

The Histories of Jew, Gentile and Church of God

By J. G. DECK

Accompanied and Illustrated
with a Chart

LONDON :
GEORGE MORRISH, 20, Paternoster Square.

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P R E F A C E

THIS pamphlet does not pretend to be a work on prophecy. In it there is probably nothing that has not been brought forward long ago ; but the matter being arranged in a new way, it is hoped it will prove interesting and helpful to readers.

Of making books there is still no end. Of evil books, which seduce from the faith and corrupt the word of God, there is no end : they increase ; the press teems with them ; the enemy has indeed come in like a flood.

Therefore there should be increased energy in presenting the truth. May the Spirit of God raise up and sustain fresh witness for Christ ; and may there be no end to the production of fresh books devoted to His interests. This pamphlet is an effort in that direction. May God grant it His blessing.

J. GEORGE DECK.

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The Histories of Jew, Gentile and Church of God

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God."—*1 Corinthians x. 32.*

THE inhabitants of Corinth were thus divided by the apostle Paul into three classes, to one or other of which every one belonged, and the saints there were supposed to be able to distinguish one from the other.

I propose to trace briefly from scripture the origin, past and future history of each class ; and I have prepared the accompanying chart to help to do this ; its plan is this :—Each class is represented by a horizontal coloured band. The centre one, coloured yellow, gives Gentile history ; the lower one, coloured green, that of Israel and of the Jews ; while the upper one, coloured blue, gives the history of the Church of God. The course of time moves from the left to the right.

The yellow band, representing the Gentiles, commences at an earlier date than either of the others. That date is B.C. 2247, when the tower of Babel was built. In Genesis x. and xi. we have the account of man's daring sin, and of how God confounded their presumptuous scheme by confounding their tongues and scattering them abroad upon the face of the earth. Wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them and brought on them the very judgment they sought to avert. This is the origin of Babylon, a name and principle of evil which runs through scripture from here to the end.

We must now turn to important verses in Deuteronomy xxxii. 8, 9. "When the Most High (contrast with man's puny high tower) divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This passage illustrates Acts xv. 18, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning," and brings into view the purpose of God. It is good to be established in this, that God is over all. There are mysteries—dark, solemn mysteries—that we cannot fathom : mysteries of iniquity and consequently of judgment to come. But God can make no mistakes, and it is for us to quietly wait and hope to the end, and we shall see the salvation of God, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. Thus, when God separated the nations, He had in view a people, a nation not yet in existence, of whom it was prophesied later, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numbers xxiii. 9.)

Now this nation, this peculiar people, was the seed of Abraham the friend of God, and we will now look at their history shown by the green band.

About 200 years after the building of Babel, God, the God of glory, appeared to Abraham, then dwelling in Charran in Mesopotamia, and called him to leave that country and go to another which He promised to give him and to his seed for a possession, and Abraham obeyed the call. Later on God appeared to him again when he was dwelling in the land, and made fresh, fuller promises : and told him the history of his seed, when he had as yet no child nor hope of one. Now man writes the history of the past, but God declares things to come beforehand and takes His people into His confidence. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." What a favour to be enlightened as to what God is going to do. God said, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I shall do ?" It did not affect Abraham personally that Sodom was about to be destroyed, but God treated him as His friend. "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth," said our Lord to His disciples. Now God makes known to us in the sure words of prophecy what He is going to do, but if we do not care to hear and only want to know what will make us happy and safe and what will secure our interests, that is base selfishness.

In Genesis xv. 13, 14, we read, "He said unto Abraham, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land

that is not theirs (Egypt) 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 they shall *come out* with great substance.” This coming out was called the exodus and took place B.C. 1494, about 700 years after the building of Babel, and that is really the beginning of Isreal’s national history. As foretold, they were in cruel, hopeless bondage, and God came down and delivered them from Pharaoh and from Egypt. Is it not wonderful that God should take up a nation of slaves and claim them as His own ? His message to Pharaoh was, “ Let my people go that they may serve me.” He did everything for them before they did a single thing for Him. He did all for His own glory and because He chose to.

