriage, when suddenly the “ Son of Man is revealed ” and “ one shall be taken and the other left ” (verse 34), thus marking the first great stage in the winding-up of this world's affairs.

Further, if *all* so-called Christians were to be included, what would be the object of the repeated warnings to be prepared and watch continually, if those who heeded them not were to benefit equally with those who did take these admonitions to heart? What lesson, if not this one, did our Lord intend to teach by His parable of the wise and foolish virgins? This view cannot be regarded as a selfish one or implying favouritism. The warnings of Scripture are addressed to all, and all equally are given the chance to profit by them.

It may be urged many have never been taught to read or study the Bible for themselves, and are therefore unable to appreciate the lessons it contains, and are consequently ignorant through lack of opportunity, rather than through any wilfulness or refusal on their part to be guided by its warnings. This is quite true; we blame rather those whose duty it is to teach them, the shepherds who are supposed to care for their flocks (see Ezek. xxxiii, 3-6).

It is sometimes said that if the rapture included only those who were really expecting Him, such would involve a divided Church, symbolised in Scripture as a Bride, thus implying only part of His Bride will be present at the marriage feast. Rev. xxi, 1-5, however, makes it clear that the Church symbolised as “ a Bride adorned for her husband ” is the Church of Christ

established in the *new* earth, when this present earth shall have passed away.

We cannot, therefore, lose sight of the great fact that many will be left behind in their graves and alive on earth, because their religion has been to them a mere formality, and themselves only Christian in name, and who have not accepted Him as their Saviour and King, even if they have not openly disbelieved in Him. Hence the warning and exhortation to be prepared in Matt. xxiv, 44 and in Luke xii, 40.

To consider now our second question: " Will it be visible to all alive at the time, or only to those for whom He comes " ?

The probabilities are that He will be seen only by those who are expecting Him ; when He comes *for* His people, His coming will be visible to none but His own followers. Such is clearly the inference from the following incidents recorded in the New Testament.

While two of the disciples were on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, talking of the events of the last three days, Jesus Himself suddenly appears and joins them in their walk, but they recognise Him not for " their eyes were holden that they should not know Him " (Luke xxiv, 16), because they did not expect Him. On arriving at the village, they constrained Him to tarry with them and take meat.

" And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it them. *" And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him ; and He vanished out of their sight "* (Luke xxiv, 30-31). Does not this incident seem to show that He will make Himself known only to those who look for Him ? The two disciples, thinking Him still in the

grave, recognised Him not until He Himself opened their eyes.

Afterwards He appeared to the whole twelve as they sat at meat, the doors being shut, and this incident is probably that mentioned by St. Peter in his sermon to Cornelius in which he expressly declares that " God raised Him up the third day, and showed Him openly ; *not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God*, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead " (Acts x, 40-41).

St. Peter is corroborated by St. Paul in the following :

" He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve : After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen by James ; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also " (1 Corinth. xv, 5-8).

It is evident from the foregoing passage that He appeared *only* to believers during the period between His Resurrection and Ascension, so upon this evidence we can only assume that such will be the case on His re-appearance when He comes for His people, and it is no doubt this fact Christ is referring to in His words, addressed *only* to the disciples (that is, to believers), " I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more ; but ye see Me : because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you " (John xiv, 18-20).

It is true His Advent will be heralded by " a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God " (1 Thess. iv, 16), but while this is evidently a symbolism used by St. Paul, and one readily understood by his readers, since the blowing of a trumpet, like that

of a bugle in an army, was a customary method in his day of summoning the people—like the bell of the old town-crier—yet, even if taken literally, we may still doubt whether any will recognise the call other than those for whom it is intended.

It is interesting to note in this connection that, in the second chapter of Joel, trumpets are used as symbols of testimony, and are connected with the re-gathering of Israel following Armageddon (Joel iii). The Feast of Trumpets, also (Lev. xxiii, 24), was ordained as a prophetic type of the future re-gathering of dispersed Israel, *and this Feast has yet to receive its confirmation*, which, however, is clearly indicated in that re-union of all Israel at the close of this dispensation which will be heralded by our Lord's Second Advent. We see, consequently, the appropriateness of St. Paul's symbolism of a trumpet as announcing this event.

That only those waiting for the call will hear it is clearly indicated by the following analogous instances recorded in the New Testament. Christ, foretelling His own death (John xii, 27-29), says: "Now is my soul troubled; but what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name. Then came a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people, therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to Him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes."

Again, in Acts ix, 1-7, describing the conversion of Saul, Saul himself heard and understood the voice which called out, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" but those journeying with him, while they heard a voice, did not comprehend the words it uttered, as



St. Paul mentions later in Acts xxii, 6-9, wherein he relates the circumstances of his conversion: " They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid ; but they heard not (understood not) the voice of Him that spake to me."

## CHAPTER XVI

*“ Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things ”* (Luke xxi, 36)

THAT our Lord's preliminary coming *for* His people will take place *prior* to the final stages of the tribulation culminating in the battle of Armageddon, seems fairly clear from the various passages throughout the Bible concerning it.

