

## THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHERS

When the apostle Paul stood on trial before King Agrippa, he said that all the Jews knew his manner of life at Jerusalem, that after the strictest sect of their religion he lived a Pharisee. "And now," said he, "I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews" (Acts 26: 6, 7).

After he had appealed unto Caesar and had been sent to Rome, he called together the chief Jews and spoke with them of the circumstances that had brought him to Rome, and said, "For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain" (Acts 28: 20).

Earlier in the apostle's missionary career, when he and Barnabas visited Antioch in Pisidia, a city of Asia Minor, he preached concerning Jesus, and in the course of his remarks said, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again" (Acts 13: 32, 33). And in writing to the Romans, before his visit to Rome, he said that "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15: 8).

Here we see that certain promises were made by God unto the fathers; that they are intimately connected both with the hope of Israel and with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The questions that first demand our consideration in relation to these promises are: 1. Who are the fathers to whom God made the promises? 2. What were the promises? 3. How are the promises related to the hope of Israel and to the gospel, or glad tidings, which Jesus and the apostles preached?

Who are the fathers? They are the fathers of the Israelitish people, of the Jews. God called Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, to

go out to another land, the land of Canaan. He promised to make of him a great nation. Abram (whose name was later changed to Abraham) was the head, or father, of a special people with whom God had dealings such as He had with no other nation, and such dealings are recorded in the Bible history. Of Abraham's sons God made choice of Isaac, for the production of this special people of promise; and of Isaac's sons He again chose Jacob, and of him made the great nation which He had promised to Abraham. So that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the fathers to whom reference is made by the apostle Paul, when he speaks of "the promises made unto the fathers."

Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God says, "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone (or when he was one), and blessed him, and increased him" (Isaiah 51:2). And Paul says, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" (Romans 4:1).

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews says, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise" (Hebrews 11:8, 9). It is clear, then, that the fathers to whom the promises were made were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the fathers of the Israelitish people.

What were the promises which God made to these fathers? The first promise is contained in the 12th chapter of Genesis, verses 1-3. It follows on the brief account at the end of chapter 11, that Abram had removed with his father, his wife and his nephew from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, and that his father Terah had died in Haran. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Abram was at this time seventy-five years of age. He left Haran after his father's death and proceeded to the land of Canaan. He went as far as the plain of Moreh, near Sichem, or Sychar, near the modern Nablus, or Shechem. Here God appeared to Abram again, and said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Genesis 12:7). Abram erected an altar to the Lord and worshiped Him there. He then proceeded a few miles farther to a place near Bethel, where

he erected another altar to the Lord and called upon His name there.

A famine arose in the land and Abram removed to Egypt, with his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot, and later returned to the spot near Bethel where he had erected an altar to the Lord. Here a quarrel arose between the herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot, and the two separated, Lot going toward the plain of Jordan at the north end of the Dead Sea, in the vicinity of Sodom and Gomorrah. After the separation, God again appeared to Abram and said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (Genesis 13: 14-17).

Abram removed from Bethel to the south and pitched his tent in the plain of Mamre, near Hebron, and there he built an altar unto the Lord. This seems to have been from henceforth the permanent place of abode of Abram. Today a very old oak, or terebinth, is pointed out as Abraham's oak at Mamre, about two miles from Hebron; it undoubtedly is very old, and may be a shoot from an oak that was there in Abram's day.

A war having taken place between the kings of Sodom and nearby places on the one hand, and some Babylonian kings on the other, and Abram's nephew having been carried off by the victorious Babylonians, Abram raised an army of his own retainers and pursued the fleeing kings and recovered Lot and much of the spoil, and on his return had his memorable interview with Melchizedek.

"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said,

Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (Genesis 15: 1-8). He was told to take a heifer of three years old, a she goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon; to divide the animals and lay the pieces over against one another, and to drive away the birds that came down upon the carcasses. At sundown a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and God again appeared to him and said, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (verses 13-16). When it was dark a burning lamp, symbolical of God Himself, passed between the pieces of the animals, and "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites" (verses 18-21).

The incident recorded in the 15th chapter of Genesis had to do with the going down of Abram's descendants into Egypt, as happened in the days of his grandson Jacob, and their sojourn there during a period of great affliction, and their ultimate bringing back to the land of Canaan, as happened at the remarkable exodus, when they left Egypt for Canaan and eventually took possession of the Canaanites' land. The relation of this possession of the land to the promises will be fully considered a little later. Now we pass on to the further promises made by God to Abram and to his son and grandson, Isaac and Jacob.

As Sarai, Abram's wife, was childless, in accordance with a custom of the day she gave her maid to Abram, and of her, Hagar, Abram had a son when he was eighty-six years of age. He called his name Ishmael, and began to think that in him the promises should be fulfilled. But it was not to be so. "When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a

father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God" (Genesis 17: 1-8). The Lord instituted at this time the covenant of circumcision, and also made promise to Abraham that he should have a son of Sarai, whose name also was changed to Sarah. "And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed: and thou shall call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year" (Genesis 17: 15-21).

Isaac was born as promised, when Abraham was a hundred years old, and Sarah at once demanded that Ishmael and his mother the bondwoman be sent away. Although Abraham very much disliked to send them away, God said, "Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed" (Genesis 21 : 12, 13).

Ishmael became a great nation, of which the modern Arabs are the descendants. But the promises and covenants of God were to be fulfilled in Isaac—"in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Abraham's faith is proverbial, but it was very severely tested. God called upon him to offer his son Isaac for a burnt offering. He proceeded to obey the divine command, and when his faith had been tested and proved genuine, the Lord withheld him from the actual

slaying of his son, and provided a substitute ram instead. So the writer to the Hebrews said, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:17-19). The Lord signified His approval of Abraham's faith, "And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22:16-18).

When Abraham sent his steward to find a wife for Isaac, he made reference to the promise God had made to him: "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence" (Genesis 24:7).

Abraham died "in a good old age," being 175 years old. Sarah had predeceased him 38 years, at the age of 127 years. When Sarah died, Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah, at Hebron, for a burying-place, and there he buried Sarah, and was himself buried there by his sons Isaac and Ishmael (Genesis 25:8-10).

God had told Abraham that He would establish His covenant with Isaac. Soon after Abraham's death another famine arose in the land, and when Isaac planned to go to Egypt as Abraham had done in the time of famine, and had gone as far as Gerar, in the land of the Philistines, and was staying with Abimelech the Philistine king, "The Lord appeared unto him and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws" (Genesis 26:2-5). After Isaac had removed to Beersheba "the Lord appeared unto him the same night and said, I am the God of Abraham thy

father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake" (verse 24).

Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Again God made choice between the two, and selected Jacob as the one through whom should come the promised seed and the promised blessings. In course of time Isaac sent Jacob to Padan-aram, the home of Rebekah, so that he might find a wife among his own people, instead of doing as Esau had done, marrying women of the Hittite nation. When Jacob left home, Isaac blessed him with the words, "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people: and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham" (Genesis 28:3, 4).

As he went on his way to Padan-aram, Jacob rested at Bethel, and he "tarried there all night because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Genesis 28:11-15).

Years passed by. Jacob visited Padan-aram and there married Leah and Rachel, and later returned to Canaan and was told by God to go to Bethel and erect an altar to the Lord. This he did, and God appeared unto him and blessed him. "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins: and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land" (Genesis 35:10-12).

Events developed which caused Jacob and all his family to go down to Egypt in the time of famine, thus fulfilling God's words to Abraham that his descendants should, after his decease, go to be strangers "in a land that is not theirs." In process of time they

were subjected to great affliction, as God had also foretold to Abraham. And later, the further promise was fulfilled, that they should go back from Egypt to Canaan, with great substance. This was fulfilled in the great exodus when the people, greatly multiplied in numbers, were led from Egypt to the borders of Canaan by Moses, and by Joshua right into the land of Canaan, where in a series of great victories they defeated the Canaanites.

Jacob died in Egypt and was buried in the same cave at Machpelah where Abraham and Isaac had previously been buried. Shortly before his death, Jacob blessed his son Joseph and Joseph's two sons. He said, "God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession" (Genesis 48:1-4).

A little later, when Joseph was about to die, he called his brethren together and said, "I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence" (Genesis 50:24, 25). When Joseph died he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt, and when later the exodus took place under Moses, the children of Israel took up Joseph's body and buried it in the parcel of ground that Jacob had bought of the children of Shechem.

Such are the promises God made unto the fathers—to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It will be seen that they have to do with the land of Canaan in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt; that they have to do with a possession of the land by the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and that they have to do with the multiplication of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into a great and numerous people—numerous as the sand of the seashore and the stars of heaven.

There are two parts to these promises of possession of the land of Canaan: some of them refer to the possession of the land when at the exodus under Moses and Joshua the children of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, entered the land and gradually dispossessed the Canaanites and divided their land among the twelve tribes of Israel. Prior to the entrance to the land, during a period of forty years of wilderness wandering, God gave to the people a law and made their possession of the land contingent upon their obedience to that law given through Moses. In fact, when the people were in the land they entered into a solemn compact with God to keep His laws, and from Mounts Ebal and Gerizim the

blessings which should follow obedience and the curses which should follow disobedience were proclaimed. The possession of the land was conditional. God had fulfilled His promise to bring the people out of the land wherein they had suffered affliction, the Egyptian house of bondage; but He warned the people that if they did not obey His law He would drive them out of the land again and they should be dispersed among all nations of the earth: the details may be read in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, with this final declaration: "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude: because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you" (Deuteronomy 28: 58-68).

The people did not keep their covenant. They rebelled against the law God gave them through Moses, and eventually some of them were carried into captivity in Assyria and Babylon. After a time, part of the captives returned, and Nehemiah, a leader in the return and rebuilding of the city Jerusalem, pleaded with God,

recounting His mighty deeds of deliverance, and the falling away of the people, and God's repeated renewals of His mercy upon them, and praying for a further exhibition of His mercy. He said, "Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and brought him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous" (Nehemiah 9:7, 8).

But the nation did not repent of its wickedness in disobeying God's law, and at last their holy city was destroyed by the Romans, and the people scattered among all nations exactly as predicted in Deuteronomy.

The question is, was this temporary, conditional possession of the land by the unworthy descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a fulfillment of all the promises made to these fathers? And the answer is, No. In addition to this possession under the law, there was a promise, an unconditional promise, of the eternal possession of the land by *Abraham and his seed*, and it is necessary to distinguish this part of the promise from that part which was fulfilled, as Nehemiah says, in the conditional occupation of the land, under the Mosaic law, when God brought the people from Egypt to the land of Canaan as He had foretold to Abraham.

The apostle Paul is very explicit in writing to the Galatians about the promises God made, and in distinguishing between the possession under the law and the possession unconditionally promised to Abraham. He says, "Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (the Gentiles) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Galatians 3:6-9).

Here we see the faith of Abraham commended, for he believed the promises of God. The value of a promise depends upon two things: the ability and the reliability of the one making the promise. Abraham believed God, because he knew that God was both able and willing to perform that which He had promised. Abraham believed God and has become to all generations following the supreme example of faith, or confidence, in God. The writer to the Hebrews says, "Faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, Revised Version margin). He

looked upon the things promised as real things, because he knew God both could and would perform them. He believed God, and has been called the father of the faithful and the friend of God, because of his great faith.

And so the apostle Paul continues in writing to the Galatians of the two parts of the divine promise, and of the seed mentioned in the promise: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made: and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Galatians 3:16-20). This is very clear as to the two inheritances or possessions of the land. The one was a temporary, conditional possession, under the law, which was terminated because of disobedience, and the possessors were the fleshly descendants of Abraham; the other is to be an unconditional possession, an eternal possession, in which the seed of faith—Jesus and all who are His—shall be the possessors. Paul says to the Romans, "The promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (Romans 4:13-16).

So the seed intended in the promise is Jesus Christ, not the individual, but the multitudinous seed of which Jesus Christ is the head, including all, whether Jew or Gentile, who are the children of Abraham by faith. So Paul further says, "The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. . . . For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:22-29).

While the promise had principally to do with the land of Canaan, it is evident from Paul's words to the Romans, that the blessing of all nations through Abraham and his seed involves the possession of the whole world. What a promise! None but God could reasonably make such a promise. He is the possessor of heaven and earth, and He alone could promise it to Abraham. He knew Abraham. He had tested his faith, and He made the promise unconditionally. "To thee and to thy seed will I give it." Abraham believed God; he trusted both His ability and His reliability and so there is not the slightest doubt of the promise being fulfilled. But again, we ask, was the inheritance under the law a fulfilment of the promise? No.

When Stephen was recounting God's dealings with Israel, he said, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him unto this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child" (Acts 7:2-5). This is conclusive testimony that Abraham did not possess the land: as we have already seen, he had to purchase the cave of Machpelah for a burying-place for his wife and himself.

Again, the writer to the Hebrews, after speaking of the faith of Abraham and the other patriarchs, says, "These all died in faith; not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13). And again, "These all, having received a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (verses 39, 40).

Stephen declares that God did not give Abraham so much of the land of Canaan as to set his foot on, although He promised to give the land to him and his seed. The writer to the Hebrews declares emphatically that those to whom the promises were made did not receive them; that is, did not receive the things promised, only the promise of the things, during their lifetime; they saw them afar off; they realized that the fulfilment of them was in the distant future; but they were persuaded of them, they had implicit faith in them.

God is faithful that promised. So the apostle Paul declared that the conditional inheritance of the land by the fleshly seed of

Abraham, did not make void the other inheritance, that which was made on an unconditional promise. That still awaited fulfilment, but in due time it would be fulfilled in the case of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob themselves, and the seed of faith, Jesus Christ and those who are Christ's by faith and baptism into His name.

The writer to the Hebrews refers to God's promise being absolutely reliable. He says, "We desire that every one of you do shew the same obedience to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:11-18). Two immutable things: one, the fact that the promise was made by God, who cannot lie, and therefore whose words are absolutely reliable and His promises certain of fulfilment; the other, the very existence of God Himself—He sware by Himself—He could swear by no greater.

When the Sadducees came to Christ with a question which they thought would upset His doctrine of the resurrection, He upbraided them for not believing Moses in whom they professed to believe. He said, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him" (Luke 20:37, 38). When Jesus spoke, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead. But God's purpose with them was not completed. Therefore it was necessary that they should rise from the dead to receive the fulfilment of the promises which God made to them while they were living, but which still remained unfulfilled. Though dead, they still lived unto God—they were waiting the day of resurrection, when God would be revealed as their God, in the fulfilment of the promises He had made to them.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." While the promises are still unfulfilled,

there is the opportunity for us to become constituent members of the seed of Abraham, by belief of the gospel and obedience in baptism, that we may "put on Christ" and so be "Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." We must believe God as Abraham did; we must have a living faith like his, and must translate belief and faith into action and do whatsoever God has commanded through Jesus and the apostles.

Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead: who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:20-25).

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be raised from the dead at the return of Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom; they will be clothed upon with immortality, without which they could not possess the land forever; and they will be exalted to positions of honor and glory in Christ's kingdom. Therefore Jesus spoke of that day, and of the disappointment of some who would not be found worthy of an entrance into that kingdom, and said, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

One reason why the promises could not have been fulfilled during the lifetime of the fathers is, that they awaited confirmation. Though made on the word of God who cannot lie, and made doubly sure in that God swore by Himself that He would perform them, it was in God's plan that they should be confirmed in a formal way, in one of the modes used in the east to confirm covenants. So Paul says to the Romans, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15:8). In the 9th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews there is a detailed comment on this confirmation of the covenant. Unfortunately the Authorized Version gives a very misleading translation, and the Revised Version only partially remedies the matter. The Greek word *diatheke* may mean either testament (or will) or covenant. A will is made by a person while living, but is not of force until that person is dead; but a covenant can be of force without the death of the chief parties to the covenant. Now the Authorized Version refers to the covenant God made with

Abraham, the promises, as a will: in which case the death of the testator would be required before the will could be of force. But God is the maker and must be the performer of the promises, so it is inconceivable to think of them as a will that could not be of force without the death of the testator. Yet the Authorized Version reads as though the covenant or the promise were a will or testament. It says, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also be of necessity the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:15-17). The Revised Version substitutes the word "covenant" for "testament," and reads, "For this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament (margin, or covenant) is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death; for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth." Here the idea of covenant and will are somewhat mixed. The real meaning of the passage can only be understood by recognizing the practice of confirming a covenant by the parties thereto passing between the parts of an animal slain as the covenant victim, or the victim that establishes the covenant.

The rendering of the Emphatic Diaglott gives the correct idea: "And on this account he is Mediator of a new covenant, so that death having taken place for a redemption of the transgressions against the first covenant, those having been invited might receive the promise of the aionian inheritance. For where a covenant exists, the death of that which has ratified it is necessary to be produced; because a covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid when that which ratifies it is alive." So Jesus Christ was the covenant victim, whose blood ratified, or confirmed, the divine promise, so that Paul could say He "was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Now they can be fulfilled, and in God's own time they will be. The interval between the promise and the fulfilment is the opportunity for many, both Jews and Gentiles, to be incorporated into the Abrahamic seed, and so become heirs according to the promise—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The promises will be fulfilled at the return of Jesus Christ to the earth and the establishment of His kingdom. The promise primarily had to do with the land of Canaan, but, as Paul says, it involved the possession of the whole earth. Christ's kingdom, in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be, is to radiate from Jerusalem to the uttermost ends of the earth—all kings shall fall down before Him and all nations shall serve Him. He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever. Then will the blessing be upon both the Abrahamic seed of faith, and also the literal fleshly descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who will be restored to divine favor and be the central element in Christ's universal kingdom. These features of the subject will be considered in detail in later pamphlets of this series. The fulfilment of the promises is an integral part of the gospel of Jesus and the apostles and of the predictions of Israel's prophets. Just one or two of these we will here quote in conclusion. In Luke 1:68-73 we have Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began; that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham."

Jesus said, "I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11).

God says that notwithstanding the falling away of the children of Israel, He will still remember His covenant with their fathers: "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land" (Leviticus 26:42).

Micah closes his prophecy with the declaration, "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old" (Micah 7:20).

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN RELATION TO REDEMPTION

In writing to the Romans, the apostle Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). It is "the" power, not "a" power—"the" power of God unto salvation; and not unto the salvation of everyone that ever lived, or even everyone that ever heard that gospel; but "to every one that believeth."

It is like the electricity in the modern power house. The electricity is there; it has been stored up; it is ready to light the home, or cook the food, or run the machinery of home or factory, or make the train or the street car move from place to place. The power is there, but it does not light homes or cook food or operate machinery unless certain conditions have been complied with—unless the wiring has been done and the contract has been signed between the company which has produced and which owns the power and the person or organization which it is to serve. When these essential preliminaries have been completed, the power becomes available to the consumers.

So it is with salvation. The power house is the Word of God; there is stored up the gospel, which is God's power unto salvation; and when the necessary preliminaries of hearing, believing and obeying are completed, the power is effective for the salvation of those who hear, believe and obey, and of those alone. It is offered to all, but all will not take advantage of the offer and comply with the essential conditions.

Jesus said in His commission to the disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16); or as it is recorded by Matthew, "Go ye therefore, and teach (or make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19, 20). The apostles were sent by Jesus to preach the gospel, the same gospel that He had preached,

and to teach all nations, or make disciples or pupils of all nations; and when the hearers believed, it was necessary for them to be baptized, and to keep all things which Jesus through His apostles commanded. Then the gospel, the power of God, would be effective unto their salvation. (Baptism will be considered in detail in No. 17 of this series on "Divine Teaching," so we will say no more about it here than that it is emphatically declared to be one of the essentials for salvation by God's power, or Christ's gospel.)

Jesus preached the gospel: the apostles preached the same gospel after His ascension, as He commanded them. What, then, is the gospel? Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Does that mean Christ's gospel, the gospel that He preached, or does it mean the gospel of (or concerning) Christ? Really, it does not matter which interpretation you take of the word "of"—whether it denotes possession, that it was Christ's gospel, or whether it means that which the apostles preached about Christ. If it was Christ's gospel, the gospel that He preached, it was the gospel of the kingdom of God; if it was the gospel that the apostles preached about Christ, it was that He was ordained to be a King, and the central theme of their preaching was the kingdom of God, and the part the death of Jesus played in relation to the redemption of those who shall be kings and priests with Him in that kingdom.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). Jesus Christ means Jesus Anointed—anointed to be a King, as well as a Prophet and a Priest; and crucified, that through His death the way might be opened for others to share His kingdom with Him. That was the gospel—it was Christ's gospel—the gospel of the kingdom which He preached throughout all the cities and villages of Palestine during His three-year ministry; and that gospel, preached after His ascension by the apostles, is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth. Therefore the kingdom of God has a paramount relation to redemption; a knowledge and belief of that gospel and obedience to the stipulated requirements are absolute essentials to redemption.

Bible teaching concerning the kingdom of God, its nature and the details of its operation, were considered in No. 8 of this series, and may be summarized briefly here: God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and of all animate beings, is Lord or Ruler over all. Nearly four thousand years ago He made choice of Abram (whose name was later changed to Abraham) to be the head of a special

people—the Hebrews, the children of Israel, the Jewish nation—for whom He would have a particular care. This people were governed by leaders of God's appointment, until at length they desired a visible king, and God permitted them to have one. First Saul, then David and then Solomon were appointed by God as kings over His special people. After Solomon's reign the kingdom was divided into two parts, each with a king—the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. For a few centuries these two kingdoms existed side by side, and first the kingdom of Israel and later the kingdom of Judah ceased to be, having become the victims of invasion by the kings of Assyria and Babylonia. The kingdom was never restored, but predictions were made by God's prophetic messengers that after a long time the two portions would be reunited in their own land, Palestine, and that with Jerusalem as His capital a King should reign not only over the restored kingdom of Israel but over all the gentile kingdoms of the earth made subject unto Him; He should be a universal monarch, ruling for God but dwelling with men. That King was to be Jesus Christ, who in the days of His earthly ministry preached the gospel of the kingdom of God, announcing its restoration and that He was to be the King. For this He was put to death by order of the Roman governor at the request of the Jewish rulers, and after three days' burial was raised from the dead by the power of God and received up into heaven to await the time of the kingdom's restoration. Then He is to return from heaven to earth and take up the government of a universal empire with Jerusalem as His capital city, the Jewish people restored to their own land as the center of that empire, and all gentile nations subjected to His sway. Our consideration closed with the following seven declarations, supported by Scriptural quotations:

1. Jesus is to be the King.
2. Jerusalem will be the capital.
3. The kingdom is to be a world-wide dominion.
4. The King will have associate rulers.
5. The kingdom of God will supersede the kingdoms of men.
6. The kingdom will have universal law and universal worship.
7. The kingdom of God will be a source of blessing to the whole earth.