Israel’s history was a sad one. Though they were a chosen people with marvellous privileges, they did not respond to the goodness of God, Whose purpose was to set them on high, above all nations of the earth. God was faithful and brought them into a good land, the land of Canaan. But their possession of it was conditional on their obedience. If they continued in His covenant and walked in His law, they were to be the head of the nations and have every sort of earthly prosperity and blessing ; but they did not continue in it, and so again and again were chastened and brought into servitude to their enemies around. Later on there was kingly power set up, and there was marvellous blessing in the reigns of David and Solomon ; all the promises of God then seemed to be made good : all the riches of the nations around flowed into them, and king Solomon’s fame went out to all the world. But it did not continue—man always breaks down—and so we find judgment came upon the nation and it was broken into two kingdoms—that of Judah with two tribes, and that of Israel with ten tribes. The surrounding nations were also used to chastise them, but all in vain. They got worse and worse and finally they were carried into captivity ; Jerusalem’s walls were broken down, and the beautiful temple—the house of God—burned and laid waste ; the glory of God departed from the land, and king and people were carried captives to Babylon.

Then the power that God had entrusted to the kings of Israel passed into the hands of the Gentiles—that is a most important point to have clearly before us. If we turn to Luke xxi. 24, we find that the Lord Jesus speaks there of a remarkable period called the times of the Gentiles : “ 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.*" If we were to go to Jerusalem now we should find it still in the hands of the Gentiles, proving that the times of the Gentiles are running on ; they are not ended yet, and it is very important to see that. But when did they begin ?—At the time when the world power passed from Israel to the Gentile. Power belongs to God and He can raise up whom He pleases. He gave power and glory to Solomon, but He could not continue it to an apostate nation ; and the book of Daniel tells us about the four great Gentile monarchies to whom God successively entrusted earthly dominion and how they used it. Daniel was carried away into captivity to Babylon, but he remained true to God ; he kept himself undefiled amid the pollutions of the heathen king's court, and God marvellously blessed him. It was a dark day when Jerusalem was broken down, but there was no change in God. So Daniel held to the truth and faith of God just as firmly as ever ; he honoured God and God honoured him.

In Daniel ii. we read that Nebuchadnezzar had a remarkable dream ; he forgot it, but it was impressed on his mind that it was not a common dream, so he called in all the wise men and magicians, but the wisdom of the world is of no use in the things of God ; they could not help him. God made known to Daniel what the dream was. Daniel came in and told the dream and the interpretation : " As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind. . . . Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to peices" (Daniel ii. 29-35). This was what was going to take place hereafter. A great many people wonder what is going to take place hereafter—Nebuchadnezzar did, and God made it known to him through the dream interpreted to him by Daniel ; that's what God does—he makes known what is coming to pass. There were to be four great kingdoms—empires in succession. These are shown on the chart by another band inside the yellow Gentile band, divided into four unequal parts, connected by a bracket ; the whole forming the important period called " the times of the Gentiles." No. 1, coloured gold, sets forth the Babylonian kingdom ;

No. 2, silver, the Medo-Persian ; No. 3, bronze, the Grecian ; and No. 4, black, the Roman—all corresponding to the four parts of the great image.

To show the great importance of this prophetic period of the times of the Gentiles, God has given another witness, that in the mouth of two witnesses every word may be established. Daniel himself had a vision later on, the same truth and history, but presented in a very different way. Daniel saw four terrible beasts, representing the same empires, but as they appear morally to a saint of God. Men of the world glory in war and in strife ; in a man rising to the height of power and establishing a great empire ; they say, "what a wonderful man he must be," and so on ; but these great conquerors, these mighty men of the earth, are like wild beasts that fill the earth with bloodshed and misery. Thus the same four empires that appear to the heathen monarch as a magnificent, glorious image, appear to the saint of God as four ravaging wild beasts.

In the left-hand upper corner of the chart are given pictures of the great image and the four beasts, side by side, but not connected with the chart itself.

How did Nebuchadnezzar use the power that was entrusted to him ? Was he faithful to the Giver of it ? No ; he set up a huge image in the Plain of Dura, and commanded all peoples to fall down and worship it under pain of death. He did what has been done again and again since ; he set up a state religion ; he sought to coerce and come in between the consciences of the people and God. Three men stood out and obeyed God rather than the king, and having cast them into the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar had to own that there was no god like their God—the Most High God.

The second kingdom was the Medo-Persian—its head, Darius, took God's place by making a law that no prayer was to be made to any god or man save to himself for thirty days, and cast God's servant Daniel into the den of lions for breaking that iniquitous law. That is how man uses, or rather abuses, the power God gives him.