Armageddon itself is symbolised by the judgments which are to follow the pouring out of the Seventh Vial of Rev. xvi, 15-21 :

“ And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of Heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done ” (verses 16-17) ;

This view is borne out by the following words of Isaiah :

“ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. “ For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity : the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain ” (Isa. xxvi, 20-21).

Further, that the Church—and by this expression is meant not the whole so-called Church, but only that

portion of it which is really expecting Him ; the Church, speaking of it collectively, is *not* looking for Him—will be taken up during or after the climax of the final tribulation is not indicated anywhere in Scripture, whereas Rev. iii, 10-11, distinctly implies such removal *before* it.

“ Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” A better translation, which gives a more accurate meaning of the Greek in the above passage would be, “ I also will *keep thee out of* (or ‘ guard securely from ’) the hour of trial.”

It must be remembered that this final tribulation is very different to the tribulation which the Church has been called upon to undergo during the course of this present dispensation ; the sufferings of the early martyrs at the hands of Pagan Rome, the persecutions of the Papacy and terrors of the Spanish Inquisitions, the Protestant martyrs in this country during the reign of Queen Mary, are all sufficient to characterise the “ fiery trial ” of St. Peter (1 Pet. iv, 12).

Whilst all Christians, in all ages, are to be prepared to suffer for the truth’s sake, there is nowhere any intimation that they will be called upon to pass through the dread darkness, the fearful trials known as ‘ the great tribulation.’ If this were to be the case it would be useless our watching and waiting for the coming of the Lord until the flood of persecution so graphically described in Rev. xiii has overtaken the world.

“ . . . These incidents of the great tribulation are so extraordinary in their character that the world will

easily recognise them when they come, and if the rapture is not to take place until after these things, it is vain to think of the Lord's coming for His people yet awhile" (Canon Horsefield).

Have we not, also, several instances in the Old Testament wherein those faithful to God were delivered beforehand from the judgments passed upon a wicked people? Just as Enoch was translated to Heaven before the Flood (Gen. v, 24) ["Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations"—Ecclesiasticus xlv, 16] (See also Heb. xi, 5); Noah and his family saved from the Flood which came upon an ungodly world; and just as Lot was spared the fate of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xix, 24), even so will all faithful Christians be withdrawn, both those in the grave and those alive, from this world prior to the judgments which are immediately to precede Christ's *visible* Advent to *all* people.

This suggests yet another question: "What will happen, then, to those who still remain in their graves and to those who are left on earth after this first resurrection or "rapture"?

It seems fairly clear from Rev. xx that there are to be *two* resurrections, firstly of the redeemed, and secondly of the rest of the dead. The just are here described as living and reigning with Christ for a period of a thousand years, during which Satan is bound and rendered harmless. "But *the rest of the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first (that is, the premillennial) resurrection."

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thous-

and years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison " (verses 5-7).

The verses which follow, together with the opening verses of chapter xxi, then describe the destruction of the forces of evil, under the leadership of Gog, urged on by Satan, followed by the vision of the new Jerusalem when Christ's reign comes to an end, and He Himself delivers up all power to God. . " Behold the *tabernacle of God is with men*, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God " (Rev. xxi, 3).

This is also described by St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians : " Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father ; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, *then shall the Son (of Man) also Himself be subject unto Him* that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all " (1 Cor. xv, 24-28).

We wish to make clear to the reader that this final destruction of the forces of Satan described in Rev. xx is not the same as the destruction of Gog portrayed in Rev. xvi. One event ushers in the millennium ; the other marks its close. Satan, after being bound during the thousand years of Christ's personal reign upon earth, is, at the end of that time, released in order to test those who are then living to discover whether their allegiance to Christ, as King over the whole earth, has been real and wholehearted, or whether Satan still has power to turn men's hearts from God. Satan, in fact, is released in order to prove whether, after a

thousand years of Christ reigning on earth with a glory and power far beyond that of any mortal king that ever preceded Him, there are still some ready to dispute His authority.

Even as Adam was created without guile, knowing neither good nor evil, but fell when tempted by Satan, so is mankind, regenerated in the millennium to Adam's original innocence, subjected a second time for proof at the hands of the evil one. That Satan is all too successful is implied by Rev. xx, 8: "(Satan) shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth . . . to gather them together to battle: *the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*"

This second attempt on the part of Satan to subvert the world is symbolised in the same language as that used to foretell the first Armageddon, and even as he meets with defeat at the former which ushers in the millennium, so does he suffer even greater disaster at this latter Armageddon which marks its close, and is "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xx, 10). The leader of these forces of rebellion in both cases is typified by Gog in each instance.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to his works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. *This is the second death.* And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx, 13-15).

This last verse appears to answer the question, "Will the wicked be doomed to *eternal* punishment?" in the affirmative. For these wicked are those who,

given every opportunity to reform under the perfect and ideal conditions attendant on Christ's personal reign on earth for a thousand years, yet, under the influence of Satan, in their rebellious multitudes, rush to their own destruction.

What their end shall be is further vividly but unmistakably described in Rev. xxi, 8. " But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: *which is the second death.*" It was not to save men from this second death that Christ came to suffer death upon the Cross.