The kingdom of God is intimately related to individual and national redemption. This was expressed very briefly in two early declarations, and as time went on the brief announcements were

expanded and details of the means of their realization were gradually given. In Genesis 3:15, when the Lord God pronounced sentence upon the serpent for his part in that transgression of our first parents which brought sin and death into the world, it was said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here is a brief announcement which declared the purpose of the Creator ultimately to undo the work of sin, through One who is called the woman's seed, who though first wounded in the heel by sin should finally triumph by bruising the serpent's seed in the head. The evil that had been wrought by Adam should be overcome by Jesus Christ, though first He must needs die because of sin: He would rise again in triumph over sin and death and the Paradise that had been forfeited by Adam's transgression would be restored through Christ's righteousness.

When God called Abraham He gave to him certain promises which were repeated to his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob, in which it was declared that this purpose of God was to be accomplished through the possession of a certain land by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their Seed, Jesus Christ, as so clearly shown by Paul in his letter to the Galatians. (This was considered in detail in No. 9 of this series.)

Abraham understood God's promises to apply to a date far in the future: he knew that he would die and await the day when he would be raised again to share the blessings promised when he and his seed should be a source of blessing to the whole world. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). Paul says this was the gospel and that it was preached to Abraham in these words (Galatians 3:8). So Abraham, by the eye of faith, looked forward to the day of Christ's kingship and glory, and understood that his redemption, his salvation, would be realized therein. So Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

Later on, when the kingdom had been established in the land of promise, a covenant was made with David, the second king, in which it was further declared that the realization of God's purpose was to be accomplished through the establishment of the kingdom of David and his Son forever (II Samuel 7:8-16). This covenant will be considered in detail in No. 12 of this series, so we will simply state that the son referred to in this covenant was Jesus Christ who is to

sit upon the throne of His father David, and reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end; and then David, raised from the dead, will rule with his greater Son. David realized that this covenant would not be fulfilled in the reign of his son Solomon; he looked forward to the reign of his greater Son, of whom he prophetically said, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1, quoted by Jesus in Matthew 22:44). Jesus was both David's Son and David's Lord—great David's greater Son. Therefore, when Nathan the prophet told him of God's covenant, David said unto the Lord, "Thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come" (II Samuel 7:19); and later, when he was about to die, he referred in his last words to the covenant God had made, and which he knew would be fulfilled a long while after, in a kingdom where he and his Son should rule: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow" (II Samuel 23:2-5).

"This is all my salvation and all my desire." David realized that this kingdom, the kingdom of God, had an intimate relation to redemption. He would be raised from the dead; when he awoke he would be satisfied with the divine likeness (Psalm 17:15); he would be clothed upon with immortality and would be exalted to the throne of universal dominion along with his greater Son: and this was all his salvation and all his desire.

Israel's prophets further elaborated the divine program in their predictions concerning the chosen people and their relation to the gentile nations. Though they had many messages of woe, because of the nation's transgressions, though they foretold the scattering and the persecution which God would bring upon them for their sins, they also foresaw that after the punishment, after the dispersion among all the nations, after the suffering of reproach and anguish and physical torture, they would be brought back as a nation to their own land and re-established as God's kingdom on the mountains of Israel and under the Messiah whom their fathers rejected but

whom they should recognize as Jehovah's King, they would be a center of universal blessing.

Therefore the prophecies contain abundant descriptions of the glories of the kingdom and the blessedness of all nations under the rule of King Jesus and His saints.

As this kingdom will be the realization of all David's salvation and desire, so will it be for all the prophets and saints. When Paul was about to die a martyr's death, he looked, as did David, to the fulfilment of the divine promises, for all his salvation and desire. He wrote to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:1-8).

The kingdom of God, to be established at the return of Jesus Christ from heaven, the restored kingdom of David in which Jesus should sit on David's throne, was the goal after which the apostle and his fellow-laborers and all the saints were striving. Its contemplation enabled them to endure all manner of hardships and affliction, even as Jesus Himself, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2). So Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant

grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:8-18).

Again he writes, quoting from the prophecy of Isaiah: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (I Corinthians 2:9, 10). And when he was preaching at Derbe, in Asia Minor, as Luke says, "When they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21, 22).

In like manner Peter, when exhorting the believers who had been called by the gospel, to add to their faith "moral courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love," wrote, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:8-11).

So also James: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7, 8).

And John, too: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1, 2).

The apostles are unanimous in setting forth the kingdom to be established at the return of Jesus, as the "summum bonum," the greatest good, the sum-total of all their desire, the fulness of their salvation. Whatever their sorrows in their mortal experience, they would be more than compensated in the attainment of immortality and glory at the appearing of the Lord Jesus; whatever their joys and blessings in their present positions as sons of God, they would be far superseded in the day of the Lord's appearing by the exaltation to equality of nature with Him and a share in His kingdom. That is why when Peter asked Jesus, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" He said, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:27, 28). And that is why John saw the redeemed referred to by the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders, when they sang the "new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth" (Revelation 5:9, 10, Revised Version); and why Jesus promised the overcomers: "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

There is a beautiful hymn which expresses in similar form the desire of the modern saints who look to the day of the Lord's appearing and kingdom as all their salvation and all their desire. What have such to do with the aims and practices and politics of this present world? What is their guiding star amid the evils and distresses which abound on every hand? It is, or it should be, the same that guided Abraham and David and Paul and Peter and James and John, and all the prophets and apostles and saints of old:

"Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
 Born to set Thy people free;  
 From our fears and sins release us,  
 Let us find our rest with Thee.  
 Israel's strength and consolation,  
 Hope of all the saints Thou art;  
 Blest desire of every nation  
 Joy of every longing heart.

“Born Thy people to deliver;  
Born to be their future king;  
Come and reign on earth forever;  
Soon Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own transforming spirit  
Make our bodies like Thine own;  
By thine all-sufficient merit,  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.”

Now let us look at the glories of the kingdom. Human governments, with all their attendant evils, will be abolished, and one divine government, with blessings untold, will succeed the kingdoms of men. For it is testified in connection with the pouring out of the seventh vial of the Apocalypse: “The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 11:15, Revised Version).

One grand result of the unification of earth's governments will be the abolition of war. Wars occur now, with all their slaughter, desolation and expense, because one nation desires the territory, trade or some other possession that a rival nation has; but when there is one universal empire, when all kings shall have fallen down before the universal Emperor, and all nations serve Him, there will be no international rivalries and jealousies and covetings; and wars will cease to the ends of the earth. Till then they will not cease. All human efforts to attain worldwide and enduring peace—and there have been many—have failed thus far; and all future purely human efforts will likewise fail. When Jesus returns and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, then “He shall speak peace unto the heathen (the nations), and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zechariah 9:10); then peace will become a fact, worldwide and everlasting. The fundamental fault of human nature, selfishness, will be restrained, and righteousness shall take the place of evil and the result will be peace.

The 72nd Psalm beautifully describes the peaceful glory of King Jesus' reign: “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee

as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually: and daily shall he be praised. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory" (Psalm 72: 1-19).

What a beautiful figure that is in the 6th verse: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth"! When one knows the transformation that has been made by the introduction of water into the desert, causing it to blossom with flowers and fruit in abundance; when one sees the effect of gentle showers after a prolonged drought, or after the grass of the lawn or the meadow has been mown; then he can appreciate the beauty of the figure that the coming of King Jesus will be just as welcome and just as beneficial to the people that are left of the nations after the divine judgments have been poured out upon the wicked and the individual and national sinners have been mown down.

"He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. . . . He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." What a change that will be! Today there is very little righteousness in the governments of the earth. Even the best of them are operated by those in whom selfish human nature pre-

dominates. The lawmakers have private interests to serve, and serve them by unjust laws and by the imposition of taxes and other forms of tyranny upon those who can least afford to meet them, and by squandering or wasting upon themselves a good share of that which the poor contribute. The poor man has little chance of justice, while hypocritical lawyers and fraternity-bound judges have to do with the law's administration. It is a common proverb that one can get plenty of law, but little justice. It is a golden key that opens the door of the law today; but it will not be so in the days of King Jesus. He shall judge with righteousness and deliver a just judgment.

There will be no evading of justice then, either. The criminal will not always be given by far the greatest share of the consideration. Now, a just sentence can be evaded, or indefinitely postponed, if the criminal has money enough to pay for appeals and appeals and appeals, with their resultant delays and delays and delays, and the frequent reversal by one court of the decisions of another. But then, as Isaiah says, "A king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. . . . Judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the fruitful field," and things will be estimated at their proper value, for "the vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful" (Isaiah 32: 1, 5, 16, 17). The graft and bribery that are so common today in connection with all forms of human government will then be a thing of the past. It will be impossible to deceive or browbeat the King and His princes in that day, for their superhuman powers will enable them to detect all forms of hypocrisy, and the possession and distribution of gold will not avail to defeat the ends of justice. Grafters and gangsters and hoodlums of every kind will be suppressed with an iron hand. "He shall break in pieces the oppressor." The sweatshop and the tyrannies of both capital and labor will be ended, and men will enjoy the fruits of their own labor, with none to make them afraid. So that "in his days the righteous (not the wicked) shall flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper. . . . He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight." (Psalm 72: 4-14)

It will be as Isaiah says "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel

and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isaiah 11:2-4). There will be no kidnaping and murdering of innocent children; no grinding of the faces of the poor that their oppressors may live in luxury; no miscarriages of justice where the innocent suffer for the guilty; no overburdening of the poor to support an aristocracy of birth or wealth—all these will be things of the past, and instead of the ruled being ever ready to take vengeance on their rulers for their oppression, the reign of King Jesus and His saints will be of such tremendous benefit to their subjects that "prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised. . . . Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." What a glorious time! What grand conditions to live under! How we should pray as Jesus taught His disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

Isaiah and Micah prophesy of this glorious time: "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3).

The Psalmist sings of God's work in destroying the evils of human governments and establishing the blessings of His own: "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen (nations); I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:8-10). Yes, war will ultimately be abolished, not by any human league of nations or disarmament conference or

peace pact, but by the manifestation of divine might in the destruction of all national and international evils and their replacement by righteous government and just administration of divine laws.

Long ago God declared His purpose to fill the earth with His glory. He said to Moses, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Numbers 14:21); and Isaiah and Habakkuk said several centuries later, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14); and the 72nd Psalm concludes: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory" (Psalm 72:18, 19).

The earth is at present in the condition described by Paul in Romans 8:18-23: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Revised Version).

The whole creation groaneth; but at the deliverance, not only will human beings and nations be blessed by the kingdom that will be established, but the very ground and the lower orders of animate creation shall be blessed as well. They were all cursed at the time of Adam's transgression, and the curse will be removed. Instead of thorns and thistles, "then shall the earth yield her increase" (Psalm 67:6). "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree" (Isaiah 55:13). "I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you, and I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field (Ezekiel 36:29). "I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together" (Isaiah 41:19). And when the earth yields her increase there will be no profiteers and racketeers to deprive the multitude of its share, and make them pay exorbitantly for what they get; for in that day, "they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit

of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isaiah 65:21, 22). The modern evils of overcrowding in unsanitary surroundings, with vice and misery and want, will be done away with, and "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Micah 4:4).

The evil nature of the brute creation will be changed, so that "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 65:25).

Not only will living conditions be bettered in every way, but life itself will be prolonged, so that one dying a hundred years old shall be considered as but a child; yet so different will be the intellectual and moral attainments, that though like a child in years, he will be responsible for his doings. "I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old: but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed" (Isaiah 65:19, 20). There will be sin and death among the subject nations of the earth; but the rulers, King Jesus and His saints, will be immortal and all-righteous, and will be able to detect and punish any instances of transgression with unerring accuracy and without bickering and delay.

It was of this glorious age that the prophets and apostles spoke and wrote, and to it all the saints of God, past and present, have looked for the consummation of their hopes. This will bring the desire of all nations, peace and prosperity, with righteousness and justice for all. When the righteousness of God is manifested in the government of man, then will the wicked either cease to do wickedly or be wiped off forever from the scene. This kingdom is the only solution to earth's many present woes. It is the only thing which will put an end to humanity's evil aspirations and iniquitous dealings. All other efforts to abolish these are foredoomed to failure, however well-intentioned they may be. To Jesus has been intrusted the rulership of the earth and soon He will return to enter upon His kingly functions. Then He will gather to Himself those who are His, who in this dark and evil age, and in the ages that are

past, have believed and obeyed His gospel, and they will be blessed with the salvation to which that gospel is God's power. Jesus has already been made after the power of an endless life. He was raised from the dead to die no more. Death hath no more dominion over Him. And when He returns He will raise from the dead those who are sleeping in Him, and will gather with them those who are still living and believing in Him, and bestow upon them all together the immortality that is His, and exalt them to positions of honor, glory and responsibility in the kingdom He comes to establish.

When Jesus partook of the Passover just before His crucifixion He said to His disciples, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29); and He said also to the disciples, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29, 30).

When Jesus and His saints are installed as rulers over the nations, they will be immortal, but their subjects, the restored people of Israel and the remnants of the gentile nations, will not. For this kingdom is an intermediate stage in God's plan, between that which is wholly human and that which is all divine. The apostle Paul, in that 15th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, having emphatically declared the possibility of resurrection in general and the actuality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the consequent certainty of the resurrection of believers in Christ, continues: "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of 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. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (I Corinthians 15:23-28).

The kingdom of God will be in operation for a period of one thousand years in this intermediate stage, during which all evils will be subdued, and Jesus will rule for God and dwell with men. He will be the King in God's kingdom, and at the end of that period,

all evil will have been put down and the last enemy, death itself, will have been destroyed, and the completed work will be delivered back to God, that henceforward, throughout the unending ages of eternity, He may be all in all, the Head of His everlasting kingdom. John says, "And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:4-6).

As a beautiful hymn says:

"The Saviour comes, His advent's nigh,  
He soon will leave the throne on high,  
And coming back to earth again,  
Will reign for God and dwell with men.

"O happy day when war shall cease,  
And ransomed earth be filled with peace;  
When sin and death no more shall reign,  
And Eden bloom on earth again."

Oh that we may be numbered among those to whom in the day of His coming He will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

## CHRIST A KING

In almost all ages and climes men have desired leaders or chiefs. They have sought out those whom they have thought to be the best, and have placed themselves under their command. The various names which have been given to these leaders are indicative of their positions and duties. The significations of all may be summed up under the two headings, "knowledge" and "authority." The English name "king" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "cynnan," meaning "to know," and signifies "the cunning one," or "the knowing one." Such a use of the word "cunning" is found when Bezaleel, who was engaged in the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, is described as a cunning workman: "And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; and to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver and in brass, and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work" (Exodus 35:30-35). The Latin name for "king," "rex," signifies "a ruler," being taken from "rego," which means "I rule."

There are two kinds of kingly authority—"limited" and "absolute." In the former, the monarch is not allowed to govern entirely by his own will, but is guided by a number of selected ministers, or representatives elected by the people. In the latter the monarch's will is law, and his word may enforce the execution of the law.

In recent years, many countries have given up their kings. They have deposed them and set up "democratic" governments, headed by a president, usually elected for a specified term of years. Governments may be divided into three kinds—autocratic, aristocratic, and

democratic; and a fourth form once existed, and will exist again, the theocratic.

Autocratic is another name for an absolute monarchy; aristocratic is the form in which the monarch is guided by his chosen ministers, or an elected parliament or similar assembly; democratic means ruled by the people, who elect their president and also the assembly or congress to work with him; and theocratic means ruled by God.

An absolute monarchy, an autocratic government, seems to be the ideal form of kingly power. If it be possible to elect one in whom dwells the perfection of knowledge and discretion, what can be better than to exalt him to the highest position and implicitly follow his direction? But in no living monarch is such perfection to be found, nor has there been in any that have yet reigned. It would almost seem, then, that the ideal form of government is but a matter of theory or fancy: this is the only conclusion that can be drawn from experience. However, by faith we are enabled to see that, though to the present there never has been a perfect monarch, there will be. The God who has created the earth and given it for the habitation of man is the possessor of all things. The right of universal sovereignty belongs to Him. He has permitted the existing order of things to be established, but, as Solomon has said, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). Though He permits the present constitution of nations, He has also made known His intention to take the government of the earth out of the hands of a great number of weak and erring mortal rulers, and vest it in One who is absolute perfection in knowledge, in wisdom, and in nature. In His Word He has made a revelation of such an One, and He it is, the perfect King, whom we shall now consider. Of Him Isaiah says, "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2); and again, "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times" (Isaiah 33:6).

A proud and vain-glorious Babylonian monarch was once caused to know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever He will. This is the starting-point in our considerations. The Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men. What is more fitting? Shall not He that formed man govern and direct him?

When men began to multiply upon the face of the earth, their wickedness also increased, and by a mighty act of destruction all human beings except one family, that of Noah, were caused to perish. This family afterward multiplied in three branches, through Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and after several generations God made choice of one individual, Abram by name, and declared that in him all families of the earth should be blessed, in token of which blessing his name was changed to Abraham, meaning "father of a great multitude."

In process of time the descendants of this man became a strong nation, having as their Ruler the Lord their God, and receiving from Him a code of perfect laws. But they grew tired of being ruled by an invisible King, the God who had chosen them, and desired a king whom they could see and who could go out and come in before them; and lead them in battle. They wished to be like the nations by which they were surrounded. Through the prophet Samuel they requested God to give them a king, and God acceded to their request. In this king over the nation of Israel is foreshadowed the King, Jesus Christ.

The king of Israel was chosen by divine appointment. He held his office by divine right: he was king by the grace of God. The first king that God chose for them was Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a man of splendid physique, and one that the people could therefore feel a certain amount of satisfaction with. He stood head and shoulders above all the people. But his mind was not in harmony with the mind of God, and the kingdom was removed from his household and given to David, the son of Jesse, a man of the tribe of Judah, of whom it is said that he was a man after God's own heart. Paul says, "He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will" (Acts 13:22). Several times in the historical books of the Bible, a contrast is made between David and other kings, in which David's fitness for the kingdom is brought out; for example, it is said of Solomon, who succeeded David, "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father" (I Kings 11:4); and of Abijam, a later king, exactly the same is said (I Kings 15:3). Of Asa, the son of Abijam, it is said, "And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father. . . . Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days" (I Kings 15:11, 14).

Of course, these references are to the kingship: especially in the case of Solomon is his departure to idolatry mentioned, and in the case of Asa the fact that he destroyed the idols. The one led his people in the wrong way; the other in the right; and of David, the special thought is the kingship. In contrast to Saul whose heart was not right, who disobeyed the direct commands of God, David ruled in the fear of God and led his people to worship God according to His law: as a king, he was a man after God's own heart; but in his private life he, like all others, committed sins, some of which are plainly recorded. There liveth not one who does not commit sin: the Lord Jesus Christ was the only exception. David, the man after God's own heart, was a type of Christ in His kingship.

David was chosen by divine appointment, and Samuel the prophet was sent to anoint him as king: Jesus is the Lord's Anointed, and has been selected by God to be the perfect King. David was of the tribe of Judah, and so was Jesus Christ, and it had long been testified that the rulership should belong to Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be," was Jacob's dying blessing (Genesis 49:10). "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birth-right was Joseph's" (I Chronicles 5:2). One of the titles of Jesus, referring to His kingship, is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5). David was a man after God's own heart, and Jesus is, too, though in a greater degree. Again, the king of Israel was appointed to administer divine law, and Christ in His kingdom will administer that law which shall be according to Jehovah's will, the law that shall go forth from Zion.

Though in Israel's kingdom we may behold a shadow of the kingship of Christ, it is but a shadow; the substance will be of far greater glory. Few indeed of the kings of Israel were worthy of their position—none was perfect; the best of them fell far short of administering God's law in its integrity; but the greater King foreshadowed will perform perfectly the functions of His exalted office.

In the prophetic Word there are many references to the kingship of Christ, and the earliest is contained in the promises which God made to Abraham. Reference is there made to a Seed who shall be established together with Abraham, who with him shall enjoy the promised blessings, and in whom all nations of the earth shall be blessed; and it is said that He shall possess the gate of His enemies. The apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, shows that this seed is

Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

To Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, similar promises had been made to those which God made to Abraham; and when Jacob was about to die, he called his twelve sons to him and pronounced a blessing upon each. A prophecy concerning Christ, to which we have already made reference, is contained in the blessing to Judah, of which son Jesus Christ was a lineal descendant: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" (Genesis 49:8-12).

Balak, king of Moab, was terrified at the approach of the Israelites on their way from Egypt to the promised land, after they had slaughtered the Amorites. He sent to Balaam, asking him to come and curse the children of Israel; but the Lord turned the words of Balaam to blessing instead of cursing, and in his speech to Balak there is a prophecy referring to Christ: "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies: and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city" (Numbers 24:17-19).

When the Israelites had been led to Palestine and settled there as the nation of God's choice, promises which referred to Christ were made by God through Israel's prophets, and had reference to Him primarily as King over the Jews and Israelites, and then as King over the whole earth.

The first was made to David through the prophet Nathan and is recorded in II Samuel 7:12-16: "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will

establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." Though this may at first glance appear to have been fulfilled in the kingdom of Solomon, that was but a partial and typical fulfillment. The covenant will be considered in detail in the next pamphlet of this series, but a few points may be noticed briefly here.

In the first place, this house and this kingdom are to be established before David forever. Seeing that David has died, it awaits its fulfillment when Christ shall return to reign and David shall be raised from the dead to live and reign with Christ. Secondly, so late as the day of the prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah sent a message to Israel in these terms: "If ye can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" (Jeremiah 33:20, 21). From this it is evident that up to Jeremiah's time that covenant was not fulfilled; that it was not completely fulfilled by Solomon's reigning over Israel. Thirdly, a promise was made to Mary before the birth of Jesus, which spoke of His reigning on the throne of David and over the house of Jacob forever. And lastly, both Peter and Paul, as recorded in The Acts of the Apostles, have applied the covenant made with David to Christ. For Peter said, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 3:30-32). And Paul, when speaking of David as king of Israel, also said, "He raised up unto them David to be their king, to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus" (Acts 13:22, 23).