The third kingdom, the Grecian, was to be characterized by lightness, activity, rapidity, but to end in disaster and division.

In the Book of Daniel we get not only historical facts, but we see how the Gentiles use the power entrusted to them by the Most High ; that they are no better than the Jews

from whose hands it was taken for their mighty sins. Jew and Gentile are alike unfaithful and guilty. The very goodness of God tested them, but they did not glorify God or continue in His goodness. In chapter iii the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, is related ; he set up a state religion, compelling all to obey him rather than God by worshipping an idol and casting into a fiery furnace the men of God who refused to do so. In chapter v we see how the head of the second empire, Darius the Medo-Persian monarch, behaved—he put himself in God's place, made an unalterable decree that he was to be prayed to and none else for thirty days and cast God's faithful servant Daniel to the lions. So much is history : but the conduct of the two remaining kingdoms (the third and fourth beasts being in Daniel's day still future) has to be made known by prophecy : that of the fourth beast, great and terrible, being given in chapter vii, where we read of its making war with the saints, and speaking great words against the Most High ; while in chapter ix. worse still is told us, for there, verse 26, the Messiah is "cut off," and it was the Roman power, the fourth beast in its first stage (Revelation xvii. 8) that murdered the Son of God.

Now in Daniel viii, supplemented largely by Daniel xi, we have the conduct of the third beast foretold, and mention is made of a period of time, 2300 days. This period, only mentioned in this one place in Scripture, figures largely in the extraordinary prophetic scheme put forth by the Seventh Day Adventists and is really the foundation on which most of it is built up ; this makes it more important than it otherwise might have been to ascertain the meaning of .the chapter, and leads me to submit the following thoughts for consideration.

In Daniel viii the leopard with four heads of chapter vii is represented by a rough goat with a great horn, the first king—Alexander the Great ; Josephus tells us that he, warned by a vision from God, protected the Jews. When the great horn was broken four others came up, and out of one of them a "little horn," which must not be confounded with the "little horn" of chapter vii, which will spring from out of the ten horns of the fourth beast. This little horn no doubt was Antiochus Epiphanes ; he fearfully persecuted the people of God—yea, he magnified himself against God—the Prince of the host ; took away the daily sacrifice and polluted the sanctuary ; he cast truth to the ground and prospered. Then Daniel heard the cry so often wrung from the suffering saints of God, "How long ?" and a definite

answer was given, "Unto 2300 days ; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." And first I would point out that there is no explanation given of this period of time—it does not belong to "the last end of the indignation" (verse 19). Daniel seeks to know the meaning of the vision and Gabriel is sent to enlighten him, but he does not refer to those days, unless the first clause of verse 26 is a reference—it possibly may be, but if so it simply confirms the statement of verse 14, without enlarging or explaining it.

Now it was pointed out long ago "that we are never to suppose that the explanations of a vision in Scripture are merely a repetition of what has gone before. They allude to the past, but they add fresh features not given before. . . . the explanatory part adds fresh information that looks onward to the last days"—and these really are the more important. Thus—there being no explanation—the period of 2300 days was fulfilled in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and has no future fulfilment. Of course this is so, as in this chapter it is the conduct of the third beast, the Grecian Empire, that is given and not that of the Roman or fourth Beast, which will be in the last end of the indignation—other scriptures give that—though we must remember the explanation goes beyond the vision and describes a mighty king, who shall stand up against the Prince of princes.

What then is the explanation of the period of 2300 days ? It refers to the time during which the daily sacrifice was taken away and the sanctuary was polluted : the marginal reading and the correct meaning of "days" in verse 14 being 'evening morning,' the occasions of offering the daily sacrifice—there were two such each ordinary day : thus 2300 sacrifices, offered evening and morning would represent 1150 ordinary days, or three years and seventy days (the Jewish year consisted of 360 days.) Now it is a matter of history that Judas Maccabeus, the deliverer God raised up to free His people from the power of Antiochus, cleansed the sanctuary and re-dedicated the temple on the 25th of Chislev, B.C. 165, and that he did it on the exact anniversary of the day three years before that the image of Jupiter Olympius had been erected in the temple, and sacrifices had been offered to it, which seems to be the fulfilment of Daniel xi. 31—the placing of the transgression or abomination of desolation in the sanctuary : this must not be confounded with what is still future as described in Daniel xii. 11, and referred to by our Lord in Matthew xxiv. 15—"When ye shall see the abomination

of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place."