" And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; *and there was no more sea.* And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (xxi, 1-2).

This second Armageddon, then, marks the close of the millennium, the final destruction of Satan and the powers of evil, when all the remaining dead are risen from their graves, and is the *real end of the world*, which so many people confuse with the end of the present dispensation, and which so often has been predicted as about to happen. For we are told in the opening verses of chapter xxi that it is immediately followed by a *new heaven and a new earth*, in which oceans do not exist, thereby implying an entirely different cosmogony.

The new earth inaugurated by Christ's personal reign here below may therefore be taken as a forecast of the still greater event following after its close; that is to say, it will only be new compared to the social system in force under its present human rulers. Its physical aspects—except in the local changes in

Palestine and neighbouring countries (see Zech. xiv, Joel iii)—its climates and seasons, will probably, as far as we can conjecture, remain much as they are to-day, though perhaps modified.

Sin, therefore, will continue to exist, though latent and repressed, even during the millennium, that is as long as this world lasts in its present form, and will not be for ever subdued until the present order of things has entirely passed away, when "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi, 4).

Even as the present age is a preparation, a sifting amongst all nations, for the coming millennium, so is the millennium itself a preparation for that new world in which death will be finally abolished, and the earth will be peopled for ever with countless myriads from whose nature sin shall be eradicated, and over whom Satan shall have no more power.

Isaiah lxx, 17-25, predicts this preparation, and shows us the conditions prevalent in the millennial era, when human life will again extend to the ripe old age enjoyed by the patriarchs in the days of the world's infancy. Peace and contentment will be the lot of all, and everyone will enjoy the fruit of his own labour.

What will happen to those left on earth after the "rapture" of those taken out of it? They cannot entirely escape those terrors which come upon the world in the final days of the time of the end, which are symbolised under the figure of six successive broken seals (Rev. vi).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This "rapture of the saints" would appear to strengthen the view given in our chapter xii (*ante*) regarding the destruction of the



This does not imply, however, that such are abandoned to their fate. Before the final seal is broken, a halt is called ; symbolised by an angel “ ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads ” (Rev. vii, 2-3). This halt is given in order to enable those who have become converted and penitent to “ escape all those things that shall yet come to pass ” (Luke xxi, 36), while the still impenitent are reserved for further trial and judgment.

The prophet Joel describing these final scenes utters this consolation : “ And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered ; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call ” (Joel ii, 32). (See also Rom. x, 13 ; and Acts ii, 21, wherein Peter refers to this prophecy by Joel).

That even those who are “ caught up ” alive at the first “ rapture ” of the Saints will experience, at the beginning, some of the trials and tribulations of the final days seems suggested by Matt. xxiv, 22, though it is also possible that this passage may refer to the “ halt ” symbolised in Rev. vii, 2-3.<sup>1</sup>

armies of Gog by the hosts of the “ mighty ones.” For this rapture means that all the best moral and religious elements—such as would offer the keenest resistance to Gog—will be withdrawn from the world at the time of its greatest crisis, thereby leaving the way open for this arch-enemy of mankind to secure the fulfilment of his aims.

<sup>1</sup> “ The ‘ rapture of the Saints,’ as it is termed, is purposely not defined as to the date of its occurrence, either in Scripture or in the Great Pyramid, but it is geometrically defined in the latter as possibly taking place . . . at some time during the final tribulation . . . ”—*The Witness of the Great Pyramid* (p. 305).

It may, however, mean that, even as God, at the intercession of Abraham, who had found favour in His sight, offered to spare Sodom even if but ten righteous men could be found in it, so will the Almighty, for the sake of the elect, though themselves removed from the world, spare its inhabitants by a further shortening of the time of the tribulations (*see* Gen. xviii, 23-32). With the parallel case of Sodom before us, this conjecture offers the most likely explanation of this passage in this connection.

## CONCLUSION

SCRIPTURAL prophecy has revealed to us, when examined in the light of history, the magnitude of the impending changes which are about to come upon this world, the symptoms of which are even now as clear as can be, and the foregoing chapters are an endeavour on our part to arouse as many as may be to realise this fact before it is too late, and so be prepared for all eventualities.

All students of prophecy, be they Historicists or Futurists, are agreed that we are rapidly approaching the end of this dispensation, and that consequently the opportunity to take heed while there is yet time is speedily diminishing. They may differ considerably in their respective interpretations of prophecy, and the paths they choose may diverge widely, but the object they have in view, that of warning their hearers, is the same.

It may be urged by some that the indications we have given of present-day features of life are unduly fore-

boding. Our object, however, has not been to find fault, but to warn. If these features are real—and we challenge anyone to disprove them—is it wise to ignore them? while if they exist they must reveal themselves. Our object has been to trace those that do exist, and in the light of facts, and of Holy Writ, to account for them, and to show that out of evil will eventually come forth good.

The portents of to-day, however, are not all of the gloomy kind. The following words of Malachi are true of a steadily-increasing number of people, a fact which is borne out by the extending output of books and literature to meet the demand for more light upon the Scriptures.

“ Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him ” (Mal. iii, 16-17).

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