Reference was again made to Jesus Christ as King of the Jews when Zedekiah, the last of Judah's kings, was taken captive to

Babylon, and Ezekiel was commanded to say to him, "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem and take off the crown; this shall not be the same. Exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him" (Ezekiel 21:25-27). From that day to this the throne of David has not been occupied by any king; the whole nation of Israel, both the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel and the two-tribed kingdom of Judah, has been scattered among the nations and punished for its stubborn iniquity and its rebellion against the law of God. But the prophets who had to bear messages of reproof and tidings of approaching desolation and punishment, also had messages of joy, and spoke of the regathering of the people after they had been punished, and their reconstitution as a nation. Therefore most of the prophecies of Christ's kingship over the Jews are connected with the promises of Israel's return from captivity. Jeremiah, who has been called "the herald of the dissolution of the Jewish commonwealth," spoke of a time when the Lord would forgive their iniquity and remember their transgressions no more, and would make a new and enduring covenant with them. Ezekiel said they should be regathered from all the nations whither they were driven, and should be united in their land and on their own mountains as one kingdom, with one King, Jehovah's Beloved.

Zechariah says that at the time of Israel's regathering many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord, and that then shall the Lord be King over all the earth. There shall be one Lord and His name one. Isaiah and Micah, in similar language, testify that when the mountain of the Lord's house (or God's kingdom, with Jesus Christ as King) is exalted above the hills (the other kingdoms), then many people shall flow unto it, and many nations shall come to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob (Zechariah 8:20-22; Isaiah 2:2, 3; Micah 4:1, 2).

From the New Testament might be quoted many prophecies which concern the kingdom of Christ, but two will suffice for the present. In the book of Revelation it is written: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). And in his first letter to the Corinthians Paul said, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Corinthians 15:25).

Seeing that Christ is to be a King, let us now consider the establishment, location and nature of His kingdom. First, When will He reign? When on earth before, He preached of the kingdom of God and that He was to be the king thereof. His disciples and a few others believed His preaching and looked forward to His kingdom, but the majority of those who heard Him either did not believe Him, or, if they did, had not sufficient interest in His preaching to follow Him. The rulers of the people, including their priests, bitterly opposed him and eventually had Him put to death by crucifixion. They crucified the Lord of life and glory, but God raised Him from the dead to die no more. The priests and rulers of the people brought Him before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, and charged Him with treason and blasphemy, and though Pilate was convinced of the harmlessness of Jesus in relation to the overthrow of the Roman state, he in a cowardly manner granted the request of the people for His death. When he said to Jesus as He was arraigned before him, charged with treason, with making Himself a King when they had no other king but Caesar, "Art thou a king then?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." Jesus had answered a previous question, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" with the statement, "My kingdom is not of this world (age, dispensation or order of things); if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." It was then that Pilate asked, "Art thou a king then?" and Jesus replied, "Thou sayest that I am a king." That was just as emphatic an admission of the fact, as is the modern slang expression an agreement with some statement, "You said it!" Jesus was a King, but the time of His kingdom had not arrived, and the Roman Empire was in no danger of being broken up then by Jesus. So Pilate was convinced of the harmlessness of Jesus in His confession of kingship, and though yielding to their request for the death of Jesus, he expressed his contempt of their accusations by placing the superscription on the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." Oh, how mad His enemies were at that! They begged Pilate to change it to "He said, I am King of the Jews," but Pilate emphasized his conviction and his contempt with "What I have written I have written" (John 18: 33-37; 19: 19-22).

After the resurrection of Jesus, the disciples who had journeyed with Him during the three years of His public ministry, and who

had believed Him to be the Messiah, asked Him concerning His kingdom, whether He would immediately establish it. They had been unprepared for His death; they thought He would restore their kingdom, but when they saw Him crucified they were bewildered. Though he had on several occasions spoken of His approaching death, they evidently had not understood its necessity before the establishment of the kingdom. However, when He was raised from the dead, their faith and hope were revived and they asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put within his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:6-8). He would restore the kingdom: He had preached that gospel for three years; but they were not then to know the time of the restoration. There was a work for them to do first: they must continue the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, beginning at Jerusalem and ultimately reaching to all nations. And He was immediately received from their sight by a cloud. He ascended to the Father's throne, there to await the time of His kingdom. He had told the Jews that His kingdom did not belong to that dispensation during which He was on earth. He had also spoken a parable to His disciples in which He described Himself as a nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return: and this going was fulfilled when He ascended, as we read in the first chapter of The Acts. He is still away: He is as described in the Psalms and the letter to the Hebrews: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1; Hebrews 1:13).

When Jesus was taken from the earth, two angels appeared to the disciples, and told them that the Jesus who had been taken from them into heaven should so come again as they had seen Him go. The day and the hour of that coming in kingly power are not known by any mortal; but a revelation has been given by Jesus to His saints, who are waiting for Him, whereby they may see with great accuracy the approach of the day of His coming, and may know with a great degree of certainty when they are in the vicinity of His return. From this revelation, accompanied by the prophecies of the Old Testament, it is easy to discern that we are now on the eve of His appearing in the glory and majesty of His regal power.

Where will He establish His kingdom? That kingdom is to be of worldwide extent, but its center of government will be Mount Zion and the city of Jerusalem. For the throne of David was there in time past, and it is to be restored as in the days of old. The prophets of Israel sang of the glory of that city when it shall be the city of the Great King. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Psalm 48: 1, 2); and Jesus advised His hearers not to swear by Jerusalem, "for it is the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35). Ezekiel has said that the name of the city, when it is the centre of universal rule and worship, shall be Jehovah-shammah—"The Lord is there" (Ezekiel 48:35). Isaiah and Micah have said that "the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2). Jeremiah has said that "at that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17).

The kingdom will be centered at Jerusalem. Jesus Christ will be King over all the earth, but the government of the various parts of the earth will be in the hands of the saints, who have been redeemed out of every kindred and people and nation and tongue, by the blood of Christ. Such are referred to in Psalm 45:16 as "princes in all the earth. Isaiah has said "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment" (Isaiah 32:1). These princes are spoken of by Christ Himself thus: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21). Jesus made a definite promise to the apostles that when He should sit upon the throne of His glory, they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. From these testimonies it is most reasonable to conclude that the center of Christ's universal dominion will be Jerusalem, that Christ Himself will reign there and see to the government of the whole earth, but will depute part of the rule to the apostles over the twelve tribes, and to those who have been redeemed by His blood, other than the apostles, over the remaining portions of the earth.

Paul wrote to Timothy, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Timothy 2:12). Jesus spake a parable in which He referred to Himself as a nobleman going into a far country to receive his kingdom, and giving to his servants certain pounds to trade with till his return.

“When he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities” (Luke 19: 12-19). This shows that there will be degrees in the glory which shall be added to the new nature, even immortality, with which all the redeemed shall be endowed. The awards will be made in accordance with the diligence of the servants during their Master’s absence.

How will this kingdom be established? It is a kingdom which will bring joy and peace and blessing to every country that is known, but it will be inaugurated by a time of trouble such as never has been. The prophet Isaiah has said, “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9). It is certain that they will not before then. So that the kingdom will be established by such a manifestation of divine power as shall make all ears to tingle and the stoutest hearts to quake. “Oh!” said Isaiah in anticipation of this, “Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence” (Isaiah 64: 1, 2)!

The prophets Joel, Ezekiel and Zechariah have pictured the state of things that will be brought about by a manifestation of divine power. Almost all the nations of the earth united against the King of Kings when He comes to take His great power unto Himself and reign; and all their glory and all their pride humbled to the dust by His power and might. “The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth” (Isaiah 23:9). All human power must be broken; all human monarchs must be forced to yield their honor and glory to Christ; and this will only be effected by a conflict of arms.

There will be a titanic struggle for the possession of the Holy Land, when some nations are to fight against God’s people of Israel and others are to take their part, as declared by Ezekiel in his 38th and 39th chapters. The prophet there describes the attack made upon

the Holy Land and its people who have been gathered out of the nations and are dwelling peaceably and prospering, making agricultural developments which excite the cupidity of a northern power that descends on the land to take a spoil; and to take a prey, and to turn his hand "against the desolate places that are now inhabited and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." This is an exact description of the condition the land is assuming under the Zionist Movement, whereby Jews that are immigrating are establishing colonies and becoming prosperous, and their lands fruitful. The attacking power is called Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, with a great army of confederates, and can only be the northern Russian power and its allied nations. The situation described by the prophet is rapidly developing, and ere long that northern foe will descend upon the land with the purpose of seizing and plundering. But Ezekiel says this invader meets with opposition. Another power is there called "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof." This can easily be identified as the British power, which even now has been given the mandate over that land and is there as the protector of those returned Jews who are establishing and developing the colonies. This power challenges the invader, Gog, and says, "Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?" A terrific conflict ensues, as described in the latter part of this 38th chapter, and also in the 39th, and God pours out His judgments on this northern host, and delivers His people Israel, and so makes all the assembled nations to know that He is the Lord. He says, "Thus will I magnify myself and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezekiel 38:23). Also, "The heathen (the nations) shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel 39:23-29).

The gentile nations shall be made to recognize Jehovah at the same time and because of the same judgments by which Israel will be made to recognize Jehovah their God and Jesus returned as their Messiah and King. This is also brought out by the prophet Joel, who associates the destruction of the power of the gentile nations with the restoration of Israel. "In those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. . . . Proclaim ye this among the gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near: let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen (nations) round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more" (Joel 3:1-17). Before the time of peace there will be a terrible time of war; before the swords and spears are beaten into ploughshares, the implements of agriculture must be beaten into instruments of war; and in that last great war both Israel and the gentiles shall be brought to acknowledge Jeho-

vah, and thus all nations shall be brought under the sway of Jehovah's King, Jesus the Christ returned to earth.

So also the prophet Zechariah tells of the time, the place and the outcome of this last great war: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. . . . Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, 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, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. . . . And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold and silver and apparel, in great abundance. . . . And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. . . . In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in

the house of the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 14:1-21). What a clear and unmistakable prophecy!

Thus, when all nations are gathered to the great battle in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is between the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem, when the city seems about to fall before the hostile gentile multitudes, when part of the inhabitants have been taken captive and the rest are filled with fear, then the Lord shall go forth and fight for them as He fought for them many times before and delivered them from their enemies. Jesus shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, as the angels said to the disciples when He ascended to heaven: He shall march through the assembled hosts and take possession of the city, destroy the power of the hostile nations, and establish His own kingdom on Mount Zion. It will be a terrible time of trouble and bloodshed, but it will cause all to know the Lord and to fear Him, and to give honor to the King whom He has chosen to rule the world. The result will be a kingdom in which all families of the earth shall be blessed in Christ, and those worthies of old who, though they have died, shall be made to live again and live forever by Him who is able to fashion their bodies after the likeness of His own glorious body. (The blessings of that kingdom are dealt with in detail in No. 10 of this series of pamphlets, "The Kingdom of God in Relation to Redemption.")

The course of human history on the territory of the ancient known world, from the time of Israel's prophets to the establishment of Christ's kingdom, is outlined in a series of visions recorded by the prophet Daniel. One was a remarkable dream which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had. When he awoke he forgot what the dream was; and when he requested his wise men to tell him the dream none was able except Daniel, a captive prince of Judah, and he was only able because his God had revealed it to him. Having told the king of the great image he had seen made of various metals, he proceeded to interpret the dream as God's revelation of the destiny of the kingdom of Babylon and succeeding kingdoms. The prophet himself later had two visions in which animals were used to represent the same kingdoms which the metals of Nebuchadnezzar's image stood for. In the image there was a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron: the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay. The king beheld a stone cut miraculously out of the mountain without hands, fall upon the feet of the image and cause it to fall; the stone itself became a large mountain and filled the earth, but the image was

broken to tiny fragments and driven away like chaff (Daniel, chapter 2). Daniel saw the winds disturb the sea, and out of the sea arose four beasts—a lion, a bear, a leopard and a terrible, strong, ten-horned beast. Another horn arose among the ten, and three of the ten fell before it. This eleventh horn had eyes and a mouth and the power of speech. Then the judgment was set, and the books were opened and the beast was given over to destruction. Afterward the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and “to Him were given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him” (Daniel, Chapter 7).

These visions are two representations of the same thing. They are symbolic of the history of the world from the time when they were given till now, and even beyond. The interpretation is supplied by Daniel. The parts of the image correspond with the beasts which Daniel saw; the gold with the lion, the silver with the bear, the brass with the leopard, the iron with the exceedingly terrible and strong fourth beast, and the feet and toes of iron and clay mixed were the counterpart of the ten horns of the fourth beast.

These represent the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman empires, the last to be subdivided and ultimately give way to the kingdom of God.

This kingdom in which Jesus will be the universal Ruler, is just the kind of government which the world needs—a government whose head shall be infallible, omnipotent and all-wise. Why should it be thought strange that the God of heaven should set up such a kingdom? Have human efforts at civilization and the amelioration of mankind proved so successful that they cannot be improved upon? Emphatically no, as witness the present condition of the earth's population! Then is it not a glorious gospel which proclaims that when man has so signally failed, his Creator is willing to step in and set to rights those things which man cannot? God is to establish a kingdom, and Jesus Christ is to be the King, and all the blessings that the human mind can desire shall follow from His rule. So we say with the Psalmist: “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness” (Psalm 45:3, 4).

## THE COVENANT MADE WITH DAVID

The past and the present are the materials out of which God has purposed to evolve a future. From the time of the creation it has been His will to proceed by a well-defined plan to work out a state of things which shall reflect His glory. God's works are numerous and perfect. The laws of Nature are so skilfully adapted to the welfare of all earth's operations, that the honor, glory and majesty of Nature's God are manifest in her every form. True are the words of the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1).

As to the future of the world, as to man's nature and destiny, the things of Nature around us are silent. There is only one source of information on this most important of all enquiries—"To what do all things tend?" The Bible alone can tell us what God has done, what He is doing, and what He intends to accomplish. It is the only revelation ever made to man concerning the will of Him whose thoughts are higher than our thoughts and whose ways are higher than our ways. In it God declares Himself to be the Creator and Sustainer of everything, and the only source from which knowledge may be obtained concerning His purpose. Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, He says in chapter 45, verse 11: "Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me."

God made a covenant with King David in which He declared something of His purpose. The terms of the covenant are stated in the 7th chapter of the Second Book of Samuel. When David had rest from his enemies, he purposed to build a house for the ark of God to dwell in, seeing that from the time of its construction by Moses it had been within the curtains of the tabernacle and had been moved from place to place. He thought it unseemly that he should dwell in a house of cedar, and God's ark should dwell only in a tent. "And Nathan said to the king, Go do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." The prophet evidently thought the king's suggestion a good one, and so expressed his approval. That, however, was his private personal opinion only; he had not

yet heard God's views on the matter. For "it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever" (II Samuel 7:1-16).

Thus did Nathan speak unto David. Here are the exact terms of the covenant. Briefly summed up they are that God would build David a house—not this time a building of wood or stone, but a house of people, a family, a household—and that David should have a son who should reign after him, and yet with him, and the kingdom should be everlasting and under God's care. David at once expressed his gratitude to God for having made such a covenant with him, and expressed his understanding of the nature of the covenant and the time of its fulfilment. For the record continues:

“Then went king David in and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. For thy word’s sake and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God. And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel; and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever” (verses 18-29).

Several references are made later to this covenant by God. Thus in Psalm 89: 3 it is declared: “I (God) have made a covenant with my chosen: I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations”; and in the 28th to 37th verses: “My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take

from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." And in Jeremiah: "Thus saith the Lord: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season: then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" (Jeremiah 33:20, 21).

This covenant made with David is no cunningly devised fable. It is an item of divine truth, or David would not have exclaimed among his last words: "He (God) hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow" (II Samuel 23:5). The last clause of that sentence, "although he make it not to grow," expresses David's conviction that the promise would not be fulfilled immediately after his death, that is, in the person of his son and successor, Solomon. Why did he speak thus? Because, as already quoted, he perceived on receiving the promise that the Lord had spoken of his house for a great while to come. The question to be decided is, "Has that great while passed, or has the set time for the fulfilment of the promise not yet come?" We believe, and shall proceed to show, that it has not yet come.

Some would ask, "Did not David have a son, Solomon, who reigned after him; who built a house for the Lord; and who was chastened with the rod of men for his iniquity?" True, he did. But we would not think that all David's hope and salvation were brought to pass in the reign of Solomon over Israel for forty years. No! If Peter the apostle were here now, he would repeat the words he uttered to those assembled at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost nineteen hundred years ago: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul (Revised Version, he) was not left in hell (hades), neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:29-31). Peter here refers the promise to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ or Anointed of God; and when it is remembered that Peter

spoke by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we shall not feel inclined to dispute his testimony.

Paul, another inspired apostle, more particularly connected with us because he was the apostle specially commissioned to deliver God's message to the gentiles, said as recorded in Acts 13:22-35, that when God "had removed him (Saul) he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. . . . And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

As to the sonship of Jesus Christ, the covenant requires that He shall be both Son of David, II Samuel 7:12, and Son of God, as at verse 14. Solomon was the son of David, being born unto him by Bathsheba. Jesus was also the Son of David, for in the 1st chapter of Matthew and the 3rd chapter of Luke, the genealogy of Jesus is traced from Abraham, through David to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Was He Son of God also? Yes, in a higher sense than Solomon was. Solomon was the son of David and his wife Bathsheba; but in the 1st chapters of both Luke's gospel and Matthew's, it is said of the circumstances of the birth of Jesus, that His mother was Mary, and His Father, God. At the intimation of the angel to Mary that she should have a Son—the Child of Promise—she, being a virgin, expressed her astonishment, and was answered by the angel in words which Luke has recorded: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). This was a more direct sonship of God than was Solomon's; for, therefore, said the angel, because the Holy Spirit shall overshadow thee, shall thy Child be called the Son of God. In the 3rd chapter of Matthew there is further confirmation, when at the baptism of Jesus the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice was heard proclaiming to those around, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I

am well pleased; hear ye him" (verse 17). Jesus was the Son of God and Son of David; and David by the spirit of prophecy was able to see the superior nature of his promised Seed and to call Him Lord.

Another feature of the covenant was that in suffering for iniquity the Seed should be chastened with the rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men. In the ordinary version of the Scriptures the text is, "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men," but we are informed by scholars that a more correct translation is "Even in his suffering for iniquity." Did Jesus suffer for iniquity? Truly, He did; but He did not commit iniquity: He never transgressed the divine law, but suffered for the transgressions of others. In that beautiful yet pathetic 53rd of Isaiah we read, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken" (verses 3-8). This is a description, by the prophet, of Christ's sufferings. No man ever suffered more for iniquity than He did, yet the iniquity was not His own; as Paul says, "Though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain" (Acts 13:28); and as Peter says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24); and John the Baptist said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Jesus was Son of God and Son of David, and in suffering for iniquity, though not His own, He was chastened with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. These portions

of the covenant have been fulfilled; but there are others which have not been fulfilled, and seeing that God has sworn, and will not lie unto David, they must yet be fulfilled.

Christ is to be a King. His kingdom is to be an everlasting kingdom, and it has not yet been established; or if it has, where is it today? Sin and misery abound on every hand. Vice is supreme, and virtue is scarcely known. Vice reigns in many forms, but chiefly in that spirit of self-aggrandizement by which the poor are forced to spend a short life of toil for the benefit of their austere task-masters who look with un pitying eye upon their workmen's sufferings, and are themselves living in ease and amid plenty, and storing up wealth for the encouragement of their posterity to follow in their footsteps. The poor are therefore driven to seek pleasure in ways which would give no pleasure if their lives were otherwise. Men on every hand are seeking how they may best outdo their fellows. Nation is striving with nation over the possession for a few short years of that territory which is not theirs, but God's. This surely cannot be a perpetuation of a kingdom of Christ! Jesus cannot at present be fulfilling that part of the covenant which speaks of His kingship, or it is a sorry realization of the many utterances of Israel's prophets concerning the glory of the kingdom. We hope for greater things than these. We look for a time when Jesus shall reign supreme and vice shall be trodden underfoot; when Christ's kingdom shall be established for ever and God's mercy shall rest upon it. To see how this is to be brought about it will be necessary to look back upon the history of Israel, and upon the days since Jesus was on earth. This kingdom is to be the realization of the hopes of all the saints of old. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had reference to the same time. The promise made in Eden that the seed of Eve should bruise the head of the serpent's seed after being bruised by it in the heel, had reference to this day of Christ's supremacy. The mainstay of the prophets and the truth of the whole Scriptures is this glorious order of government; and surely it is not in existence now!

God did once have a kingdom. The people of Israel, after being brought out of Egypt by His almighty arm and receiving the law through Moses at Sinai, were taken to the land of Canaan and in time were established there as a kingdom, first with no king but their God, afterward with a visible king, Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. He proved to be unworthy of the position, and in his place David, a man after God's own heart, was

chosen as their king. David, the son of Jesse, was of the tribe of Judah. He did those things which were righteous in the eyes of the Lord, and was favored by the Lord on that account. So well-pleasing to God was his character that God made with him the covenant we are now considering. It could not have been made with Saul, for he was not of the tribe of God's choice: Judah was the chosen tribe and David belonged to it. David died and was laid to rest in the dust of the earth to await, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and many others, the development of God's plan. As before observed, David perceived that God had spoken of his house for a great while to come.

After David's death, Solomon his son reigned in his stead, and during his reign of forty years the nation of Israel reached the zenith of its glory; but after Solomon fell asleep the kingdom was divided between his son Rehoboam and Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Two separate kingdoms existed for about four centuries, during which the northern or Israelitish kingdom fell away to the worship of golden calves at the instigation of Jeroboam. The sin of the people increased, and though here and there a king arose whose will was in accord with the commands of the Lord, yet on the whole the nation grew worse until Israel was carried captive to Assyria by Shalmaneser, and Judah to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Then followed seventy years of dire calamity to the people, seventy years in which they wept bitterly for that which had come upon them. God had often sent to them, as He expresses it, rising early and sending messengers to invite them to return to Him, but they would not. Therefore for the multitude of their transgressions they were given over to the hand of their enemies until such time as it should please the Lord to restore them to His favor. Speaking through His prophet Ezekiel to the last king of Judah, God said, "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezekiel 21:25-27). These declarations need very little study for us to find out what their meaning is. It is that the kingdom should not again exist until He should come whose right it is, and who is worthy to hold the position of Overseer of God's heritage; and that is Jesus Christ. This clearly indicates that there will be an end of the overturning; the word "until" must

point to a time of alteration. But in addition to this intimation there is much other testimony. Even Jeremiah, the prophet commissioned to bear the most doleful tidings to the people, also bore them tidings that they should be restored from their outcasting. The captives of Judah remained seventy years at Babylon, as Jeremiah had foretold, and at the end of that time a command went forth for such as had a heart to go, to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. Some went back, but not all. The kingdom was never re-established. Surely, therefore, this partial restoration cannot be the fulfilment of such testimonies as are to be found in the 6th and 7th verses of the 4th chapter of Micah: "In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever"; or Ezekiel 37:21, 22: "I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel: and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." Or again, Hosea 3:4, 5: "For the children of Israel shall abide for me many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Hosea also says in his 14th chapter at verses 4 and 5, that God will heal their backsliding and will love them freely, and will be to Israel as the dew; for His anger shall be turned away from them.