Thus we have a period of three years or 1080 days out of the 1150: no doubt the daily sacrifice was taken away and the sanctuary polluted quite seventy days ere the climax was reached in setting up the image of Jupiter in the temple. On a previous occasion two years before (B.C. 170) this monster of iniquity had plundered the temple and sacrificed a sow on the altar of burnt offering, but he did not then stop the daily sacrifice, for, for a huge sum of money he appointed Menelaus to be high priest, but two years later he issued a decree commanding the whole nation to apostatize and conform to the Greek religion—putting to death all who refused; he suppressed all observances of the Jewish religion, burned every copy of the law that could be found—cast truth to the ground, and stamped and trod under foot the sanctuary and the host of God's people: and the answer to the bitter cry of the saints "How long?" was that this was to continue 1150 days, and so it did exactly.

Thus this chapter has to do with the conduct of the third beast, and while the explanation reaches on to the last end of the indignation, the period of 2300 evenings and mornings does not; it is referred to in no other part of Scripture; it is fulfilled and is no longer of importance. A knowledge of this will be helpful in dealing with the Seventh Day Adventist delusion.

And what did the fourth beast do with its God-given power? Ah! it was the Roman power that crucified Christ. Pilate, a Roman Governor, after again and again attesting His innocence, condemned Him to death. He knew He had done nothing amiss, and yet unrighteously delivered Him to be crucified. That's how man uses the power God gives him; and later on, during almost the whole existence of the fourth beast in its first form, pagan Rome shed the blood of the saints as water by ten terrible persecutions. I have said "*in its first form,*" for this terrible fourth beast, in an altered and final form, is yet to figure in this world's history, ere it is smitten by the Stone cut out without hands.

In Rev. xvii. we read of it again, and in verse 8 it says that "*it was, is not, and shall ascend.*" "*Yet is,*" at the end of the verse, in the revised version is rendered "*shall come*" —Greek, "*shall be present.*" I have sought to represent this on the chart by colouring the long space, marked 4, strongly and darkly at its ends and faintly between. We also have

details of it given in Revelation xii. ; in Revelation it is represented in its final form with *seven* heads, whereas in Daniel it has only one.

But I must now refer to another period of time equally important, but in connection with Israel's or Jewish history and known as "the seventy weeks of Daniel." This period is shown on the chart by a band let into the green band of Israel's history, coloured orange, and separated into two unequal parts by a long uncoloured space, with "Lo AMMI" written on it. The period commenced B.C. 445, but the time of its end is still future and unknown to men. The prophecy concerning it is given in the ninth chapter of Daniel, which opens up with Daniel agonising in prayer for his people and the city—Jerusalem—and confessing their many mighty sins.

A speedy answer came. Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him and told him that seventy weeks were determined upon his people and the holy city. *Determined*, and of course by God, is a remarkable word. It is not only fore-known ; it did not matter what earth's mighty men planned, they could only carry out the determinate counsel of God. The passage continues "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy." What a blessed prospect ; their national history had been an appalling one—perpetual backsliding and apostasy (see Jeremiah ii. ; Ezekiel xvi. and xxiii.) ; and now, after hundreds of years of it, the transgression is to be finished, reconciliation made by Messiah Himself (Isaiah liii.) for all their iniquity, and everlasting righteousness brought in. The people will be all righteous (Isaiah lx. 21) and all shall know the LORD from the least to the greatest (Jeremiah xxxi. 34) by reason of the new covenant God will make with the house of Israel.

The seventy weeks are divided into three periods, *seven*, *sixty-two*, and *one*. I would say the weeks are of years, not days ; and the sixty-nine ($7+62$) extend from the commandment given by Artaxerxes, B.C. 445, to rebuild the city (not the temple) to Messiah the Prince. During the first *seven* the city was built in troublous times ; the second period, sixty-two weeks, reaches from the completion of the city to the cutting off of the Messiah, marked on the chart by the cross (+). The third period, the last week, yet awaits its accomplishment. The interval between the two last periods, already over 1,900 years long, is a prophetic blank in Israel's history, God having cast them off for the time because of

their rejection of the Messiah ; it is the “ many days ” during which the children of Israel abide without a king and without a Prince and without a sacrifice, etc. (Hosea iii. 4). It is an immense parenthesis during which the Jews are set aside and God is bringing in the “ fulness of the Gentiles ” (Romans xi. 25).