These happy days for Israel have not yet come: Israel hopes for them, but does not see in Jesus of Nazareth the promised Messiah. Look at their condition of recent years. See how they have been despised and ill-treated on every hand. Look at their treatment by Russia, for example, and think whether this can be the abundance of peace which has been promised for them. No, it is not: it more befits the ruined condition depicted in Psalm 89:38-44: "But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed. Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.

Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground."

This is their present condition; but they are not destined to remain so forever. The promises of God are certain. The hope which gladdened David's heart is a sure one, for God's mercy has made it so. What shall we say, then? Is Israel to be cast off forever? No! The day of her release is at hand. The old wastes shall soon be rebuilt, the former desolations shall soon be restored, and the waste cities shall soon be repaired. Jesus of Nazareth is the One appointed to do the work. Peter, after he had healed a lame man, and after telling his hearers that they had killed a righteous and a just One, and desired a murderer to be granted to them, said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things; which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21).

Jesus Christ, whom Peter spoke of, is to fulfil a threefold office as Prophet, Priest, and King. As a Prophet he performed a mission nineteen centuries ago; as a Priest He is now at the right hand of His Father and ever maketh intercession for the sins of His household; as a King He will one day be on earth again to rule the world in righteousness. Let us consider more in detail Jesus Christ as a Prophet.

The Spirit of Christ, which spake through the prophet Isaiah, testified thus: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:1, 2). And in the 16th to the 21st verses of the 4th chapter of Luke it is recorded of Jesus that He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up; and as His custom was He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up to read. There was delivered to Him the book of Isaiah. When He had opened the book He found the

place where the words above quoted were written. Having closed the book again, and given it to the minister, He began to say to them that were in the synagogue: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Jesus Christ the Prophet, anointed with the Spirit of God at His baptism, went about the land of Palestine proclaiming to the people the gospel of the kingdom of God. This was the gospel which He taught to Peter and the other disciples while His earthly ministry lasted; and after His death and resurrection the same gospel was the center of all the teachings of the apostles. The prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the others, preached the same kingdom, and told the Jews of the Messiah who should deliver them from all their evils. For more than three years Jesus preached His gospel, but the majority of the people would not receive Him as their Messiah. Though some of them were, and all of them ought to have been, at that time expecting their Deliverer according to the word of Daniel, who gave them a sign of the times by a prophecy of seventy weeks, yet when Jesus told them that it was He who was promised they rejected Him, even though He proved His authority by many signs and wonders. So far did their rejection of Him carry them that, as Peter said, they slew a righteous and a just One, preferring a murderer to be granted to them. The circumstances of that awful crucifixion are recorded in the gospel narratives, how that after being betrayed by one of His disciples He was subjected to several mock trials, finally being condemned to be crucified upon a false charge. We quoted a little while ago a promise made in Eden that Eve's seed should bruise the head of the serpent's seed after being bruised in the heel by it. When Christ died upon the cross, He was bruised in the heel by sin, the serpent's seed. The other part of the promise is yet to be fulfilled. Jesus died and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; but because of His life of perfect righteousness, though held by the grave for three days, He was not allowed to remain therein, for God could not suffer His Holy One to see corruption. Christ rose from the dead and was in the company of His disciples for forty days, comforting them, and giving them fuller assurance that He was in reality the One of promise—Israel's Saviour. Then, commanding them to preach the gospel to all nations, He was received up from their presence, from the summit of the Mount of Olives, to the right hand of His Father in heaven, where He now performs the second part of His work as Jesus Christ the Priest, and awaits the time for His return as King.

Like as the high-priest of the Mosaic dispensation entered into the holy place once a year to bear the sins of the people, and make intercession for them to the Lord; so Jesus is now entered into the most holy place where the Lord God Himself dwells, and is now continually mediating for the sins of His people. Another type also exists between the Levitical high-priesthood and the priesthood of Christ. After the intercession, the high-priest came out and pronounced a blessing on the people. Christ has not yet come to bless His people, those for whom He is interceding, but will do so before long. The time when He comes to perform the work of blessing will also be the time of the restitution of all things spoken of by Peter; and then He will perform the third office in the description already prophetically given of Him.

Jesus Christ the King. This is the fulfilment of that part of the covenant made with David which says that his kingdom shall be established forever. Jesus Christ a King! Yes, even before His birth the angel Gabriel, when announcing to Mary that she should be the mother of Jesus, said also that He should be great and should be called the Son of the Highest; and that the Lord should give unto Him the throne of His father David, and on it He should reign forever. As a beautiful hymn expresses it, He was "born a Child and yet a King." His preaching of the gospel commenced when He was thirty years of age, and lasted more than three years. During that time He tried to convince the children of Israel of His kingly right. His disciples believed Him, or rather eleven of them did; and when they were assembled on Mount Olivet to witness His departure, some of them asked Him if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel. He did not tell them that it was a vain hope they had. No! He told them that they were not permitted to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. They knew not the exact time of Israel's restoration, neither do we know now. But there are many things in connection with the words of the prophets, of Christ and of the apostles, which indicate that we are near the day. Many things have been fulfilled, and therefore give us full assurance that the remaining portion will be. It is often pointed out as a wonderful fulfilment of prophecy that in answer to the words of the 16th chapter of Revelation, which declares that the great river Euphrates shall be dried up, the Turkish Empire, holding sway over the territory through which the Euphrates flows, has for the whole of the past century been gradually but surely growing weaker as a nation; in fact, it is today but

a shadow of its former greatness. This is one of the events connected with the pouring-out of the sixth vial going on at the same time as three frog-like spirits are stirring up the nations to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. While these two things are going on, the nations preparing for a great war and Turkey's power gradually drying up, there is another event said to come to pass—the advent of Christ; for He, the speaker to John, said, "Behold, I come quickly"; "Behold, I come as a thief."

This is but one of the many signs by which we are given to know that we are in the vicinity of the second advent. Another is the state of affairs in Russia. All the nations seem to be doing their own will, acting as forced by natural circumstances, and ministering to their own temporal aggrandizement. But as Israel's political affairs were watched over by God, so we must remember that, as Solomon says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will," in order to work out His own purpose. So Russia has a longing to possess the land of Palestine, and is making every move she can to compass that end. The Jews are also being slowly regathered to their own land, in answer to many prophecies which say that their captivity shall be turned again. The 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy tell of the designs of Russia upon the Holy Land, just as the Jews are beginning to be at ease there. Under the names of Gog and Magog the prophet says that she is to think an evil thought, and with other peoples is to go to the Holy Land to take a spoil and a prey. But Russia meets with opposition from another power called Tarshish (or Britain). Ezekiel speaks of the great conflict that shall ensue; that the sixth part only of the invading host shall be left and turned back; that all her power shall be broken; and that Israel, having been punished for her many sins, shall be restored to divine favor.

The 3rd chapter of Joel and the 14th of Zechariah tell us that not only Russia, but all nations, shall be gathered against Jerusalem to battle when Israel shall be brought back from captivity among the gentiles, and that in the Valley of Jehoshaphat shall be fought that great battle of the day of God Almighty for which the nations are preparing during the drying-up of the Turkish power.

Were ever such preparations for war being made before? They are greater than those which preceded the Great War of 1914-18. The great statesmen and military and naval leaders of the world know that ere long another greater war than the last must break

out, and they are doing their best to try to ward it off. The whole world is in a state of excitement, not knowing what shall be next, and men's hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming to pass; but there are few who are looking for these things as the fulfilment of long-uttered prophecies and as preparatory to that age of supreme blessing which shall be the consummation of the purpose of God throughout the ages. Just picture, then, the scene in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, called also the Valley of Decision on account of God's pleading there for His people; all nations gathered there to battle; Jerusalem the subject of yet another siege, greater than any it has yet undergone; half the city going forth into captivity and the remainder just on the point of despair; when lo, across the valley, on the sacred Mount of Olives, He whose feet long ago trod its sides in the silence of the night, again appears as the Saviour of the city. The war-engines, the guns, and the cannon of the assembled hosts will all be of no avail; for then shall the Lord go forth and fight for His people. His all-powerful arm shall be extended for their deliverance, and He whom once their fathers rejected, and whom they have spurned, shall be admitted to be the only source of help—the Messiah indeed, as He proclaimed Himself before. Then shall be a scene which reminds us of the meeting of Joseph and his brethren, when he revealed himself to them. Joseph's brethren wept; and the Jews, says Zechariah, shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as for an only son. There will be no room for saying then that He is a blasphemer. If they would not believe His works when on earth before, they will then have seen a more powerful manifestation of His supernatural might and title—one which none can gainsay. It follows also that if all nations are gathered to this great and mighty destruction, all their power will be broken, and nationally they shall exist no more. They will have to bow to Him who shall then have proved His power by delivering Israel's children. The monarchs shall all lay their crowns at His feet, and as Zechariah again says, "The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one" (Zechariah 14:9).

When that universal dominion shall be established; when all existing governments shall have been overthrown; when Jesus shall have asserted His rights by that wonderful manifestation of power; then shall those who are His chosen and faithful ones, live and reign with Him. "Behold," says Isaiah, "a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall execute judgment in the earth" (Isaiah

32:1). Glorious tidings are these! No king or queen, however good, can justly be said to reign in righteousness now. And as for princes, the same is true of them. Christ shall reign on Mount Zion and His righteous princes shall assist Him throughout the earth. They shall be made equal to the angels, partakers of the divine nature. Then no iniquity can flourish; no vice can raise its head above virtue. All evils shall gradually be wiped out. This age will be the realization of the promises made to the fathers. Israel will be reconstituted a nation. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be there. David will be there also to witness and to enjoy eternally the fulfilment of the covenant God made with him. This will be the salvation he longed for, and truly it will supersede the grandeur of the time of Solomon: that sinks into insignificance before this marvelous scene of glory.

During this period all are to know the Lord from the least even to the greatest, and they will require to be taught His ways. They shall seek to know God, and the saints shall be to them as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. At that time sin and death shall still exist, though in a mild form. A child shall die a hundred years old. Death and sin will not be abolished till the end of a millennium of this righteous rule. During that time the nations shall be instructed in righteousness and fitted for immortality as well; and after that all evil shall cease and death itself shall die, and the final state of things shall reflect in fulness the glory which is the Creator's due.

One other part of the covenant remains to be noticed. "He shall build a house for my name." Solomon built a temple for the Lord; so will Christ. The future temple will be far grander than Solomon's, and a description of it is given in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy. It is to be a house of prayer for all nations, the place in which Jehovah shall manifest His glory. It will be built in the form of a square, each side of which will be more than a mile in length. It will stand in a tract of country forty miles square, set apart for the priests and the temple and the King. Truly it will be a worthy fulfilment of that part of the covenant.

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed  
Great David's greater Son;  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun;

*The Covenant Made with David*

He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free;  
To take away transgression,  
To rule in equity.

“He comes with succor speedy  
To those who suffer wrong;  
To help the poor and needy,  
And bid the weak be strong;  
To give them songs for sighing,  
Their darkness turn to light,  
Who, languishing and dying,  
Are perishing from sight.

“Through changing generations,  
With justice, mercy, truth,  
While stars maintain their stations,  
And moons renew their youth,  
He shall come down like showers  
Upon the fruitful earth,  
And love, joy, hope, like flowers,  
Spring in His path to birth.

“Kings shall fall down before Him,  
And gold and incense bring;  
All nations shall adore Him,  
His praise all people sing.  
O'er every foe victorious,  
He on His throne shall rest,  
From age to age more glorious,  
All-blessing and all-blest.”

## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The evidence for the second coming of Christ is to be found both in the Old Testament and in the New. The Old Testament evidence consists in those prophetic declarations which Jews and Christians alike admit to refer to the Messiah; but the Jews do not recognize the Messiah's appearance in the first advent of Jesus, while the gentile Christians do. The predictions of the prophets concerning the Messiah embrace things that transpired when Jesus was here, and things that have not yet had any historical fulfilment, but are still matters of prophecy and await their realization at His second appearing. The Old Testament does not specifically mention a first and a second coming, but the fact that some predictions concerning Him have not yet been fulfilled, combined with the certainty that God's promises shall not fail, necessarily implies that He must come again.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of this kind is to be found in the 61st chapter of Isaiah, which Jesus read in the synagogue at Nazareth. He ceased reading at the place where that which related to His first coming ended and that which related to His second coming began. The prophecy as given by Isaiah is as follows: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:1-3).

Luke tells us in the 4th chapter of his gospel, verses 14-21: "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the regions round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his cus-

tom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Why did He break off reading just where He did, in the middle of the prophecy? Because that was all to which he could say "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had been anointed, at His baptism, with the Spirit of God, and in the power of that Spirit He was then doing just what Isaiah said He should. He was preaching the gospel to the poor; the rich would not listen to Him. He was healing the sick and comforting the broken-hearted; He raised several dead and restored them to their sorrowing relatives. He proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord, of which the writer to the Hebrews says, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness" (Hebrews 3:7, 8). He could not have said "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" if He had read the rest of the prophecy, for it speaks of a day which is still future, when He shall come again to fulfil that part of Isaiah's words: to bring the day of vengeance of God upon those who have rejected His offer of salvation, who have hardened their hearts in this day of opportunity; and to bring joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, praise for heaviness to those who have obeyed the gospel call and embraced the opportunity of salvation while it is still called "Today."

The prophecy of Daniel contains symbolic outlines of God's program with the nations, and even mentions time-periods relating to the duration of the kingdoms of men, which lead up to the coming again of Jesus and the establishment of the kingdom of God. (These will be dealt with in detail in No. 16 of this series on "Divine Teaching.") And all the prophets tell of the glory that shall pertain to the restored kingdom of Israel, which can only be realized at the second coming of Christ; it was not brought to Israel at His first appearing.

The New Testament evidence for the second coming of Christ is much more definite than is that in the Old Testament, and may be divided into three sections: 1. The testimony of Jesus Himself; 2. The testimony of angels; 3. The testimony of the apostles; and in this order we shall proceed to examine it.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

During His earthly ministry Jesus often referred to His second coming: sometimes in parable and at others by direct statement; and after His ascension to heaven He sent a message to the believers, the Revelation to John in Patmos, in which there are many references to His second coming. We will here consider the testimony He gave during His earthly ministry, and leave that in the Revelation till after we have considered the angelic and apostolic testimony.

The parable of the nobleman, recorded in Luke, 19th chapter, is one of the most easily understood of all the parables. It represents Jesus as a nobleman going into a far country to receive his kingdom and to return. He gives to his ten servants ten pounds with the injunction, "Occupy till I come," or as the Revised Version better renders it, "Trade ye herewith till I come." It depends upon the use they make of the pounds whether they receive his approval or reprobation on his return. Jesus has gone into the far country—He has ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, to await the time when His enemies shall be made His footstool (Matthew 22:44), and He is to return to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He has commissioned His servants to make known to others, during His absence, the truth concerning His second coming and the kingdom that He will then establish, that all may hear the message of the gospel and have the opportunity of sharing in the salvation to be revealed at His appearing. He will return shortly and call His servants before Him, that He may know how much each has gained by trading, how each has spread the good news of salvation and endeavored to turn sinners from the error of their way: to those who have been active in His service He will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"; to the slothful and indifferent He will say, "Depart from me."

Another parable is recorded in the 25th chapter of Matthew's gospel, the parable of the sheep and the goats. It follows Matthew's account of a parable very similar to Luke's parable of the nobleman, or the pounds. In this case a traveling man goes away and gives his servants varying numbers of talents, and on his return rewards

those who have been diligent and punishes the slothful. The application to Jesus and His second coming is similar to that in the parable of the pounds. Then Matthew says, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Jesus on many occasions spoke plainly of His second coming and the work that He shall then do. In Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." He followed this up by saying, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." This was in reference to the vision the three chief apostles had a few days later, when they saw Him transfigured; they beheld His glory as it will be manifested when He comes in His kingdom. He has not yet come, so it could not be that He meant they should live until He did come "personally" in His kingdom: they were permitted to have a "vision" of Jesus in the glory of His kingdom, and Peter later referred to this experience, saying, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (II Peter 1:16-18).

In Mark 8:38 Jesus says, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels"; and similarly in Luke 9:26: "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."

In Matthew 24:37-39 Jesus likens the day of His coming to the day of Noah's flood: "For as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were

before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe 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." "Of that day and hour," He said, "knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (verse 36), so He exhorted them to watch: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (verses 42-46). These words of Jesus were spoken in answer to a question which the disciples put to Him when He told them of the coming destruction of the temple: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (verse 3). He gave them signs of His coming which we shall consider in Nos. 15 and 16 of this series of pamphlets. He also said in the same talk with the disciples, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. . . . And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (verses 27, 50).

In Luke 12:35-40 Jesus says to the disciples, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching. . . . Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

In a conversation with the disciples just before His crucifixion Jesus referred to His departure and to His return. In John 14:2 He makes a wonderful statement, which unfortunately is often misunderstood. He says, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." The Father's house is a house of people, a household, a family: in that house there is room for many—a place for all who will accept the gospel call. He was going to heaven while this great house or family was being prepared, while believers were being called

into the family by the gospel. "I go to prepare a place for you." Had he stopped there, it might perhaps have been excusable for some to interpret the house as being heaven itself, instead of a household or family: if Jesus were going to heaven to remain there forever, that might also make such a view excusable; but Jesus has only gone to heaven to await the time when His enemies shall be made His footstool. Then He will return to set up His kingdom on earth, and then will He manifest to the world that "house," that "household," that family—the "Father's house," which has been in preparation during His absence; they will be associated with Him in that kingdom's government. So he added the clear, definite statement, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (verse 3). When He comes He will take to Himself those who are His: they will be with Him where He then is—on earth; they will be with Him in His kingdom.

Other testimonies of Jesus to His second coming might be given, but we must pass on to the angelic and apostolic testimony.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE ANGELS

This is to be found in the first chapter of The Acts of the Apostles. It was just as Jesus was about to leave the disciples and ascend into heaven. The disciples, seeing Him raised from the dead, had begun to hope for the immediate restoration of the kingdom of which He was to be the King, and asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" His reply did not indicate that their hope was a mistaken one, but that the time of the fulfilment was not then to be known by them: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." They were to be witnesses for Him in all the earth. He was immediately received up from them into heaven, and as they looked wonderingly up, as He departed, there appeared to them two men in white apparel—angelic beings with a message direct from the God of heaven—who said to them, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:6-12). Words could not be plainer. It is difficult to imagine that a sincere believer in Christ could hesitate or refuse, even on the evidence of this passage alone, to admit the absolute certainty of His second coming. This angelic promise was sufficient to energize the disciples for their life's work in the

service of their Master, witnessing for Him. It nerved them for the endurance of terrible persecutions, and in most cases even martyrdom itself. They evidently had no uncertain opinion concerning the coming again of their Master, and their testimony, which we will now proceed to examine, is rendered of the utmost value by the fact that they consecrated the whole of their lives to the proclamation of the Lord's return, and the glorious things which were absolutely dependent upon it.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES

This apostolic testimony is contained in *The Acts of the Apostles* and in the various letters which the apostles wrote. After the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, the people were in great astonishment, and Peter said that the miracle had been performed through the name of Jesus Christ, whom they had put to death, but whom God had raised from the dead; and, continuing, he exhorted them, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (*Acts* 3: 19-21). The "until" signifies an ending of the period during which Jesus shall remain in the heavens.

The same apostle, toward the close of his career, wrote his second epistle, in the first chapter of which he refers to the second coming of Christ, "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 16), and refers, as previously quoted, to the experience which he and James and John had on the Mount of Transfiguration. In the last chapter of the epistle he refers to a time when some should question the second coming because of the apparent delay: "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" (*II Peter* 3: 3, 4). The delay, however, is only apparent. In like manner there were scoffers who taunted Noah about the flood he said was coming. He had long preached and the flood did not quickly come; but it did come at last, and all the scoffers perished. So now, says Peter, the apparent delay in the Lord's coming is not an evidence of slackness on the part of

God: it is the outcome of the divine mercy "that all should come to repentance." While the final judgments are delayed, the door of opportunity for salvation remains open and it is not God's will that any should perish. But the day of opportunity will have an end, and "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering." God's quickly is not man's quickly; for a thousand years are as one day with Him (verses 8-10).

The apostle James says, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7, 8).

John many times refers in the Revelation to the coming of Christ, but these references will be quoted a little later. He also refers to it in his first epistle: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

Thus we have the testimony of the three disciples who were with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and who there beheld a manifestation of the glory which shall be His in His kingdom. They were privileged to behold "the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

In addition to this testimony of the personal companions of Jesus during His ministry of preaching, there is the abundant testimony of the apostle Paul, who, though he may have seen and heard Jesus when He was on earth, was not a disciple or even a believer in His word, but was one of His most zealous persecutors until some little period of the apostolic ministry had elapsed. He was a most zealous Pharisee, a devout and earnest worshiper of God according to the traditions of the elders, and considered that he was doing God service in endeavoring to suppress the growing band of followers of Jesus. Suddenly, as he was on his most important errand of persecution, just as he neared Damascus with his company of soldiers, planning to take to prison or death all who believed in Jesus in that city, he was arrested by the brilliancy of a light from heaven, brighter than the noonday sun, and heard a voice calling unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "Who art thou, Lord?" was his reply. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9:1-5). Such an event was sufficient to convince Saul entirely of the error of the ways which he was treading, and to turn him so completely round that he

became a preacher of the very faith which he beforetime persecuted, and in the very city where he had gone to persecute. That was a genuine conversion: there was no half-measure about that; therefore the testimony of such a man must be of inestimable value. It was no hallucination that caused Saul (as his name was then, but afterward spoken of as Paul) to give up everything for Christ, to renounce all the prospects of advancement that lay most surely before him in the cause of Phariseism, that he might serve Jesus who appeared to him. Nothing but the sincerest and strongest conviction could work such a marvelous change.

The evidence for the second coming of Christ furnished by the apostle Paul is to be found in almost all his epistles, and they constitute a considerable portion of the New Testament. His writings prove that he was animated by the same hope that sustained the other apostles—the hope of seeing on earth again the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been said by some that the apostle looked for the second coming of Christ in the early part of his missionary life, but that later he altered his views on the matter and had given up the hope of any personal coming. This we shall find to be incorrect, for quotations from his earliest writings and from some of his latest, show that his hope had not changed.