A little consideration shows that this must be so : for seven years after the Cross the transgressions of Israel were not finished and everlasting righteousness was not brought in, and these magnificent promises were not accomplished ; on the contrary, on account of the crowning sin of crucifying their Messiah, a darker day than ever set in, according to the Lord’s words in Luke xxi. 23 : “ 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,” &c. ; as also was foretold in Daniel ix. 26 : “ The people (Roman) of the prince that shall come (not Titus, but the future Beast or head of the Roman empire) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary,” all which has literally come to pass.

We will now for a time leave Israel’s history, and see what happens during the time they are set aside.

Look again at the chart. At the time of the blank in Israel’s history a new history begins, shown by another band coloured blue above the Gentile band, and marked “ THE CHURCH.”

This period is also called “ THE PRESENT DISPENSATION,” and it surpasses all others in importance because it is especially connected with the Lord Jesus Christ ; He, “ the second Man,” having come on the scene, everything is of importance as it relates to Him. And that is what gives the Church such a peculiar place of pre-eminence and dignity ; not because of the blessings bestowed on the favoured ones who compose it, but because of the closeness of its relation to Christ—it is His body, His bride, the object of His love.

About the time of the rise of the fourth beast, the Roman empire, Christ was born in Bethlehem. Luke records that He preached in the synagogue of Nazareth the acceptable year of the Lord as having begun ; fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah lxi. 2, first clause, where He shut the book ; and later on the Cross, He was “ cut off,” according to Daniel ix. 26, and had nothing. Apparently He laboured in vain and spent His strength for nought. Israel was not gathered

(Isaiah xlix. 4, 5). His own received Him not, but the Heavens received Him. He was received up into glory : God glorified His Son Jesus, Who had so perfectly glorified Him. He could not be holden of death ; He ascended on high. This is shown on the chart by the arrow with the golden crown above it. Christ was worthily received above and crowned with glory and honour ; the everlasting doors were lift up, that the King of glory might come in, and He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, but it was “ until ” ; the word to Him was “ Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool.” He is yet to rise up, to come again, to “ be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel” (2 Thessalonians i. 7; 8.) Then will be fulfilled the second clause of verse 2 of Isaiah lxi., “ and the day of vengenace of our God.”

Now while the Lord Jesus is thus enthroned on high and waiting the appointed time for His appearing again, what happens on earth ? Not much outwardly visible, no vengeance falls on guilty man for his crowning sin of the murder of the Son of God, at least, not at once, and then only on the guilty Jews, not on the world at large. In answer to the dying prayer of the Saviour : “ Father forgive them for they know not what they do,” space for repentance is still given, and repentance and forgiveness of sins are preached, in the name of the One they had crucified, to the guilty city and nation. But all in vain, save to a small remnant.

But though small at the outset, a new beginning is made by the coming and working of the Spirit of God. The Church (coloured blue on the chart), the Body of Christ is formed, and the Kingdom is preached and set up, but in a mysterious form ; so that this present dispensation we are considering and living in may well be called “ the Spirit’s day.” The Spirit of God had worked in various ways in all ages ; He had striven with men, and souls were quickened by Him ; holy men of God spoke (and wrote) as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But the Lord Jesus, to comfort the sorrowing disciples, on the eve of His departure, promised the Spirit in a new and more wonderful way. In answer to His prayer, the Father would give them another Comforter to abide with them for ever—not to come and then leave them as Jesus was doing (John xiv. 16). He would be in them and teach them, guide them into all truth and show them things to come. The coming of the Comforter would usher in a new day—“ at that day ” (John xiv. 20)—but His coming was dependent on the

departure of Christ, which thus became expedient for them (John xvi. 7), and this accords with John vii. 39, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Then after His resurrection, and before His ascension, Jesus told them more, made them two distinct promises—(1) That not many days after they should be baptised with the Holy Ghost ; (2) That they should receive power after that the Holy Ghost had come upon them, and be witnesses unto Christ. Both these were fulfilled ten days later, on the day of Pentecost. As to the first, which is of immense importance, I will quote from another :—

"The Church was not founded when Christ first spoke of it to His disciples (Matthew xvi. 18, 'I will build my church'), nor is any trace of it seen before His death, or after His resurrection until this time. In the first chapter of Acts, the disciples are assembled, but merely as a number of individual believers. Nothing as yet indicates that they were gathered in any corporate character. At the close of the next chapter, however, which describes the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we read that the Church, till then spoken of only as a future thing, was already in existence, for 'the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved' (Acts ii. 47). The baptism of the Holy Ghost foretold by Joel and John the Baptist is connected with the establishment of the Kingdom in power and righteousness. The baptism of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost is connected with the establishment of the Church."