The earliest letters of the apostle are generally supposed to be the two to the Thessalonians. In each of these there are references to the second coming: in fact, every chapter of each epistle contains something about it. In the first chapter of the first epistle he commends them, saying, "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus" (verses 9, 10). In the second chapter he says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (verse 19). In the third chapter he says, "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (verses 12, 13). In chapter 4, where the apostle comforts the Thessalonians concerning some who had died: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that

we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (that is, precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (verses 13-16). And in the fifth chapter: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 23).

Such plain statements as these, especially those quoted from the first and fourth chapters, must surely convey to any honest mind the idea of a literal personal coming, and it is a matter for wonder that any Christians should be found who do not believe in the personal return of Jesus.

The references to the second coming which are to be found in the second letter to the Thessalonians are as follows: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7, 8). "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand" (2:1, 2). He proceeds to show that before that day arrives a certain man of sin shall be revealed, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (verse 8). Again he prays, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (3:5).

In disproof of the view that the apostle changed his ideas toward the end of his ministry, there is testimony to be found in one of the last letters he wrote, the second to Timothy, just before his martyrdom at Rome. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. . . . I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 3:1-8).

In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul says, "That ye come behind in no gift: waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7). In speaking of the Lord's Supper he says, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (11:26). And in speaking of the resurrection of Jesus

and the believers, he says, "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (15:23).

In writing to the Philippians the apostle says, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself (3:20, 21). Again he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (4:5).

To the Colossians Paul wrote: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (3:4).

In his first letter to Timothy the apostle Paul charged him thus: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14).

To Titus, the apostle Paul wrote: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2:11-13).

Such is the direct testimony of the apostle to the gentiles, concerning the second coming of Christ. Besides this, there is much in his writings that has to do with His coming, although referring rather to the work that is before Him when He comes, than to the fact that He will come.

Some consider that Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews; if so, then any references to the second coming that are contained in that letter must be added to the undoubted testimony already quoted. Others do not believe Paul wrote that letter, and there have been several other suggestions as to its authorship; but since a doubt exists and no one knows for certain who did write it, we are safe in referring to the author as the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. Whoever he was, he had much to say of the work of Jesus when He returns, especially as a Priest; but he also makes some definite references to the fact that He is coming. In contrasting Him with the angels and declaring His superiority over them, he says, "To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (1:13). He says that

God has prophetically, and in His purpose, put all things under Jesus, but he says, "We see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little (or, for a little while) lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (2:8, 9). This is like the quotation we made from Isaiah 61 and Luke 4, where Jesus stopped reading at the place where that which was fulfilled at His first coming ended. Here the writer says we see Jesus crowned with honor and glory as the Saviour of men; but we do not yet see all things put under Him; that will be at His second appearing. Peter also says that the prophets searched diligently for the meaning of their prophecies, "searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:10, 11); and he exhorts his readers to "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (verse 13). The sufferings were experienced; the glory as a Saviour has been attained; but the glory as a King awaits its realization at His second coming.

The writer to the Hebrews, in his 9th chapter, comparing the high-priest on the Day of Atonement as a type with Jesus the Antitype, says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin (or, a sin offering) unto salvation" (9:27, 28).

Jude refers to a prophecy by Enoch, which is not elsewhere recorded, in which he says "The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints."

This completes the apostolic testimony, which is very clear and very emphatic in declaring that Jesus is coming again. We will now look at the references to the second coming as contained in the book of Revelation, the last message that Jesus sent to His church, through John in the island of Patmos, something like sixty years after He had ascended to heaven: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Revelation 1:1). The revelation is opened with a salutation "from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the

earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds: and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (verses 5-7).

The promises to the overcomers in the seven churches, contained in the messages of the second and third chapters, will be fulfilled at His second coming; and in one instance He says, "Behold, I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (3:11).

Many of the things seen in vision by John have to do with Jesus returned and in His kingdom: He must return before they can become accomplished facts; such, for instance as Revelation 11:15, where at the sounding of the seventh trumpet it says, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

In the sixteenth chapter, along with the drying up of the river Euphrates and the preparations for the great war under the pouring out of the sixth vial, it is plainly stated, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth" (verse 15).

In the seventeenth and nineteenth chapters Jesus is pictured with some called and chosen and faithful companions, and at war with some of the sinful armies of the earth. For this He must needs have returned to the earth, and the conflicts are preliminary to His putting down all forms of regal and ecclesiastical rule and authority.

In the nineteenth chapter He is also represented as having returned to take to Himself His bride, the church, that it may be associated with Him in His future operations of conquest and sovereignty.

And in the last chapter, the twenty-second, He says, "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (verse 7); and again, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (verse 12); and again, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly" (verse 20); and John says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Oh, blessed hope! with this elate,  
Let not our hearts be desolate,  
But strong in faith, in patience wait.  
Until He come."

To go again to the Old Testament, there is a remarkable prophecy of the second coming of Christ, in fact, two predictions, in the book of Daniel; in the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's wonderful dream and the visions which Daniel had of four great beasts, and of two other beasts.

Daniel lived when the Babylonian Empire was at its zenith, under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, and to that king he said, "Thou art this head of gold" (Daniel 2:38). Nebuchadnezzar thought his kingdom would last forever, but Daniel continued, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; 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" (verses 39-45).

Daniel had a vision of four beasts that strove upon the great sea—a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a strong and terrible unnamed beast. This last had 10 horns, and another rose before which three of the first fell. Then the judgment sat, and One was brought to the Ancient of Days to receive the throne of universal dominion.

In another vision Daniel saw a ram and a he-goat. This is recorded in the 8th chapter. The ram corresponds to the bear of the former vision and the goat to the leopard. In this connection the interpretation of the second and third symbols is given. The ram (and therefore the bear and the silver) stood for the Medo-Persians, who brought the Babylonian kingdom to an end; and the goat (and

therefore the leopard and the silver) stood for Greece, which succeeded the Medo-Persian Empire. The fourth, though not mentioned by name, can be none other than that great and mighty empire which succeeded Greece, namely, the Roman.

This, however, was no more to be a perpetual kingdom than its predecessors. It was first to be divided into two, and later into ten: and surely the broken state of the Roman Empire has been and still is evident in the many nations which exist where once that mighty empire stretched, and of which nations some are strong and some are weak.

Then, another great empire was to succeed, and as truly as the other parts of the prophecy have been fulfilled, this will be. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands is the divinely begotten Son of God, Jesus the Christ, who shall descend from heaven at the appointed time and smite the image of human government, breaking it to pieces which shall be carried away as the wind carries away the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and Christ's dominion shall extend from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. He will receive from God, the Ancient of Days, the authority in that universal empire which is to follow the overthrow of all human governments, and the kingdoms of this world "become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

We therefore pray, as Jesus taught His disciples, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," and we repeat John's closing words in the Revelation, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Christ is coming; let creation  
Bid her groans and travail cease;  
Let the glorious proclamation  
Hope restore and faith increase.  
Christ is coming!  
Come thou blessed Prince of Peace.

"Earth can now but tell the story  
Of Thy bitter cross and pain;  
She shall yet behold Thy glory,  
When Thou comest back to reign.  
Christ is coming!  
Let each heart repeat the strain.

*The Second Coming of Christ*

“Long Thy exiles have been pining,  
Far from rest and home and Thee;  
But, in heavenly vesture shining,  
Soon they shall Thy glory see.  
Christ is coming!  
Haste the joyous jubilee.

“With that blessed hope before us,  
Let no harp remain unstrung;  
Let the mighty advent chorus  
Onward roll from tongue to tongue  
Christ is coming!  
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come.”

## THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

When the apostle Paul had reached Rome at the end of a very tempestuous journey, and, though a prisoner, had been allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier for a guard, it came to pass, that after three days he called the chief Jews of the city together and thus addressed them: "Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had anything to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you; because that for *the hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain. And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets from morning till evening" (Acts 28:17-23); and the chapter closes with this declaration: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (verses 30, 31).

Paul said, "For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." He preached about Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. Therefore the hope of Israel is intimately connected with the gospel of the kingdom of God. Jesus had preached that gospel about thirty to forty years previously; and shortly after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, Saul (later called Paul), a very zealous Pharisee, was in the forefront of the persecution of those who believed the gospel of Jesus, and he made havoc with the churches of believers. But the risen Jesus appeared to him and con-

vinced him of the mistake he was making, and even selected him, after his conversion, as the chief of the apostles, and especially as the apostle to the gentiles. But Paul never forgot the Jews. He was a Jew himself, and wherever he went preaching, he always went first to the Jews, generally to the synagogue, and gave them his message; and when, as usually happened, they rejected his preaching, he turned to the gentiles.

At that time the Jews were subject to Rome, and they very much disliked their position. They remembered the words of their prophets, that God would send them a deliverer, a Messiah, and they were continually hoping he would come and restore their kingdom which had for several centuries been overturned. But when Jesus appeared and preached the gospel of the kingdom, they would not receive Him: they were looking for a mighty prince who should subdue all their enemies and exalt them into a glorious and powerful nation; they had no place in their hopes for a suffering Saviour, even though Isaiah and the Psalmist had so clearly foretold that there must be suffering before the glory. Instead of believing the preaching of Jesus, they caused Him to be put to death as a blasphemer and a traitor. God raised Him from the dead to die no more, and He ascended to heaven, to await at the Father's right hand, the time when His enemies should be made His footstool, and He should be King in the kingdom of which He had preached, which would be the restored kingdom of Israel, together with all the kingdoms of the earth united with it into a universal empire.

So when Jesus had personally appeared to Saul (Paul) and converted him, he became just as zealous in proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and that Jesus was the Messiah, the future King, as he had been previously in persecuting the believers in Jesus. In his defense before Agrippa he recounted his conversion and said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests: and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11). Then follows the story of his conversion on the way to Damascus, where he began to preach the faith that he had formerly persecuted with so much vigor. And he says, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, wit-

nessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the gentiles" (verses 22, 23).

He had great zeal, but at first he was mistaken: he did not know the truth: after he had learned the truth, he was just as zealous for Christ as he had been formerly against him. Yea, he even had to suffer as he had made Christ's friends suffer before: so that at Rome he said that "for the hope of Israel" he was bound with the chain. In his second letter to the Corinthians he catalogs his sufferings for Christ's sake and Israel's hope, showing that he endured more for his faith than any of his enemies did for theirs: "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (II Corinthians 1:23-28). What a list! And that does not include his journey to Rome and imprisonment there, and at last a martyr's death—and all "for the hope of Israel"—all because he would persuade both Jew and gentile that Israel's kingdom would be restored and that Jesus Christ would be the King.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, the fulness of God's wrath had not been poured upon the Jewish people. Shortly after Paul's death, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people scattered into all countries of the earth; and still they have the hope of restoration to their own land, and, as we shall see later, are endeavoring to obtain a national home in the land of their fathers, through the Zionist Movement and with the aid of Britain and other great powers.

In the tenth chapter of the letter to the Romans Paul wrote: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness

of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:1-4). He remembered the time when he was just as zealously mistaken as they were, and he is anxious for them to be converted to the truth as he had been. He continues in the eleventh chapter: "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew" (Romans 11:1, 2). As far back as the days of Moses, when God said through him that if the people would not hearken to Him and keep His commandments He would scatter them among the nations and bring upon them all kinds of evil because of their transgressions, He also said, "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments and because their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God. But I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 26:43-45); and a few verses preceding: "And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquity of their fathers shall they pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember: and I will remember the land" (verses 38-42).

Both in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 the punishments that should follow disobedience of God's law were made clear to the children of Israel. It turned out that they did disobey God's law, and though He sent many prophets to them, begging them to repent and do right, they would not, so that eventually the predicted punishments were poured out upon them. They were first taken to

Assyria and Babylon for a while, and after a few years of captivity some were allowed to return to their land and rebuild their city and temple, but the kingdom was never restored. They were subject to foreign powers, Syria, Egypt, Greece and Rome. When Jesus was on earth the Romans had dominion over them, and the people had not as a nation become righteous in the eyes of God; they even put to death God's Son, and so Paul said that wrath had come upon them to the uttermost (I Thessalonians 2:26). Jesus knew that the city would be destroyed and the people scattered, and that the gentiles would have sway over them, and He lamented over the city and the people as He thought of what was in store for them: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:37-39). He further said, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. . . . For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).

In 69-70 A. D. the Roman armies under Vespasian and Titus marched triumphantly through the Holy Land and reached Jerusalem just before Passover of the latter year. They destroyed the city, burned the temple, slew more than a million Jews and sold nearly a hundred thousand for slaves or reserved them for gladiatorial shows. The prediction of Jesus was fulfilled in all its horror, and the wrath came upon them to the uttermost, only three or four years after the martyrdom of Paul. Since then the Jews have been scattered among all nations and have been subjected to persecution and derision as Moses and the other prophets often said they should be. And with it all, they have not been exterminated; this, too, was foretold, because God purposed to restore them as a nation to their own land after a long period of captivity and suffering. "But fear

not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord; for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished" (Jeremiah 46:27, 28); and in similar language the same prophet says at 30:7-11: "Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord: neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. . . . I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after" (Jeremiah 30:7-11, 16).

In these predictions it is said that God will bring blessings to Israel, the seed of Jacob, after He has punished them as a nation for their sins. In the quotation from Leviticus 26 this blessing is predicated upon the repentance of the people and their acknowledgment that the evil God has brought upon them is for their iniquity. It is now nearly two thousand years since they crucified Jesus, thereby filling full the cup of their iniquity; soon after that they were scattered among the nations; their descendants are still in unbelief of Jesus as their Messiah, and it does not seem as if they will of their own accord ever come to recognize Him as such. But God's purpose does not wait on their "voluntary" repentance and acknowledgment of Jesus; they will be "compelled" ere long so to do; even this has been foretold. God has said, that it is not for their sakes, as individuals, but for the sake of His own name and the promises He has made to the fathers of the Israelitish people,

that He will bring all the blessings upon them; also that at that time they shall come to see all His dealings with them in their true light: "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel" (Ezekiel 36:22-32).

When God delivers His people from the lands of their enemies and brings them again into their own land, they will recognize in Jesus returned to earth, who has delivered their city and their land from the hosts of the nations gathered against them, the Messiah whom their fathers rejected, and Zechariah says, "It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son" (Jeremiah 12:9, 10).

A vail of darkness is spread over Israel and the nations; it shall be taken away and they shall see God's purpose clearly in the day

when He delivers His people from the lands of their enemies. Jeremiah said, "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all" (Jeremiah 31:10-12). Again, Jeremiah, in the sixteenth chapter of his prophecy, distinctly tells of God's purpose first to punish the nation for its sins and then to regather it: "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them! and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (verses 14, 15). The exodus from Egypt was wonderful, and God many times prefaced His messages to the prophets with "Thus saith the Lord that brought thee out of the land of Egypt." That was to them the beginning of their national existence. But the future exodus will be so much greater and more glorious, the exodus from all the nations of the dispersion, that the Egyptian exodus will fall into insignificance before it. And to show how complete it will be, God says, "I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things" (verses 16-18). Looking over the day of dispersion and suffering to the day of regathering, Jeremiah exclaims, "O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (verse 19).

The gentiles have long had this misunderstanding of God's purpose. They have thought that God has cast off His people forever

and has transferred the blessings promised to Israel to the gentile Christian church. It is not so. God has not cast off His people. He has turned His face away from them for a time, but He will turn toward them again. As He says through Hosea, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him" (Hosea 14:4). Then the gentiles will see the mistake they and their fathers have been making for so long, and they will be converted to a right apprehension of God's plans, at the same time that the people of Israel are.

Jeremiah again says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land" (Jeremiah 23:5-8).

Let us go again now to the eleventh chapter of Romans and continue Paul's argument. He says, "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy" (verse 11). Hitherto God's special favors and glorious promises had been for the Israelitish people only; but now, since their rejection of the Messiah, the gentiles have been invited to a participation on equal terms with the Jews in the promised blessings. There is now no distinction between Jew and Greek, but all must come by the same way of faith and obedience; they must all come through Jesus Christ, for His is "the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12); and "God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all" (Romans 11:32). The gentiles, however, must not be proud against the Jews, and imagine that God has cast them off forever; God is able and willing to restore them again as Paul shows by a very beautiful simile: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle to the gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and

might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Romans 11:12-28).

All Jews are Israelites, but not all Israelites are Jews. It is necessary to keep this distinction in mind, for some prophecies are to Israel, meaning Israelites only, or the members of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, and others are to Judah, or the Jews, of the two-tribed kingdom of Judah. But there are some prophecies that relate to the whole house of Israel, which include both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, for they are all Israelites in that they are descendants of Jacob or Israel. The kingdom was the kingdom of Israel, embracing all twelve tribes, until its division after the reign of Solomon into the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam, consisting of ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah under Rehoboam, having only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Israel was carried to Assyria, though some of the people remained in the land, and of

those who remained some mingled with the foreigners sent by the king of Assyria to people the land; from them came the Samaritans. Judah was carried captive to Babylon, and seventy years later some of these Babylonian captives returned to Jerusalem. We have no record of the ten tribes returning to their land, and there has been much speculation as to the present location and identity of their descendants. Though some of the marks of identity, which some think they see in the British speaking people of England and America, seem plausible, there is very grave doubt as to this being the correct identification; of other suggestions there is far less likelihood of accuracy. We have not space here to enter into a discussion of this subject, but while we do not know where they are, God does, and at the proper time He will reveal them, for it is very clear that the restoration will be of the whole house of Israel, that is, both Israel and Judah, the ten-tribed kingdom and the two-tribed kingdom shall be reunited.

The opening salutation of the epistle of James is, "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are scattered abroad, greeting" (James 1:1). He knew that both kingdoms were to be included in the future restoration. This is made very clear in the prophecy of Ezekiel. Speaking of the glorious restoration, in chapter 36, from which we have already made citation, Ezekiel says, "O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit; and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. . . . Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it" (verses 8-11; 33-36).

In the following chapter there are two very remarkable narratives; the first is of a vision that Ezekiel had, the vision of the valley full of dry bones; and the second is the account of how Ezekiel, as a man of sign, had to do something to illustrate his preaching—to unite two sticks. In the vision of the dry bones Ezekiel says the hand of the Lord carried him in the spirit of the Lord and set him down in the midst of a valley, full of dry bones, very many and very dry. He was told to prophesy upon those bones and say, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you and ye shall live: and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ezekiel did as he was commanded, and the bones came together and the sinews and flesh and skin covered them; but they had no breath. He was told to prophesy unto the wind and tell it to come upon these slain that they might live. He did so, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood up upon their feet, a very great army. And the Lord gave him the explanation of the vision in these words: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it" (verses 1-14).

The dry bones in the valley represented the children of Israel—the whole house of Israel—politically buried among the nations. God intends to take them out of their national graves and bring them to their own land, and He knows just where the two-tribed kingdom of Judah and the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel are politically buried today, and when the time is ripe He will bring them forth to the land of Israel. There they will be reunited into one kingdom, as the next part of the chapter says: "The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel

his companions: and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant (or, my beloved servant) shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever; and my servant David (or my beloved servant) shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen (the nations, the gentiles) shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore" (Ezekiel 37:15-28).

Jeremiah speaks of the same time in his third chapter, and he likewise shows that both Israel and Judah shall be regathered to their own land: "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come

together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jeremiah 3:17, 18).

It is very evident, then, that God knows where the lost ten tribes are and will at the proper time bring them with the two tribes of Judah and make them one nation again in their own land. This restoration is the hope of Israel for which Paul said he was bound with a chain at Rome. This is the restoration of which the disciples asked Jesus if He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel. This is the restoration for which the Jews of today are looking, though they do not yet recognize that Jesus is their Messiah, and for which they are doing a preliminary and a preparatory work in the Zionist Movement.

The prophets gave many glowing descriptions of the time when Israel and Judah shall be restored. Space does not permit us here to quote more than an insignificant fraction of their testimony. Isaiah says, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the land of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married" (Isaiah 62:1-4).

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . . And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. . . . The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion

of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations" (Isaiah 60: 1-15).

"Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. . . . Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. . . . Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me" (Isaiah 49: 7-23).

And again, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. . . . No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee, in judg-

ment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 54: 11-17).

Oh! Why should Israel's sons, once blessed,  
Still roam the scorning world around,  
Disowned by God, by man oppressed,  
Cast out from Zion's hallowed ground?

O God of Judah, view their race  
Back to Thy fold the wanderers bring;  
Bring them to see Thy glorious face  
In Jesus Christ, their promised King.

The veil of darkness rend in twain,  
Which hides their eyes from glorious light;  
The severed olive branch again  
Firm to the parent stock unite.

O haste the promised day, O Lord,  
When Jew and Greek one prayer shall pour;  
With eager feet one temple crowd,  
One God with grateful praise adore.

## PROPHETIC TIMES AND SEASONS, THE GREAT TIME OF TROUBLE, AND THE GLORIOUS AGE TO COME

A large proportion of the Bible is prophetic; that is, it foretells things that are to happen later. The great end of all prophecy is that glorious age to come, when the kingdom of God will be re-established on earth for the subjugation of every enemy of God and righteousness, the extirpation of every evil, and the introduction of the all-perfect age when God shall be all in all.

Many of the prophecies have time-periods either mentioned in definite terms or expressed in symbols; and the working-out of the divine prophecies in the history of nations may conveniently be divided into several distinct epochs, or ages.

### TIMES AND SEASONS

Jesus spoke of times and seasons at His last interview with the disciples, just before He ascended to heaven from the summit of the Mount of Olives: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). God had laid out the ages according to a definite plan and He had made revelation of that plan through the prophets, sometimes with time-measurements. The prophets, speaking by divine inspiration, were the mouthpieces of God, but often they did not comprehend the full significance of the messages they bore. Therefore Peter says, "The prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (I Peter 1:10-12).

This same Peter, in his second letter, after recounting the experiences of himself and two other disciples on the Mount of Trans-

figuration, says concerning prophecy, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:19-21).

Instead of "a more sure word of prophecy," the Revised Version rendering of this passage is "the word of prophecy made more sure." This adds emphasis to the thought. Some of the prophecies, those concerning the sufferings of Christ, and others, had already been fulfilled; they therefore gave assurance that the things remaining in the prophecies would in due time also be fulfilled—by them the word of prophecy had been made more sure.

A specific illustration of Peter's statement that the prophets inquired diligently concerning the meaning of their messages is contained in the 12th chapter of Daniel. Here the prophet had been told of a time of trouble such as never before had been, and that at that time a great prince should arise to deliver Daniel's people. It even stated that at that time the resurrection of the dead should take place and that some should arise to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. The instructions to Daniel were, "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" (Daniel 12:1-4).