"The effect then of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was to gather into one body or assembly those who before this event were nothing more than individual believers. Up to this time they had been like the Old Testament saints—'just men,' each having life, each quickened by the Spirit, each the object of God's favour and grace. Now, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost they are formed into God's assembly or Church. Nor is this merely an inference from the fact that the Church is first named immediately after this baptism had taken place. The apostle Paul, speaking of the Church as the Body of Christ, expressly says that 'By one spirit we are all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit' (1 Corinthians xii. 13). In whatever other way therefore the Spirit acts, the effect of the 'baptism' of the Holy Ghost promised by our Lord just before His ascension and fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost was to form into one assembly the isolated and even antagonistic elements (Jew and Gentile) composing

the Church ; so that instead of merely being a number of individual believers, they became in scriptural language members of the same body as closely connected with each other and with Christ as limb with limb, or as the limbs with the head.

" This then is the real character and effect of the ' baptism ' of the Holy Ghost. To apply the name to a great work in the way of conversions is simply a mistake. No doubt, the two things happened together at Pentecost, and no doubt the conversions then wrought were the result of that testimony which the coming of the Spirit helped the disciples to bear. But the coming of the Holy Ghost promised in John's gospel, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost promised in Acts i. are quite different in character and object, though both form part of the same great transaction—the descent of the Spirit to abide on earth as the representative of Christ during His absence. The *coming* of the Spirit gave power for testimony ; the *baptism* of the Spirit formed the disciples into one body or assembly. The two things were quite distinct, simultaneous but not synonymous.

" The Church is not merely a number of saved persons, but the body of saints formed on earth in unity with Christ in heaven as their Head, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, consequent on the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God."

Now, the Spirit is spoken of as a " gift " (Acts ii. 38), the gift of the Father (John xiv. 16), the gift of God (Acts v. 32). But this given Spirit Himself gave gifts to individuals, " dividing to every man as He will." Some of these are mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 4-11. Some of the last have not been continued to a fallen Church. One of the most striking was the gift of tongues given on the day of Pentecost so that the new testimony, the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, might be preached to every creature. When the Lord was here on earth and sent forth the twelve, He said, " Go *not* into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel " (Matthew x. 5, 6). But after He had died and risen again, having finished the work given Him to do, He said, " Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned " (Mark xvi. 15, 16). And it was to be done quickly ; Jerusalem had in it men out of every nation under heaven, and the disciples, without ever learning their languages, were able by the gift of tongues that very day to

speak and tell forth the wonderful works of God. The sin of man was not to stand in the way of blessing to man ; so grace reversed and undid the judgment passed on man at Babel.

What a wonderful thing the Church is ! We want to think of it ; Christ does. In Ephesians v. 25, we read, "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. That He might present *it* to himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Mark the word "*it*"—a small word but very important. At the beginning of the chapter we read, "Christ also hath loved us ;" quite true, but each one of the "*us*" can say, and it is not saying too much, "Christ loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*." But am I the only one ? No, there are tens of thousands more, so we can say "Christ loved *us*." But here the "*us*" is changed into "*it*." John xi. 52 is fulfilled : Christ has died to gather into one the children of God ; and Matthew xvi. 18, is also fulfilled, "Upon this rock I will build my church." The church is not a footstool for the feet of the King, but an object for the joy of His heart. It is a great mystery hidden in ages past, but now made known. The Church is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

All this is like light in the darkness and gladdens our hearts, though we must not dwell on it longer, but sorrowfully point out that even in the Church on earth (as in everything committed to man's care) failure, declension and apostasy set in. Of course this was all foreseen and foretold ; and warnings were given and promises were made to overcomers. First, the Lord Jesus, as recorded by Matthew, depicted in a series of parables what would take place in the kingdom of heaven—that the servants would sleep and the enemy sow tares among the wheat ; that a woman (Revelation ii. 20, "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants") would introduce among the meal, leaven (false doctrine, Matthew xvi. 11, 12) till the whole was leavened ; that the grain of mustard seed would become a great tree, a world power, and afford shelter to the birds of the air, the agents of the wicked one ; that of the ten virgins professing to wait for their Lord, half would be foolish, without the oil (the Spirit) and consequently shut out, whereas *all* would give up watching, and slumber and sleep. Then Paul by the Spirit testified expressly to Timothy that some would depart from the faith, and in his second epistle that evil men and seducers would grow worse and worse, and

that perilous times should come. Peter and Jude and John all bear the same witness to the corruption of the best thing there has ever been on earth ; all ending up in a system of ecclesiastical wickedness, personified under the emblem of a woman. In Revelation xvii. she is depicted : John " saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

This corruption is shown on the chart by the red introduced into the lower part of the blue band, faint at first, becoming more and more pronounced, and finally becoming quite distinct, and remaining all red after the blue is gone.

We have traced the history of Jew, Gentile, and Church of God up to the present time. I have no doubt that the midnight cry of Matthew xxv., " Behold the Bridegroom," has gone forth during the last sixty years, that there has been a trimming of lamps and a stir among professing Christians, and that we are on the very eve of the fulfilment of the parting promise of our Lord, " I will come again and receive you to myself."

Now for the future. What next ? The first event is the rapture of the Church. In 1 Thessalonians i. 9, 10, the apostle writes how these Thessalonians had turned to God from idols to serve the true and living God and to wait for His Son from heaven. They were but " babes " in Christ, yet one of the first things the apostle taught them was " to wait for the Son of God from heaven " ; and in every chapter of that short epistle we find the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ mentioned. In chapter iv. 15 we read, " 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 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 : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord." But here we must carefully notice that

it is not only those that are alive on the earth at the coming of the Lord that are caught up ; verse 16 says "the dead in Christ shall rise." This is "the resurrection of the just" mentioned in Luke xiv. 14 ; also called "the first resurrection" in Revelation xx. 6 : "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Now, at death the spirit leaves the body, and dead saints are sometimes spoken of in scripture with special reference to the *body*, and then they are said to be "in their graves," as Jesus said : "The hour is coming in the which all that are *in the graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life ;" but sometimes they are spoken with special reference to the *spirit*, and then they are said to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord." Now, when Jesus comes He will bring with Him those that sleep in Him, their spirits present with Him ; and their bodies, sown in corruption, dishonour and weakness, will be raised in incorruption, glory and power ; body and spirit will be re-united ; the dead will be raised incorruptible, and the living changed and fashioned like to His glorious body ; both caught up *together* to be for ever with the Lord. This much on the first resurrection, simultaneous with the rapture of the Church. Two special events happen when the saints reach the glory with Christ. The one, their standing (in their already glorified bodies, no question of sin or condemnation) before the judgment seat of Christ, to have their works and services looked into ; I just name some passages —Matthew xxv. 19 ; Romans xiv. 10 ; 1 Corinthians iii. 13-15 ; 2 Corinthians v. 10 ; 1 Peter i. 7. Bad works will be burned up, good works rewarded and remain : these will constitute the righteousness of the saints (Revelation xix. 8), the fine linen, clean and white (shining) in which it is granted to the Bride to appear at the second event, viz., the marriage of the Lamb. But this fine linen must not be confounded with "the best robe" put upon each returning prodigal to fit him for the Father's house.

I read in Luke's gospel, "When once the master of the house has risen up and shut to the door." He is sitting now. He rises up and shuts to the door, but previously takes all His own to Himself. They that are Christ's at His coming go in and the door is shut. Then events rapidly take place, both in Heaven and on earth. Visions of these were given to the apostle John, and we have his description of them in the Book of Revelation, in chapters iv. to xxii. He comes first to gather His own to Himself ; they meet Him in the air and go in with Him to the marriage. There is not much told us