Daniel was very interested in the words of the divine messenger, but did not fully understand them; so he "enquired diligently," as Peter says, concerning their meaning. He said, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" When the messenger told him that it should be "for a time, times and a half," and then "all these things shall be finished," Daniel says, "I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" And he said, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Daniel 12:6-12).

"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." It has been suggested that these last clauses refer to the present time, when travel of various kinds is very extensive, and many run to and fro by road and sea and air; that there has been a tremendous increase of knowledge in many branches of human study, especially in science; and that these are the things contemplated in the prophecy. I do not think so. I prefer the idea suggested by the French translation, which rendered into English, is, "Many shall go through *it*," and knowledge, that is, knowledge of it, the sealed book, shall be increased; especially since it says that "none of the wicked shall understand." It is quite true that many do run to and fro in the earth; it is also quite true that there has been a great increase in general knowledge; but in these cases the wicked have as great or an even greater share than the wise, or the righteous. What a beautiful thought it is, that in the "time of the end" many diligent Bible students should go through it, through the book of Daniel's prophecy, and should study it intensively, and in the light of fulfillments be able to understand what Daniel was not permitted to. Peter says it was not for them to understand all their prophecies; but they were ministering to us of later generations, who should at the proper time understand what were mysteries in their day.

Daniel was assured that in the end of the days, at the expiration of the periods named as "a time, times and a half," and "a thousand two hundred and sixty days," and "the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days," he should stand in his lot, or arise to his inheritance; he should be among those who would come forth from their sleep in the dust of the earth, and awake to everlasting life. We shall return later to a detailed consideration of this 12th chapter in the light of present-day developments.

Sometimes events were prophesied with definite periods: at others with periods hidden in symbol. One of the plain prophecies is referred to by Daniel in his 9th chapter: "In the first year of his (that is, Darius') reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem" (verse 2). So he prayed to God, confessing his own and the nation's sins, and requesting that favor be again shown to the city and the people. He was now an old man; he had been taken captive as a boy; he had never forsaken his God; and now he asks God to remember the city of Jerusalem and its people, and restore them according to the prophecy of Jeremiah. Here are

Jeremiah's words: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations" (Jeremiah 25:11, 12); and again, "Thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jeremiah 29:10); and in II Chronicles 36: 20, 21, it is said that after Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, and many of its people, "them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." Then the narrative continues that in the first year of his reign, Cyrus the Persian issued a decree permitting those who wished to return to Jerusalem, and many thousands did.

This is a remarkable illustration of historical fulfilment making the word of prophecy more sure. The destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was in 606 B.C., and the decree of Cyrus for the return of the captives was 536 B.C., just seventy years later.

It is a strange coincidence that in the same 9th chapter of Daniel, in answer to Daniel's petition, God sent him word of things that were to transpire, using the same number "seventy," but not with the same literal meaning as before. Here seventy weeks are to be counted from the rebuilding of Jerusalem: "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 the prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 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. 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 desolator" (Daniel 9:24-27). This could not possibly be seventy literal weeks—sixty-two and seven and one—or a little under a year and a half, for that would only reach a fraction of the way to Messiah the Prince and His cutting-off for iniquity and the bringing-in of everlasting righteousness. This seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days, reaches from the rebuilding of Jerusalem by decree of Artaxerxes, about 454 B.C., to the time of Jesus; and the Jews evidently had such an understanding of its time-expansion, for they were looking anxiously for the appearance of the Messiah, but failed to recognize Him in Jesus of Nazareth: 454 B.C., to 35 A.D., is 490 years.

#### THE PROPHETIC SCALE

The prophecy of the seventy weeks being fulfilled in seventy times seven, or four hundred and ninety years, gives us the key to the scale by which some, at any rate, of the prophetic times must be measured. We shall now proceed to substantiate this day-year principle by the examination of a period which is given in several different forms. It is the first of the three periods of Daniel 12, the time, times and a half. This we shall prove to be 1260 days, which on the principle of a day for a year represent 1260 years; the other two periods of Daniel 12 are 1290 days and 1335 days.

A time is that universal basis of measurement, a year, though the year has varied in different countries and ages: it is, anyway, the period of the earth's revolution around the sun, and if it has varied in length of days in some instances, there have been compensating calculations which have brought them to the equivalent of the exact measurement in varying cycles of years.

The current gentile or Christian year is  $365\frac{1}{4}$  days, with months varying from 28 to 31 days. This is subject to adjustment, having 365 days for three years and 366 for the fourth, or leap year; but this is not exactly the period of the earth's yearly revolution around the sun, and a further compensation has to be made every 100 years by the omission of the extra leap-year day: and even that is not omitted in years divisible by 400.

The Jewish year ordinarily consists of 12 months of 30 days, or 360 days in all. This is made even with the actual year by the insertion of a 13th month in certain years, called intercalary, over a cycle of 19 years.

The Mohammedan reckoning is of 12 months of  $29\frac{1}{2}$  days (alternating 29 and 30), making 354 days for the year, or 11 days

short of the solar or gentile calendar year. This Mohammedan year is fixed according to the recurrence of the new moon, and is therefore called a lunar year.

So we have gentile or solar years of  $365\frac{1}{4}$  days (365 and 366); Jewish calendar years of 360 or 390 days; and lunar or Mohammedan years of 354 days. In the Mohammedan calendar no provision is made for equalizing it with the solar in a cycle, and the years run right on with only 354 days; thus, dating from the year of Mahomet's flight, the Hegira, 622 A.D., 1335 such years expired during 1917, for they are equivalent to nearly 1295 solar years; this added to 622 gives 1917 A.D., or 1335 A.H. (anno hegirae). The significance of this will be considered later.

Seeing that the prophecies were given by Jewish prophets to Jewish people, it would seem perfectly natural that the principal time-reckoning would be Jewish also; therefore a time or year of 12 months would be 360 days; two times would be 720 days; half a time would be 180 days; and these added together make 1260 days. Measuring another way,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years is 42 months, and as each month has 30 days, the total is  $42 \times 30$ , or 1260 days. On the day-year principle this represents 1260 years of national history.

In further proof of the correctness of this system of reckoning, chapters 11, 12 and 13 of Revelation come to our aid. In chapter 11, verses 2 and 3, 42 months are shown to be the equivalent of 1260 days, for they are both given as measurements of the same event. John says, "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth"—42 months of 30 days each make 1260 days.

In chapter 12, a time, times, and a half are also shown to be equivalent to 1260 days: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven: and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which

was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days . . . .And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (Revelation 12:1-14). In the 13th chapter, at verse 5, mention is made that the power which the dragon gave to the beast was "to continue for forty and two months." So there can be no doubt as to the accuracy of this divine scale of prophetic measurement, and here again the verification of the prophecy by its fulfilment in history, as we shall see later in the consideration of specific prophecies, has made the word of prophecy more sure.

Not only in time-periods of prophecy has God used this scale of measurement, but there are two records which show that it is a general principle. The spies who went to Canaan were absent forty days, and when they returned with the majority evil report which terrified the people and made them unwilling to listen to the good report of the minority, God expressed His indignation by decreeing for the untrusting Israelites a period of wandering in the wilderness to permit all the rebels to die off; forty years they were to wander in the wilderness before entering the promised land: "But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until all your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years" (Numbers 14:32-34).

In the 4th chapter of Ezekiel the prophet is told to act as a man of sign to the people: "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year" (verses 4-6). These two illustrations cannot possibly be misunderstood.

## STUDYING AND WATCHING

Daniel was told that the vision was sealed till the time of the end; he was not permitted to understand it fully. Peter says the prophets searched diligently to ascertain the meaning of their messages, but were informed that they were ministering to later generations. Yet there are numerous statements in the sayings of Jesus and the writings of the apostles which show that it is the duty of all true believers to study the prophecies. Though they were not to be understood fully at the time they were given, they were to become known to God's servants in due season, even before their fulfilment, in many instances. Peter implies as much when he says concerning prophecy made more sure, "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (II Peter 1:19). The future is unknown to mortal men: it is absolutely dark: all the declarations of statesmen, politicians, and scholars, based on purely human speculation, are theories that may or may not turn out to be correct; but the divine predictions, based on an exact knowledge of the end even from the beginning, can shed a light on the darkness of the future and fill the heart of the believer with confident hope. God has spoken of a glorious day that is coming, after the dark night of human endeavor, and it is the prophecies that give indication of its approach—"Whereunto ye do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

In like manner Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thessalonians 5:1-5). Here the apostle emphasizes the fact that believers should study the prophecies that they may know just about where they are in the divine plan of the ages, and may watch for the great day of the Lord's coming and kingdom.

In Hebrews 10:23-25 the apostle exhorts believers to their duty in faithful watching: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some

is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." The only way they could see the day approaching was by keeping watch on the signs that had been given in the utterances of Jesus and the prophets.

In the 24th chapter of Matthew, the 13th of Mark, and the 21st of Luke is the record of a conversation Jesus had with the disciples just before His crucifixion. He had been with them in the temple and as they came out they called His attention to the beautiful buildings. He said, "See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2). He had just previously uttered a pathetic lament over the city, in which He had referred to the coming destruction: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37, 38).

The disciples said, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3). He then gave them signs of both events, the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred about 40 years later, and His coming, for which we are still waiting. We shall return to a consideration of these signs, but would point out here that signs were given and the duty of watching was enjoined. Jesus showed plainly that the approaching destruction of Jerusalem would be a fulfillment of a prophecy given through Daniel. He knew that the terrible event would take place in the lifetime of some who heard Him, so He said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes" (Matthew 24:15-18). Luke records it thus: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh" (Luke 21:21). See how Jesus exhorts them to study and understand the prophecy of Daniel: "Whoso readeth, let him understand." The due season had arrived for the understanding of that part of Daniel's prophecy which referred to the coming of the Roman abomination that was to make desolate the Holy City and the Holy Land. The Roman armies would soon compass the city. When they saw the desolator coming, they were to flee from Judea

to the mountains. History records that many did as Jesus advised: they went to Transjordan, to a little place in the mountains called Pella, and were safe from the horrors that befel those who remained in the city. As a beautiful hymn says:

“Who was saved when desolation  
Fell on Salem’s guilty head,  
When the accursed ‘abomination’  
All the holy place o’erspread?  
Friends of Jesus,  
They alone to Pella fled.”

Incidentally, notice also that Jesus attributes the writing of this prophecy to Daniel; not, as the higher critics would have us believe, to someone who lived long after Daniel’s day.

Part of these chapters which contain the Mount Olivet prophecy of Jesus refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in 69-70 A.D., and part to the day of His second advent, at “the end of the world”; and just as He exhorted those to watch in whose day the destruction of Jerusalem was to occur, so does He those who shall be living in the time of the end, “the end of the world,” when He shall come again. Of that time He says: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 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” (Matthew 24: 30-33).

Though there would be indications of the approach of the great day of the Lord’s coming, Jesus said, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe 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. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew

24:36-42). Jesus said, as recorded here, that no man, and no angel, knew the day and the hour of the second advent: in Mark's account He said that even He did not know: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). Even Jesus did not know in the days of His earthly ministry. He referred in Acts 1:7 to times and seasons "which the Father hath put in his own power." But when the Revelation was given to John in Patmos, Jesus showed that, in the interval between His ascension and the giving of the Revelation, He had been given to know the times and seasons, for He says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Revelation 1:1). Jesus had been informed by God, His Father, and now through John He passes on the information by sign, and with some time-periods mentioned, so that all His servants may be able to see the working out of the divine plan, and may "watch" for the supreme event to which all things lead, the coming of Christ and the subjugation unto Him of all the kingdoms of the earth, that He may rule as universal monarch in God's kingdom. A special blessing is pronounced upon those who give heed to the Revelation, who study it and understand it: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

The divine plan of the ages has been so revealed to man, that while the grand consummation has been declared, the times and seasons have been so concealed that only gradually have they been able to be understood. The result of this progressive method of revelation has been to keep a spirit of expectancy alive in the hearts of God's people throughout the ages: all have been able to watch, not knowing the exact time of the consummation; not knowing indeed, but that the realization might come even in their own day. Still, the parable of the man who had gone into a far country indicates that there would be a long time before his return; he had given to his servants certain talents to trade with during his absence, and, "after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" (Matthew 25:29).

Paul said concerning the Lord's coming, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from

us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (II Thessalonians 2:1-3).

Jesus said in the Mount Olivet prophecy, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). This would seem to indicate a long period of downtreading, such as in actual fact has taken place; but there is to be an end of the desolation and Jerusalem is to be delivered and become the city of the great King.

Jesus spake a parable concerning ten virgins waiting for the coming of the bridegroom; five were wise and were ready; five were foolish and unready. The bridegroom came while they slept, and, on being awaked, only those who were ready, who had oil in their lamps, went with him; those who were unprepared, who had no oil in their lamps, could not enter in. And Jesus added, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh" (Matthew 25:13).

There are set times in the divine plan. Habakkuk says, "The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:2, 3). The Psalmist says, "Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come" (Psalm 102:13). These set times were not known to the disciples in the days when Jesus was on earth: and though, during the past century, many have tried to predict the exact day of the Lord's coming, no one has been able accurately to declare it. Some such definite predictions have already been proved incorrect—1844, 1896, 1914, and others that have been set by prophetic students—and it is as true today as it was in the days of Jesus' preaching, "of that day and of that hour knoweth no man." Nevertheless, there are signs by which it is possible to know, yea, it is our duty to know, that the day is approaching, and by which we can tell that we are now in the vicinity of that great day.

Jesus said to the disciples, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). So with the prophecies: it was not wise for them to be understood in all their details at the time they were given: but in due season they have been gradually made plain; most of them are now fulfilled; little remains but the coming of the Lord and the establishment of His

kingdom. "For yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37).

#### THE PLAN OF THE AGES

In considering the times and seasons in relation to the divine purpose with the earth and the human race, the first point to be borne in mind is that the Almighty has a well-defined plan, the details of which as to time and place are made known in the prophecies, given here a little and there a little, sometimes in language that is unmistakably clear, sometimes in sign and symbol that require, on the part of the earnest student, considerable mental application. Sometimes the meaning of the signs, symbols, and symbolic periods is made known through the medium of angels; sometimes their meaning can only be ascertained when time has supplied the key to their solution, when prophecy has become history, when predictions have become facts.

The Bible opens with a description of the fitting-up of this earth for the habitation of man, the creation of day and night, of light and dark, of plants, and animals, and man; and the testimony is that everything which God created was very good. Soon, however, sin cast its shadow over the fair scene, and man became subject to the curse through transgression—a curse which still is operative in the law of sin and death, with the attendant sorrow and suffering under which humanity groans.

It is not ever to be thus. God, who created all things good, has made provision whereby the evil that man has done is ultimately to be undone, and the Bible closes with a prophetic and symbolic scene which foretells a time when God shall be all in all, and when the curse shall be removed from mankind and from the earth.

Between these opening and closing scenes of human experience there extends a period of about seven thousand years, during which the Almighty's predetermined plan is being worked out, and whether man wills or not, that plan will at last be consummated according to the divine intention to fill all the earth with the glory of God as the waters cover the deep.

"What though none on earth assist Him,  
God requires not help from man;  
What though all the world resist Him,  
God will realize His plan."

That period of seven thousand years may be divided into five main epochs, or ages, as follows:

1. The Antediluvian.
2. The Patriarchal.
3. The Mosaic.
4. The Christian, or Gentile.
5. The Millennial.

The Antediluvian Age stretched from Adam to the Flood, to the days of Noah. It was characterized by the development of sin and sinners to such a degree that Noah preached righteousness and exhorted his contemporaries to repentance, but in vain. The end of that dispensation was marked by the great deluge in which God destroyed all mankind except Noah and his family who were saved in the ark which was constructed in obedience to God's command.

The Patriarchal Age extended from the Flood to the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. Choice was made by God of one man, Abraham, and of his descendants in the line of Isaac and Jacob, for the constitution of the Israelitish people to be a special people unto God and the channel of His communications to man. It was terminated by that terrible judgment in Egypt which was at the same time the deliverance of the Israelites.

The Mosaic Age extended from the Exodus to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans soon after the beginning of the Christian Era. In the end of it Jesus Christ appeared and the institution of the Christians as a special people to the Lord was contemporaneous with the overthrow of the Mosaic economy.

The Christian Age is still current. It began at the end of the Mosaic and is characterized by the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God, and will be ended by divine judgment on the gentiles in the battle of Armageddon, the deliverance of the Jews from their present persecutions and afflictions, and the establishment of the universal empire of Christ and His saints upon the ruins of the kingdoms of men.

The Millennial Age will begin after the great conflict of Armageddon, and, as its name implies, will last a thousand years, during which all evils will be abolished, sin will be rooted out of the earth, the last revolt of humanity against the sovereignty of God will be put down, and finally death itself shall be vanquished and God will be all in all throughout eternal ages.

#### THE VISIONS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR AND OF DANIEL

In the 2nd chapter of Daniel's prophecy there is an account of a vision which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had, and in the 7th and 8th chapters are accounts of visions which Daniel had. Not only are the visions related, but the greater part of the inter-

pretation is clearly given. Nebuchadnezzar saw an image of a man, whose head was of gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay. He saw a stone, which had been cut out of the mountain without hands, smite the image upon the feet and cause it to fall to pieces. The fragments of the image were scattered by the wind and the stone became a great mountain which filled the whole earth.

In the 7th chapter is an account of a vision in which Daniel saw the winds disturb the sea, and out of the sea arose four beasts. The first was like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard and the fourth was an exceedingly strong, dreadful, and terrible beast, with ten horns. Among the ten there arose an eleventh, which had eyes and a mouth and the power of speech. Before this eleventh horn, three of the original ten fell. But the judgment was set and the books were opened, and the beast was given over to destruction. Then the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and to Him were given "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him." That dominion, Daniel saw, was to be an everlasting dominion, which should not pass away, and the kingdom should never be destroyed.

In the 8th chapter is an account of another vision which Daniel had. This time he saw a ram and a he-goat. The he-goat overcame the ram. In the goat's forehead was a great horn, and when that was suddenly broken, four others came up in its place, and out of one of them came another little horn which became great.

These visions all refer to the same thing. They are symbolic of the history of the world from the time when they were given until now and even beyond. What is their interpretation? It is furnished by the prophet. Daniel said to the king, that the parts of the image represented kingdoms, and of the beasts it is said, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth, but the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." This is so plain that there need be no haziness at all about it. This is history written more than two thousand three hundred years ago, and most of it has been fulfilled. The prophecy has become history.

The parts of the image correspond with the beasts which Daniel saw: the gold with the lion, the silver with the bear, the brass with the leopard, the iron with the exceedingly terrible and strong fourth beast, and the toes of clay and iron with the ten horns of the fourth beast. The ram and the goat of Daniel's second vision correspond with the bear and the leopard of his first vision.

Daniel was living at Babylon when the Babylonian Empire was at its zenith, under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, and to that king he said, "Thou, O king, art this head of gold." The proud monarch thought that his kingdom would continue forever; but the prophet said, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth."

The second kingdom was the Medo-Persian, and in the 5th chapter Daniel tells how it succeeded the Babylonian. Nebuchadnezzar was dead, and Belshazzar made a feast to a thousand of his lords, when the fingers of a hand appeared and inscribed upon the wall a writing which troubled the king. Daniel was called in to interpret it and he said it meant, "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." And the record says, "In that night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." This happened in the year 543 B.C. With Darius was Cyrus, king of Persia. The ram of the second vision of Daniel is said to be the Medo-Persian power; "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia."

A third kingdom was to succeed the Medo-Persian, a kingdom that was represented by the brass of the image, the leopard of Daniel's first vision and the he-goat of his second. Here again the identity is clear, for it is written, "The rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." The third empire then, was the Grecian. History tells us that in 360 B.C. Philip became king of Macedon, one of a number of states that existed on the territory recently occupied by Greece and Turkey. He planned to make Macedonia the chief of these states, and then weld all into one empire that they might attack the powers in Asia. In 338 the battle of Cheronea did much to break down the independence of the other states. Philip was at the head of part of his army against the Athenians, and Alexander his son commanded against the Thebans. Soon after this, at a banquet on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter, Philip was slain by one of his discontented subjects. Alexander, then only twenty years of age, was crowned king. He took up his father's unfinished plan of overcoming the Persian power. He first accomplished the subjugation of the European states by 334, and set out in the spring of that year for Asia.

His conquests there may be read of in any Grecian history. He met with almost unmingled success. He became master of Sardis, Ephesus, Miletus and other notable places in Asia Minor; he defeated the Persians near Issus, and conquered Phenicia, Damascus and Tyre. Passing through Jerusalem he went into Egypt, where fresh conquests awaited him, and then returned to Asia. One writer has said, "The battle of Arbela gave Alexander the very heart of the empire. Babylon was ready to surrender to him. Babylon, the center of all ambition in the ancient world, as its name has been the proverb for the heights of wordly glory in the modern; Babylon the city of Nebuchadnezzar, the place of Daniel's visions, the pride of the East, the far-off marvel of the West, was opening her gates to the goat of Macedon." The battle of Arbela was followed by the taking of Babylon, Susa and Persepolis; and Alexander advanced as far as India, crossing the Indus and subduing the northern part of the country. He built a fleet and sent it to the Persian Gulf, while he returned through Persia to Babylon. There he was stricken with fever and died in the height of his glory in the year 323 B.C., at the age of thirty-two. As the prophet Daniel had said, "The he-goat waxed very great, and when he was strong the great horn was broken, and for it came up four notable ones, toward the four winds of heaven." This last clause also was fulfilled. Four kings took the power after Alexander's death: Lysimachus, who ruled over Thrace, Bithynia and other parts of Asia; Ptolemy, who ruled over Egypt; Cassander, who ruled over Macedonia; and Seleucus, who ruled over Syria.

The fourth and mightiest power was symbolized by the iron legs of the image and the "beast that was diverse from all others, exceedingly dreadful, whose teeth were of iron and his nails of brass." The historical counterpart of this beast was the Roman Empire, which was mightier than any that had existed before, and which extended almost to the limits of the then known world. Rome had become a mighty nation in Italy and the surrounding districts before her power was extended to Asia; but between 66 and 61 B.C. Pompey marched into Asia Minor, Syria, and Judea, and met with such success that he made Pontus, Cilicia, Syria and Crete provinces of Rome. The Roman power gradually extended in all directions, and in 30 B.C. the form of its government was changed from republican to monarchical. Octavianus, the great-nephew of Julius Caesar, was made emperor under the title of Augustus. This power he held till 14 A.D. Strong as this mighty empire seemed, it could not last forever. The decree of the Almighty had gone forth against it.

He made known in the visions that it should first be divided into two, and then into ten parts. The division into two took place in 395 A.D. When Theodosius, the last emperor who ruled the united empire, died, his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, ruled respectively in the east and the west. This was a great step in Rome's decline. Though afterward, under the emperor Justinian, who reigned from 527 to 565, an attempt was made to restore the Roman government to its former position of power, the work of decay had begun and could not be stopped. The once mighty empire, which had been mistress of the world, gave place to the divided condition symbolized by the ten toes and the ten horns.

Among the ten horns Daniel saw an eleventh arise, which had eyes and a mouth speaking great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. The angel, in the interpretation, said to Daniel: "The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." We have no difficulty in finding the counterpart of this eleventh horn. About the time of the dismemberment of the Roman Empire there was developing a great power of a different order. A great spiritual power was preparing for its ultimate manifestation as the supreme power on the old Roman territory. The papacy was gradually rising; and by a decree of Phocas, the emperor of the east, about the year 606, the bishop of Rome was declared to be the ecclesiastical head of the east and the west; and following upon this spiritual rise, he obtained supremacy over three of the kingdoms of the divided Roman Empire: the Heruli, Lombardy, and Ravenna. In token of this he assumed a triple crown.

The identification of the papacy with the eleventh horn power cannot be mistaken, when the facts are carefully noted. The subduing of the three kings was fulfilled. The blasphemies and words against the Most High have indeed been uttered: for is it not blasphemy for a mortal man to claim infallibility and power to forgive, and grant indulgences for, sins, howsoever grievous? Is it not blasphemy to commit, in the name of Christ, such inhuman cruelties as have left an indelible stain upon the history of the Middle Ages? So much have the saints been persecuted that, as Daniel expresses it, the little horn has worn them out. We have but to look to the awful massacre of St. Bartholomew's, to the slaughter

of the Piedmontese, and to the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition, for a complete fulfilment of that part of the prophecy. He has thought to change times and laws. When we speak of the Gregorian calendar, do we not refer to an alteration that was made by a pope in the method of reckoning time? As regards his changing of laws, we know that his word was law, and therefore, as his wishes changed, the laws changed too. If his laws were not submitted to, excommunication was the result.

Daniel had more specific information concerning this power than he had concerning the others. He was told that it should continue for "a time, and times, and the dividing of time." This period has already been shown to be 1260 days and the prophetic scale to be a day for a year: so it represents a period of 1260 years during which this blaspheming, persecuting power should continue. Did the papal power last 1260 years? We saw that it commenced in 606, or thereabouts. It should therefore terminate about 1866. It is well-known that about then a series of disturbances took place in the papal dominions, revolts against the imperial power of the pope, which culminated in the victory of Garibaldi, the enthronement of Victor Emanuel in 1870, and liberation of Italy from the temporal domination of the Vatican. The power of the pope as a prince was ended, but his power as a priest remained. His spiritual supremacy is also destined to pass from him. The prophecy did not require that he should pass off the scene of human action immediately on the expiration of the time, times, and a half; for the testimony is that after the years of persecution "the judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end." The destruction and the consumption have begun, are still going on, and will continue until the determined end shall be brought about. Recently a working agreement, or concordat, has been made between the pope and the Italian government, but the imperial power has not been restored to the papacy, except in so far as it concerns the small territory occupied by St. Peter's and the Vatican, which is now known as Vatican City.

This papal power is referred to also by Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians, and by John in the Revelation. Paul refers to him as the "man of sin," the "son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of

iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming: 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" (II Thessalonians 2:3-10). The final destruction of this eleventh-horn power will be at the coming of the Lord Jesus to establish His kingdom.

John in the Revelation refers to this same power as "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," the woman sitting on "a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns," a woman "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth," and the woman "is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." The ten horns "are ten kings which receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength into the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation, chapter 17). In the 18th chapter Babylon is spoken of as being destroyed by fire, and a millstone is cast into the sea, to represent the completeness of the destruction, "Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (Revelation 18:8, 21).

A great part of the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled: but there is one part yet remaining. It is the statements of 2:44 and 7:27: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever"; "And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." This is a kingdom of an order different from the others. They were to come and last for a time, and then be succeeded by others; this is to come and not pass away. It is to come and last forever, and shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, so that, as in the vision the stone which was cut out of the mountains without hands became a great mountain and filled the whole earth,

this kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up shall drive into the unfathomable abyss of oblivion all existing forms of human government, and itself shall spread o'er all the world, and endure throughout the ages of ages.

#### THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Jesus told His disciples to flee from Judea to the mountains when they saw the approach of the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, or, in other words, when they saw Jerusalem compassed with armies. As a matter of fact, there are three abominations of desolation mentioned by Daniel: one in the 9th chapter, another in the 11th and a third in the 12th. It is in connection with the abomination of the 12th chapter that there are mentioned three time-periods, 1260, 1290, and 1335 days. The first question to be considered is, What is the abomination that maketh desolate, here spoken of? Clearly that marks the beginning of these periods, though the particular events that mark the endings are not mentioned. Still, it is reasonable to suppose, from the general tenor of the chapter, that the periods lead to the end of gentile supremacy and the beginning of the new era of Israel's glory, including the return of the Lord Jesus, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification of the saints. "Go thy way, Daniel, till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

The three abominations mentioned by Daniel are three distinct desolating powers which have advanced against the Holy Land and the Holy City. The one mentioned in the 9th chapter is undoubtedly the Roman, which destroyed the city in A.D. 70, and it is to this one that Jesus referred as above mentioned. Some of His hearers heeded His warning when they saw the Roman armies approach and fled to the mountains of Transjordan. That in the 11th chapter refers to the profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 to 165 B.C., when he captured Jerusalem, rededicated the temple to Jupiter Olympus, set up an altar therein for his worship, offered swine's flesh and poured the broth around the sacred buildings. The abomination referred to in the 12th chapter cannot be either of these, for the great events connected with the endings of the three periods did not occur at those distances from either of these two desolators.

From the profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168-165 B.C., the three periods reach to 1094, 1124, and 1169 A.D. respectively. In 1096 the First Crusade was waged against the Saracens, and was a feeble endeavor to rescue the Holy City from its desolation. At the other two periods no events worthy of record took place—certainly not those referred to by Daniel. From the desolation wrought

by the Romans in 70 A.D. we arrive at 1330, 1360, and 1405 respectively, at none of which times did anything worthy of mention occur. Nor does it refer to the papal power, for that cannot be termed a desolator of the Holy City, as its operations affect more western lands.

There remains but one other power that can in anywise fulfil the prophecy—the Saracenic or Mohammedan. In the years 636, 637 A.D., fifteen years after the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet, the caliph Omar took possession of Jerusalem, and on the very site of the temple has been built a mosque often called the Mosque of Omar, but really the Dome of the Rock, which stands today as an abomination of desolation, profaning the site of the once glorious temple of the true God, and testifying to the cessation of true divine worship in that place. From 637 the three periods reach to 1897, 1927 and 1972 respectively, that is, using solar years or regular gentile years, for the reckoning. But the Mohammedans reckon by the moon, and 1335 lunar years equal 1295 solar years; which added to 622 A.D., the date of the Hegira, makes 1917 A.D.

These are significant dates. The period of 1260 day-years is found in many prophetic time-periods, which space does not permit us to enumerate here; but its significance with the Mohammedan capture of Jerusalem as the central point is very remarkable. If we reckon 1260 both backward and forward from 637 we reach important beginnings and endings in relation to the times of the gentiles, and the downtreading of the Holy Land and the Holy City. Counting backward from 636-637 A.D., we have 1260 solar years to 623 B.C., 1260 Jewish calendar years to 605 B.C.; 1260 lunar years to 587 B.C. These dates are important in the beginning of the downtreading of the land: in 623 we have Josiah's passover and the discovery of the book of the law, when the prophetess Huldah told the king of the certainty of the destruction which God would bring upon the land for the nation's sins; in 606-605 the seventy years' captivity began; and in 587 the temple was burned and the city destroyed in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Counting forward from 636-637 A.D., we have 1260 lunar years extending to 1860, the date of European intervention in Syria on account of massacres by the Mohammedans; 1260 Jewish calendar years to 1878, when the Berlin Treaty was signed at the end of the Russo-Turkish war, which established British influence in Asiatic territory, and Cyprus was occupied by Britain in connection with that arrangement; and 1260 solar years to 1897, the date of the beginning of the Zionist Movement, the first national endeavor on the part of the Jewish people

for the re-establishment of their home in Palestine of which we shall have more to say later.

The year 1917 coincided with the expiration of the 1335 lunar years from the beginning of Mohammedanism, the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet; and this year saw the end of the political, and to a great extent even the spiritual, power of Mohammedanism. The writer has Turkish coins with the dates inscribed thereon in English 1917 and in Arabic 1335, a proof positive that 1917 A.D. is the equivalent of 1335 A.H., and as we shall see a little later, that year marked the end of Mohammedanism's great power on the Holy Land; it was the year of Jerusalem's liberation, when the downtreading by the gentiles came to an end, and the land and the city came under the protection of Great Britain, as had also been decreed by Jehovah two and a half millenniums ago.

#### THE DECLINE OF TURKEY \*

The Turks were once the most terrible of conquerors—their very name has become a proverb; anyone especially rough and wild is called a “regular Turk.” The records of their awful doings in their conquest of Asiatic, European, and African territory are among the bloodiest of military annals; and their empire, at its zenith in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was the most formidable since the days of Rome's greatness.

There is a prediction in Revelation 16:12 which prophetic students recognize as applying to the destruction of the Turkish Empire: “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” As long ago as 1654, Tillinghast, a biblical commentator, wrote concerning this prediction as follows: “By the river Euphrates we are to understand the Ottoman, or Turkish Empire. It is called the great river because of the multitude of people and nations therein. The people who at this present time are of all others accounted the greatest are the Turks; who therefore, and no other, are here to be understood; especially as the Euphrates in the Apocalypse ix, under the sounding of the sixth trumpet, by general consent of expositors has reference to the Turkish power.”

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the decline had not set in sufficiently for students to consider the prophecy to have received much fulfilment, for in 1802 Galloway wrote, “By what means the Turkish Empire shall be reduced to this helpless state (which is even at this day as populous as any other upon earth, the Chinese excepted) is not intimated in this verse (Revelation 16:12),

\* Written in 1932; Reprinted in 1967. The decline of Turkey led to the establishment of modern Israel.

and will perhaps remain concealed until the events themselves shall remove the veil." Since then, however, events have moved swiftly, and now, in the year '1932, we can look back upon the nineteenth century and see how literally the river has been drying up and the word of prophecy has once again been made "more sure." Many writers of the past century called attention to the details of the drying-up process: E. H. Bickersteth, E. B. Elliott, John Thomas, H. Grattan Guinness, and others have written at length upon the matter. In 1844 Bickersteth said, "The awful dispensations connected with the sixth vial continue towards the Turkish Empire," and "everything seems to conspire to render Turkey defenseless." In 1839 M. La Martine said in a speech to the French Chamber of Deputies, "The Ottoman Empire exists no more: it is a mere phantom." Grattan Guinness, in his "Light for the Last Days," said, "Europe is driven to recognize that nothing can much longer avert the long-predicted and richly deserved doom of Mohammedan rule in Europe, political death. Ever since the year 1821 the progress of Turkish decay has been so rapid and alarming as to keep Europe in perpetual anxiety."

At its zenith the Ottoman Empire extended from Venice and the borders of Germany to Persia and from Poland to the north of Africa, from Egypt to Morocco; now, in 1932, the old Turkey has altogether disappeared and a new Turkey, the Turkish Republic, has taken its place: Mohammedanism in Europe has died a political death: the political head of the system has been deposed, both as Sultan of Turkey and Caliph of the Mohammedans; and the vast territory forming the old Turkish Empire has been gradually reduced until today but an infinitesimal part is left to the new Turkish Republic. We can here but briefly refer to the outstanding events in Turkey's decline. Early last century trouble began both internally and externally. In 1807-1808 discontent arose among the Janissaries, the flower of the Turkish army. In 1812 Russia got a slice of Turkey's territory at the mouth of the Danube. In 1815 Servia's independence was partially recognized. In 1820 the Greek war of independence began and culminated in 1827 at the Battle of Navarino, when the Turkish and Egyptian fleets were destroyed and Greece became independent. In 1826 the Sultan ordered the massacre of great numbers of the Janissaries. In 1829 Wallachia and Moldavia became partially independent and in 1859 combined to form Roumania. In 1829 Russia obtained rights in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In 1830 France took possession of Algeria. In 1832 Mohammed Ali rebelled against the Sultan, won several battles

in Asia Minor, and became Pasha of Egypt in 1843, Egypt becoming practically independent of the Sultan. In 1853 the familiar term of "the sick man of Europe" was applied to the Sultan by the Czar in a conversation with the British Ambassador to Turkey. In 1844 a decree of religious toleration was exacted from the Sultan. In 1853 Russia declared war on Turkey, and, to protect their own rights against Russia, England and France came to the aid of Turkey and the Crimean War resulted, lasting till the Treaty of Paris, 1856. In 1860 disturbances broke out in Syria, and Great Britain and France intervened. From 1861 to 1876 there were disturbances in Servia, Montenegro and Crete. In 1867 the Turkish garrison had to withdraw from Servia and in 1869 Crete was granted self-government. The empire became almost bankrupt. Rebellion broke out in 1875 in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, resulting in the famous Bulgarian atrocities. In 1876 Abdul Hamid II came to the throne; he was later spoken of by Gladstone as "Abdul the Damned" and "the great assassin." Many of the states being discontented, and the country almost bankrupt, Russia took advantage of the situation to declare war on Turkey, April 24, 1877. Again Britain intervened to prevent Russia completely destroying Turkey and the Treaty of San Stefano was signed on March 3, 1878, and the Berlin Treaty on July 13th, whereby Bulgaria was made a self-governing province; Crete was promised great reforms; the boundaries of Greece were extended; Eastern Roumelia was granted self-government; Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed under the supervision of Austria, but remained Turkish provinces; Montenegro became independent; Servia was enlarged and became independent; Russia and Persia received certain Asiatic territories; and political and religious reforms were promised throughout the empire.

The "unspeakable Turk," however, was not changed, and the reforms did not materialize to any great extent. The Armenian massacres took place instead. Turkey continued to decline. The Egyptian war of 1881-1882 resulted in the British occupation of Egypt, which was still part of the Turkish Empire, but with its own Khedive, a semi-independent king. In 1885 Eastern Roumelia was added to Bulgaria. In 1896 Crete received a new charter of self-government. In 1897 war broke out with Greece; and Crete, in 1898, was put under the king of Greece. In 1909 revolution resulted in the deposition of Abdul Hamid and the placing of Mohammed V in his stead; then followed a new constitution. In 1908 Austria annexed the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and

was recognized by the powers in such action. At the same time Bulgaria declared that she was absolutely free.

In 1912-1913 a Turko-Italian war and a new Balkan war resulted in further curtailing the Turkish Empire, but quarrels between the allied Turkish enemies prevented much that otherwise might have been accomplished.

In 1914 the great World War broke out, and Turkey joined in on the side of the Germans. This led Great Britain to take complete possession of Cyprus, which she had until then only occupied. In the end, Turkey was very badly beaten by the Allies, notwithstanding her help from Germany, and nearly all her Asiatic territory was taken from her through the victories of General Allenby, who captured Jerusalem and drove the Turks completely out of the Holy Land, defeating them ultimately on the ancient battle ground of Armageddon, and receiving in reward the title of Lord Allenby of Megiddo. Some think this the battle of Armageddon of the prophecy in Revelation: personally, the writer does not, though it was on the same site on which the greater battle of the future will be decided, when all gentile power will be broken and the Lord Jesus will be personally here.

The new Turkey, the republic under Mustapha Kemal Pasha its first president, is altogether different from the old Turkey. The Sultan has been deposed both as political ruler and as caliph; the Arabic has been displaced by Latin characters, and no Arabic signs are to be seen; the fez has been abolished, and the veil almost, and the Turks dress like Europeans; the name Constantinople has been changed to Istanbul; the koran has been abolished for the swearing of oaths in courts of law, and a man gives evidence now on his word of honor; and even Mohammedan worship has become modernized. When in Istanbul last year I said to our guide at Sancta Sophia, "You are a Mohammedan, I suppose?" He said, "Yes, a twentieth century one."

Turkey—the great river Euphrates—has not been destroyed in one great decisive encounter; it has literally, as the prophecy said, "dried up." By the treaty following the late war Turkey is reduced to a very small portion in Europe (Istanbul and its suburbs), and a small territory in Asia Minor, and its capital is on the Asiatic side, at Angora.

#### THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT

Side by side with the drying-up of the Turkish Empire and the decline of Mohammedanism has been the progress of the Zionist Movement. Though during the latter half of last century there

were feeble attempts at colonization in Palestine, though patriots had written and urged such colonization, it remained for Dr. Theodore Herzl to propound a practical plan, which he did in his "Der Judenstaat"—"the Jewish State"—in 1896. The result of the publication of this pamphlet was the first Zionist Congress at Basle in 1897, when about 200 delegates attended and the movement was definitely put under way for obtaining, by purchase or lease, sites for the establishment of colonies, so that ultimately the Jewish people might have a home in the land of their fathers. The next year's conference saw the inauguration of material plans for financing and carrying out the proposal. Further conferences were held, land was leased, colonies were established and interest was aroused throughout the world in the new home land. Then the war came, and the land was the scene of much conflict; the work of the colonies was greatly hindered: some even ceased to exist. The biennial congresses had to be abandoned, and the interest of the Jews of the United States of America had to be enlisted. Conventions were held in America, and millions of dollars were subscribed to carry out the work as well as possible, and during the war events developed which brought in the practical sympathy of the Allies, especially Great Britain. A very earnest Zionist, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, professor of chemistry at Victoria University, Manchester, and a close friend of Lord Balfour, who had represented Manchester in Parliament, helped the government by supplying the formula for TNT (tri-nitro-toluol), the high explosive which gave the Allies superiority over their German enemies. The thanks of the nation were given to the professor, he was able to leave his classes and devote all his time to his Zionist activities, and the famous Balfour declaration on behalf of the British Government was made, in which the government expressed its sympathy with the Zionist aspirations and its willingness to do all it could to further them. Then Jerusalem was taken by General Allenby and the Holy Land freed of the Turk. When the Peace Conference was held in Paris after the war was ended, the Zionists were able to present their requests to the conference and have them granted—the right to settle in and develop Palestine as their homeland, with the consent of the great powers. That movement, which was started by Dr. Herzl in 1896-1897, which even many of his own people ridiculed, had become a mighty power, and had secured the practical sympathy of Jews the world over, especially of Jews in the United States.

A century ago such a thing as Zionism is today was unthought of by Jew and Gentile alike. But prophetic students knew that

God had declared that He would bring His people back to their land in the last days, in the time of the end, and they were looking for some such movement to begin. The expiration of prophetic periods had encouraged them so to anticipate; and as long ago as 1849, Dr. John Thomas expressed the opinion, based on the divine prophecies, that such a movement as Zionism would develop before the advent of Jesus and the ultimate settlement of God's returned people in the land. Here are his words written more than 80 years ago: "There is, then, a partial and primary restoration of Jews before the manifestation, which is to serve as the nucleus, or basis, of future operations in the restoration of the rest of the tribes after He (Jesus) has appeared in the kingdom. The pre-adventual colonization of Palestine will be on purely political principles: and the Jewish colonists will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth as it is in Him. They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India and in cattle and goods by their industry at home *under the efficient protection of the British power*. And thus their expectation will not be deceived; for before Gogue invades their country, it is described by the prophet as 'a land of unwalled villages, whose inhabitants are at rest and dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; and possessed of silver and gold, cattle and goods, dwelling in the midst of the land.' Now any person acquainted with the present insecure condition of Palestine under the Ottoman dominion must be satisfied from the testimony, that some other power friendly to Israel must then have become paramount over the land, which is able to guarantee protection to them, and to put the surrounding tribes in fear. This is all that is needed, namely security for life and property, and Palestine would be as eligible for Jewish emigration as the United States have proved for the Gentiles.

"But to what part of the world shall we look for a power whose interests will make it willing, as it is able, to plant the ensign of civilization upon the mountains of Israel? The reader will, doubtless, anticipate my reply from what has gone before. I know not whether the men, who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land, and of promoting its colonization by the Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other; because they will be compelled by events soon to happen, to do what, under existing circumstances, heaven and earth combined could not

move them to attempt. The present decisions of 'statesmen' are destitute of stability. A shooting star in the political firmament is sufficient to disturb all the forces of their system, and to stultify all the theories of their political astronomy. The finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them.

"The decree has long since gone forth which calls upon the Lion of Tarshish to protect the Jews."

If ever there was a case of giving heed to the word of prophecy to throw light upon a dark place, it is the above. No human foresight could have predicted events that have since taken place exactly as foretold: only an intelligent understanding of the divine prophecies could have brought forth such a clear and accurate forecast. Dr. Thomas died in 1871: he did not live to see the part the Suez Canal would play in making Britain "willing" to be in control of territory near the Holy Land. Under the treaties that followed the Peace Conference the mandate over Palestine was given to Great Britain, so that the predictions made by Dr. Thomas on the basis of the prophecies have come to pass in every particular. Space prevents a detailed description of the change that has come over the land since the Turk has been expelled and the Zionists have been allowed to enter. It is only necessary to make a tour of the land, as the writer did last year, to see the beautiful groves of oranges, apricots, olives, and other fruits, the vineyards and gardens, the tree plantations and the cornfields, all worked on the principles of modern agriculture and with up-to-date implements, to see the rapid and complete developments at Tel-Aviv, Haifa, and the Jordan Valley, to inspect the power plants and cement works and other industrial enterprises, in order to get an idea of what enthusiastic Zionist endeavor can accomplish. Great Britain is in complete control, and though there are many difficulties, racial and otherwise, to be overcome, this is her destiny and she cannot escape it. God decreed it through His prophets more than two thousand years ago.\*

#### THE GREAT TIME OF TROUBLE

With all these evidences of divine prophecy becoming historic fact, and while conscious of the glorious consummation to which all things are tending, one is saddened at the thought that it is equally certainly testified that before that consummation arrives there is to be a time of trouble such as never has been. Daniel said so in the 1st verse of his 12th chapter. At the time when Michael the great prince stands up to deliver Daniel's land and people "there shall be

\* Since 1948 Israel has existed as a nation.

a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Jesus said in His Mount Olivet prophecy, in regard to His coming, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many, and ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places: all these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24: 4-13). Luke adds, "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth; and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21: 25-28).

There have been many times of trouble, but this last, preceding the advent and kingdom of Jesus, is to be the worst. Seeing so many of the prophecies have been fulfilled and so little remains but the troubles of the last days and the coming of the Son of Man, it would not be surprising if the troublous times in which we are now living were the prelude to still worse times before the Lord comes. The whole world is involved now as it never has been before in trouble and disaster. The heavens, or ruling powers, have indeed been shaken and there have been great earthquakes among the people—the earth. Men's hearts are failing them in wider range and in greater intensity than ever before. The whole world was involved in the late war, and the whole world is suffering what is looked upon as the aftermath of that war. Statesmen are looking for another war even greater than the last: and indeed it will come. The suffering caused by the last war, personal and national, still continues; the debts contracted then will never be repaid; the European nations are practically bankrupt; even such great nations as Great Britain and the United States of America are in such straits

financially and socially as never before. The evils of misgovernment were never so apparent, and crime was never so rampant as now. It surely needs the whirlwind of divine judgment to sweep away the strongholds of iniquity and replace the futile efforts of man at self-government by the iron hand of righteous administration. The wise man said; "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach (or a depression) to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). We have heard a lot about "depression" recently: but here is the divine statement as to its cause: "Sin is a depression," or the depression is the result of sin. Micah strikes at the root of a great deal of human misery, and might well be describing the influences that work for evil in our day: "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood: they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward: and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire; so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity . . . . Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me" (Micah 7:2-7). What an apt and scathing description of the political and judicial grafters of the present day! How the poor are oppressed and their cause disregarded by those who fatten upon them and flourish like green bay trees through their nefarious schemes: and the pity of it is that these oppressors are regarded as shining lights among the people! It is not necessary here to enter into details concerning the evils that eat like a canker into the vitals of social existence: the newspapers are full of them every day; human efforts at rectification, and they are few at best, will never result in ridding the world of them. Only the manifestation of God's anger and righteous judgments will do that. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9). They will not before. And when God's judgments are in the earth, there will be the last and greatest of all wars, and by it all nations will be taught to know and respect God. The prophets have foretold this last war, through which both Jews and gentiles will be made to know God. All nations shall be gathered against Jerusalem to battle: the city shall be partially destroyed: part of the people shall have gone forth into captivity: the rest shall be afraid; when God manifests His power in the person of the returned Jesus and He puts an end to the great conflict, delivers the city, chases away the besieging hosts, destroys them upon

the plain of Armageddon, and sets up on Mount Zion and at Jerusalem the capital of His government which shall extend to earth's utmost bounds. Then will begin

#### THE GLORIOUS AGE TO COME

Jacob will have been delivered out of his greatest time of trouble. The unbelieving Jews and Israelites will recognize Jesus as their Messiah. All men shall know God, from the least unto the greatest. The divine law shall be proclaimed from Mount Zion, and it will be administered with unerring justice and worldwide beneficence in the hands of the redeemed and glorified saints. Peace like a river shall flow from the world's metropolis and living conditions will be made such the world over that happiness shall abound and life be prolonged among the subject peoples of that universal empire. No longer will the poor be oppressed by the rich, for every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall make him afraid. There shall be one Lord over all the earth and His name shall be one—one empire, one law, one religion. There shall be glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill among those in whom God is well pleased. Truly a grand consummation of the divine plan, and a glorious and blessed time after the six thousand years of human sin and suffering! How we should long for it and pray for it and work for it, that when it does come we may be partakers in it! If we know these things, and it is our duty to know them, then we should heed the Saviour's exhortation at the close of His Olivet prophecy, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

## BAPTISM

In writing to the Ephesian believers, the apostle Paul mentions seven units which together form the complete system of revealed truth. He says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). The one baptism is intimately connected with the other elements of truth, the one body, the one Spirit, the one hope, the one Lord, the one faith, and the one God. It is important to all who would be saved to know what this one baptism is and what is revealed in the Bible concerning it.

Many ideas have been held by religious people both as to the nature and as to the efficacy of baptism. By some it has been maintained that baptism is essential to salvation, and therefore that no unbaptized person can be saved. Others have contended that if a man or a woman leads a life of honesty and justice, there is no necessity for such an one to be baptized.

In seeking to carry out the ordinance of baptism, many forms have been adopted; the practice of each of which has been strenuously upheld as scriptural. Aspersions, or sprinkling, is most commonly practiced at the present time; affusion, or pouring, is practiced in some cases; many hold that in order to a valid baptism a complete immersion of the body in water is essential; and there are advocates of threefold, or trine, immersion.

Different opinions are held also as to who are fit subjects for baptism. Some maintain that infants may be baptized in accordance with scriptural principles, from the time of birth. Others contend that such infant sprinkling is of no avail for salvation, and that only those who have arrived at years of discretion and can discern the meaning and the responsibilities of the ordinance should be baptized, and then only after a confession of faith in the revealed gospel concerning Christ and His kingdom.

We shall now proceed to examine the Bible teaching to establish the position that baptism is essential to salvation, and that a valid baptism consists in the total immersion in water of a person who

understands and believes the gospel of the kingdom of God and the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ.

#### THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BAPTISM"

The word "baptism" is of Greek origin, and is the English form of the original noun "baptisma." It comes from a root verb "bapto," meaning to dip, and so translated in the only three instances in the New Testament where it occurs: "That he may dip the tip of his finger in water" (Luke 16:24; "He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it" (John 13:26); and "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood" (Revelation 19:13). A compound with "en," meaning "in," also occurs three times: "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me" (Matthew 26:23); "It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish" (Mark 14:20); and "When he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot" (John 13:26). In each of these three cases the word is "enbapto," "to dip in."

From "bapto," "to dip," comes "baptizo," "to baptize," and also "baptisma," "baptism" as a state, and "baptismos," used only once (Hebrews 6:2, "of the doctrine of baptisms") and meaning "baptism" as an act; also "baptistes," translated "baptist" and meaning "one who baptizes," such as John the Baptist, which is used 15 times.

It will be clear from the derivation of the word that dipping is the fundamental meaning, and that neither sprinkling nor pouring can properly represent it: and from the practice and precepts of the apostles we shall find that immersion is the only valid form of baptism.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM

The importance, if not the necessity, of baptism in some form or another, either as scripturally revealed or as humanly perverted, is recognized by most religious communities. Some church organizations take their name from their adherence to the practice of total immersion—the various kinds of Baptists; but some of them even only recommend it as a good thing but not as essential to salvation. The Established Church of England has an article (No. 27) which thus refers to baptism: "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism

rightly are grafted into the church; the promises of forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Spirit are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The baptism of young children is in anywise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ." This article is quoted only as showing that the importance of baptism is recognized by most religious people, but it will become evident as we examine the Bible records that the so-called baptism, the sprinkling or christening of infants, is a perversion of the scripturally revealed ordinance and is of no avail for salvation.

The following scriptural quotations will show the necessity of baptism. In Matthew 3:15 it is recorded that the Lord Jesus Himself was baptized of John in Jordan. John was preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and calling upon those who heard him to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judaea. . . . Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins" (verses 1-6). "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (verses 13-17).

Jesus had no sins to be remitted; therefore John, recognizing this and feeling his own comparative unworthiness in the presence of the Lord Jesus, hesitated to comply with His request. He knew there were no sins to be repented of by Jesus and forgiven. But Jesus persisted in the request and John baptized Him. He thereby gave His sanction to the ordinance as an element in the divine plan of salvation: he also thereby acknowledged His oneness of nature with those He came to redeem—He was a partaker of the same flesh and blood nature, and needed to be redeemed from this as well as others; though He personally had no transgressions to be forgiven. If the Lord Jesus deemed it necessary to be baptized in order to fulfil all righteousness, how much more necessary it is for others

to be baptized, who cannot, as He could, lay claim to absolute purity and freedom from transgression!

In John 3: 1-5 an account is given of an interview between Jesus and a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He had heard the preaching of Jesus and came to Him by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again (or born from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Birth of water, or baptism, is here declared by Jesus to be an essential to an entrance into the kingdom of God, and therefore it is absolutely necessary to salvation. Also to enter the kingdom of God it is necessary to be born of the Spirit, which begins in this dispensation in a life according to the Spirit and ultimates in a change from mortality to immortality at the return of Jesus, when as Jesus says, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (verse 6)—the natural becomes spiritual; the corruptible, incorruptible.

In Matthew 28: 19, 20, we have the commission of Jesus to His disciples, in which baptism is enjoined, and Jesus would not so command them if it were not essential to salvation: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And as it is given by Mark: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (condemned)" (Mark 16: 15, 16).

In Galatians 3: 27-29, another proof is to be found that baptism is essential to salvation. Connected with salvation are certain promises which were made by God, ages ago, to the fathers of the Israelitish nation, and which have not yet been fulfilled, but have been confirmed by the death of Jesus. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off; and the reason they did not inherit them in their lifetime is stated in Hebrews 11: 40 to be, that God had provided some better thing, that they, without the faithful of other genera-

tions, should not be made perfect. These promises await their fulfilment through Christ Jesus, who is Abraham's Seed; and those who are baptized into Christ put on Christ, and thereby become related to the promises. They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. "For as many of you," wrote Paul, "as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The inference to be drawn from this is, that all who have not been baptized have not put on Christ, and are not related to the promises that were made to the fathers, the fulfilment of which promises shall yet be realized in Christ Jesus, Abraham's Seed. Paul said that this was the gospel (Galatians 3:8), and that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16); therefore baptism is absolutely essential to salvation.

Peter gives another illustration of the necessity of baptism for salvation. He likens the case of those baptized to the case of Noah and his family. Noah obeyed God's command; he built an ark and entered into it to escape the judgments that were coming upon the ungodly world which heeded not the divine command. Only those who entered the ark were saved, and the apostle shows that only those who put on Christ by baptism, and thus become related to Him, can hope for salvation. He says, "The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:20, 21).

In the sixth chapter of the letter to the Romans, Paul speaks of the importance of baptism and of its significance; but to see the apostle's argument properly it will be necessary to quote from the last verse of the fifth chapter, "That, as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Then in the sixth chapter the apostle continues, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like us Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the

Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin" (verses 1-7).

The significance of baptism is here beautifully expressed. It is a burial with Christ. He died a physical death and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea, and rose therefrom to life unending. In that death He was a sinless One, holy, harmless, undefiled. Those who are baptized into Him are looked upon by God in a similar manner, as being free from sin. They have not physically died, but they have died unto sin, and God has graciously instituted a means of their being symbolically buried into the death of Christ in a simple and harmless way, that they may rise to a new, forgiven, and sanctified life. The latter part of the chapter treats of baptism as a change of mastership from sin to God: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. . . . What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (verses 16-23).

Baptism had been practiced before Christian baptism was instituted, but when it became the means of introduction into Christ, and association with the hope of endless life, it received a new and deeper significance. It is the dividing line between those who are "in Christ" and those who are not.

Another illustration of the necessity of baptism is the case of Cornelius, recorded in the tenth chapter of Acts. Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (verse 2). But this was insufficient for his salvation; and this is evidence that it is not enough now for one to lead an honest life; that was not enough to save Cornelius. It was needful that the gospel should be preached to him and that he should believe it and be baptized.

Peter was selected to bear that gospel, and Cornelius was told by an angel to send to Joppa for Peter: "He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do" (verse 6). Peter had also had a vision, whereby he was shown that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (verses 34, 35). While Peter was speaking to Cornelius and others gathered with him, "the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard the word," and Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. This case of Cornelius shows that the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, sometimes spoken of as baptism of the Holy Spirit, does not do away with the necessity of baptism in water: it was after the Holy Spirit had fallen upon them that Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (verses 47, 48).

With all these illustrations before us, who is there that can honestly deny that baptism is absolutely essential to salvation?

#### THE MODE OF BAPTISM

There are numerous instances of baptism in the New Testament, and they make it very clear that the method practiced by the apostles, as also by John the Baptist, was immersion of the whole body in water. The apostles foretold a departure from the truth after their day, and as the truths which the apostles preached became corrupted through the introduction of heathen philosophy, so did the form of baptism become changed to suit the new doctrines. Sprinkling and pouring were substituted for immersion. Many writers on the subject of baptism admit that immersion alone accords with the meaning of the word, and that the present most prevalent form of sprinkling has been substituted for the immersion that the apostles practiced. Luther said he "could wish that such as are to be baptized should be completely immersed in water according to the meaning of the word and the signification of the ordinance, as also, without doubt, it was instituted by Christ." Rosenmuller has said, "Immersion in the water of baptism, and coming out of it, was a symbol of a person's renouncing his former life, and, on the contrary, beginning a new one. The learned have rightly reminded us, that on account of this emblematic meaning of baptism, the rite of immersion ought to have been retained in the Christian church." Calvin said, "The word 'baptizo' signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church." This is

quite right, but he also says, which is not right, that "the church had a right to change the ordinance to suit herself." So also Dean Stanley of Westminster admitted that the method practiced by the apostles was immersion, but that the adoption of sprinkling was a "triumph of convenience and common-sense." Does God want us to substitute convenience and common-sense for His commands? If it is permissible to change the mode of baptism to suit ourselves, what is there to hinder us from changing anything else that God has commanded. No! Immersion is the only correct method, and it alone will avail for salvation.

The change of form of baptism is said to have resulted from the teaching that unbaptized infants and young children were doomed to unending torment in hell; and as they could not be immersed, sprinkling and pouring were substituted. But as God has not destined any of His sinning creatures, infant or adult, for an unending existence in eternal torment in hell, the change in practice was based upon a change in belief from that of apostolic days.

Immersion was the form practiced by the apostles and by John. John the Baptist was immersing in the Jordan, and in "Aenon, near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3:23); and Philip went down with the Ethiopian eunuch into the water (Acts 8:38). A pitcher of water would have been sufficient for sprinkling or pouring. We never read of the early Christians using anything like the modern fonts; they repaired to the rivers and other places where water was in sufficient plenty for total immersion.

It has been suggested that when Paul and Silas took the Philippian jailer and baptized him and his household, it might have been necessary to sprinkle; but, again, it might not have been necessary, for it is quite possible that there was a sufficient supply of water at the prison, or at the jailer's house, in the form of a pool or a fountain, to permit of immersion. The record does not go into detail on this point, but it is a legitimate inference that the apostle would not have violated the command in a way which would render it invalid for salvation: it is not wise to base a theory or propound an objection on such an unsatisfactory foundation. Let not a doubtful occasion contradict a number of explicit statements.

As against the virtue of a triumph of convenience and common-sense over the direct command of God and the practice of the apostles, it is well to consider the case of Naaman the Syrian, who was healed of his leprosy (II Kings 5). The prophet of God told him to wash in Jordan seven times and his flesh should be clean.

He objected. He thought it would be much nicer to wash in his own rivers at Damascus than in the Jordan (and when one has seen both the muddy Jordan, near Jericho, and the crystal-clear streams at Damascus he can to some extent sympathize with Naaman's preference). But no! The prophet of God told him to bathe in Jordan, and his own servant reasoned with him and persuaded him to do so; and, as a result, he was cured of his leprosy. Had he gone back to Damascus and bathed there, as a triumph of convenience and common-sense, he would not have been cleansed. So it is not permissible to change God's ordained method of baptism and substitute something else as a triumph of convenience and common-sense; if we do so, we do it at our peril.

Baptism is likened to a burial: only immersion can at all measure up to the parallel: surely neither sprinkling nor pouring can. Paul says, as already quoted, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6: 3, 4). "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2: 12). Jesus died a physical death and was literally buried; the believer dies a death to sin and is symbolically buried in water; that as Jesus literally arose to a new physical life, an unending life, so might the believer rise from a death to sin to a new life of righteousness before God. Only immersion can properly represent a burial.

#### THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

One object of baptism is the remission of sins. It is the divinely appointed ordinance in which the righteousness of Jesus becomes a covering for the sins of those baptized. So in Acts 2: 38, Peter, after having explained that the outpouring of the Spirit on the apostles on the Day of Pentecost was in fulfilment of a prophecy by Joel, and being asked by those hearers who were convinced by his preaching, "What shall we do?" said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

So Paul, in his defense after his arrest at Jerusalem, recounting his conversion and the incidents at Damascus, says that Ananias said to him, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I

looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:13-16).

Another object of baptism is to induct the believer into Jesus Christ. It may seem a simple procedure for so important a result, but it is the divinely ordained way for giving practical expression to faith, for rendering obedience to the truth. All the truth in the world, believed only, will not save. Belief alone will not put a man or a woman "in Christ." In Romans 16:7 Paul says, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." We are in Adam by birth; we are not in Christ by birth; we get into Him by belief of and obedience to the truth. So these friends of Paul were baptized before he was; they were "in Christ" before him. He says to the Galatians, as already quoted, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). The salutations to the churches of baptized believers to whom he wrote contain such expressions as these: "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Corinthians 1:2); "To the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:1); "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi" (Philippians 1:1); "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse" (Colossians 1:1). He was not writing to everyone, but only to those who were "in Christ," who had believed the gospel and been baptized.

Being in Christ had two results. It placed the believers in a new relationship legally. It freed them legally from the condemnation to death which came through Adam's transgression; it made them free from the law of sin and death; and it placed them in relation to the law of the spirit of life. Physically they were not released from death: in the absence of Jesus they would all in time die, or fall asleep. But through the changed relationship they would live again and, if faithful, be made alive forevermore. In Adam they were related only to sin and death; in Christ they are related to righteousness and life: and baptism is the dividing line; it is the rite or ceremony whereby a believer gets legally out of Adam and in Christ, and has the prospect of being physically redeemed also

from the law of death at the return of Jesus. Now the believers are justified in Him; at His coming they will also be glorified.

When sins are remitted, the believer is cleansed from sin and stands justified in the sight of God. A new start is made at baptism. The slate is wiped clean of all disfigurements. A new page is turned in the book of life. The apostle says to the Ephesians, "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (5:26). In the same epistle he says, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (4:32). To Titus he wrote, "The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:4-7).

#### WHO ARE PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM

It will be recalled that in our quotation of Article 27 of the Church of England, it said that "the baptism of young children is in anywise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ." This, however, is not in accord with Scripture. In no place do we find Jesus ordaining the baptism of young children; neither do we find the apostles practicing it. His commission to the apostles is recorded in Mark 16:15, 16: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (condemned)." It does not appear from this that Jesus ordained the baptism of infants, for it was a necessary preliminary that the gospel should be preached, heard and believed. So in Matthew's account of the commission, the apostles were told to teach, or make disciples of, all nations which implies the same understanding and belief of the gospel before baptism; and as this is impossible in the case of infants, Christ's words do not sanction the Article above quoted, or the common practice of sprinkling infants or young children—a practice founded upon an erroneous idea of what awaits the unbaptized. Yet the current practice has such a hold on religious people that we read of a case in which an infant was born and gave signs that its life would be of but a few hours' duration, and because no ordained minister could be readily found

to perform the ceremony, the medical man in attendance was requested to sprinkle a few drops of water upon its face, that it might be saved from eternal torment in hell which was supposed to be its doom if dying unbaptized.

In The Acts of the Apostles we see how the commission was carried out. As we have already seen, Peter on the Day of Pentecost said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). They who would be baptized must realize that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and that all are related to the law of sin and death through descent from Adam, and that forgiveness of sin and change of relationship may be obtained through Jesus.

In the eighth chapter of Acts it is recorded of the Samaritans that "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." This shows that an understanding of the gospel in its twofold aspect is needful before baptism. It also shows that the apostles only baptized adults, or at any rate, those of sufficient years to understand the gospel and its responsibilities. It is necessary to believe not only that through Jesus there is remission of sins, but also the truth concerning the kingdom of God yet to be established, in the earth with Jesus as King.

In the same chapter there is an account of Philip overtaking a eunuch of Ethiopia who was in a chariot, reading the prophecy of Isaiah. The two rode on together and Philip expounded the things that were written in the prophecies concerning Christ. He also evidently pointed out the way of salvation, for as they came to a certain water the eunuch said, "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (Acts 8:26-37). So Philip ordered "the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (verse 38). Only adult believers were baptized by the apostles. The sprinkling of unconscious infants is of no more efficacy than their daily bath, as regards salvation.

It has been suggested that there were probably children in the family of the Philippian jailer, but this is as much a supposition as that there might not have been water enough for immersion. It is just as probable that there were not children in his household. In any case, it is testified that "they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:32). So those

who were baptized seem to have been old enough to understand the apostle's preaching as to what was necessary to be done in order to be saved. From apostolic practice, even as those who now practice sprinkling admit, as well as from the institution of Christ, it may clearly be seen that none are fit subjects for baptism but those who are of sufficient years to fully realize its significance, importance and responsibilities.

#### BAPTISM A BEGINNING

Baptism is the first act of obedience to be rendered when one hears and believes the gospel; the whole life after must be such as to maintain the position then attained. Baptism places one "in Christ," but it is necessary to continue "in Christ" if salvation is to be consummated in the bestowal of immortality and honor and glory in the day of Christ's coming. Baptism is not in itself a "guarantee" of salvation: it places one in a position to be saved, but does not insure that he will never fall back and so come short at last. Even Paul the great apostle says he did certain things lest he should become a castaway: he tried as hard as the athlete in the Grecian races or the boxer in the games of skill: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:27).

Baptism is the beginning of a new life. Paul says in the sixth chapter of Romans, from which we have already quoted, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. . . . Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:4-13).

The nature before baptism is spoken of as the "old man" who is said to be crucified at baptism: that is sin, which should no longer reign in those who have been baptized. In like manner the new nature is the new man of righteousness. The same simile is used in

the letter to the Colossians, and the same exhortation is given to holy living: "Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:10-12); and "But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3:8-11). In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks of the manner in which unenlightened gentiles walk and adds: "But ye have not so learned Christ; "if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:20-24).

Peter says: "Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue (that is, moral courage); and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity (or, love)" (II Peter 1:5-7).

The contrast between the works of sin and the works of righteousness is very concisely and emphatically set forth in the letter to the Galatians; there they are called the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the

Spirit" (Galatians 5:19-25). And in the next chapter, verses 7 and 8, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Not to ourselves again,  
Not to the flesh we live;  
Not to the world henceforth shall we  
Our strength, our being give.

The time past of our lives  
Sufficeth to have wrought  
The fleshly will, which only ill  
To us hath ever brought.

Life worketh in us now,  
Life is for us in store;  
So death is swallowed up of life,  
We live forevermore.

When He who is our life  
Appears to take the throne,  
We, too, shall be revealed and shine  
In glory like His own.

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