about that. Perhaps we have not the capacity to take in those things yet. Most that is given us relates to the earth and the millennium. But the most important matter surely is the place Christ has in heavenly glory. Everything there is what suits the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ ; very little would suit us ; and as to our deserts—we have none—everything we get is through pure sovereign grace. What is due to the One who stooped so low in sorrow and shame and death and judgment—what is He worthy of ? Can any glory be too great ? Any honour too high ? Oh, no ! He has been crowned with glory and honour ! His coming is the event we are waiting for. There is no date given for it ; dates all relate to Israel, but the reckoning of Israel's time has stopped for the present, for God does not count time when Israel is not recognised by Him. There is a delay in God's dealings with Israel. " Of that day and that hour knoweth no man," therefore the attitude of the people of Christ is ever to be one of expectation and waiting ; and that is a wholesome attitude—it is a good thing to be doing—looking for Him, waiting for Him. The influences of the world would have very little power over us if we were steadfastly " looking up and beholding the glory of the Lord." What a happy way of being preserved, and delivered from the power of evil. When He rises up and shuts to the door, it terminates the day of grace. The door shall be shut. Now it is open ; the invitation goes out far and wide—God's house will be filled. That is His purpose.

Luke xiv. 23, " Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." In spite of all the perverseness of man, God is to be glorified and the gospel message presented. In the 22nd of Matthew the prominent thought in the great supper is not so much the need of man, though it is for the needy ones, but the King is making a marriage for *His Son*. The blessing of the guests, the needy ones who are pressed and compelled to come in, is a small thing compared with the glory and satisfaction of Christ, which are the uppermost things in the purpose of God.

Isaiah lxi. That's the chapter the Lord Jesus read when He went into the synagogue at Nazareth. " The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted ; 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." When He had read that far, He shut the book and said " This day is this

scripture fulfilled in your ears." Why didn't he read more ? I will read the next clause : " And the day of vengeance of our God." That was not then fulfilled, and therefore He shut the book. But that is what follows. This day of grace has lasted over 1900 years. The next thing is the day of vengeance of our God. Because He didn't read it then, it does not follow that the day of vengeance will not take place. Before God smites He warns ; before He pours out His judgment He deals in mercy. Look how He smote Egypt with fearful plagues, and wasn't there a time of mercy first ? Think what a saviour God had raised up for Egypt in Joseph. He made himself known to Egypt as the living God, but they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Another king arose that knew not Joseph, and they clung to their abominations and idols, and how righteous it was of God to judge them. They enslaved and persecuted the people whose God had blessed them. Now this is a day of mercy ; in one sense God almost lets men alone ; of course there is His word, there is testimony from Him, yet we see men doing pretty well what they like, and God is keeping silent. " These things hast thou done, and I kept silence " (Psalm l. 21) ; and men say, " Where is the promise of His coming," and He bears with them ; but it won't go on for ever.

" Oh ! listen to the silence of our God,
The earth is filled with violence and wrong,
And yet he smites not with His iron rod
In answer to the moan of saints ' How long ? '

So patient, dwelling in Eternity,
So pitiful, because Omnipotent ;
He wills not that the guilty soul should die,
He waits—it may be sinners will repent.

And thus the voice of blasphemy is heard,
And deeds of shame pollute the sultry air ;
And scoffers still repeat their taunting word
' Where is the promise of His coming ? Where ? '

Listen, His silence speaks Almighty power,
Power, and compassion in the ear of faith ;
It shall not be for ever—soon the hour
Of judgment shall proclaim ' Jehovah saith.'

Our God shall come ; His silence shall be broken ;
The universe shall listen and obey ;
Ye heavens and earth, rejoice ; the Lord hath spoken,
And darkness melts in everlasting day."

We have now to look at events on earth following the rapture of the Church and the setting in of the “day of vengeance,” and we have still three classes whose histories we have to trace out—the Jew, the Gentile, and no longer the Church of God, but the apostate Church, Babylon the Great. The “times of the Gentiles” have not yet quite run out. The civil world power is still in their hands: the feet of the image have not yet been smitten by the stone that is to fill the whole earth: but there is to be no longer delay, the mystery of God is to be finished (Revelation x. 6, 7) and the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. We will first look at the most conspicuous prominent actor in these awful times: we read of him in Daniel ix. 26 as, “The prince that shall come”; in Daniel vii., as “the little horn” that shall speak great words against the Most High; in Revelation xiii., as the “beast” to whom “was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty-two months”; in Revelation xix. 19, at the head of the confederated kings of the earth and their armies he makes war with God’s King of Kings and His army; and then we get his end in verse 20—he was taken and cast alive into the lake of fire. This mighty prince is the head of the revived Roman empire, the fourth beast of Daniel vii. It is important to notice that the term “beast” is applied sometimes to the whole empire and sometimes to the prince who is at its head and wields its power.

In Revelation xvii. 8, where “beast” denotes the empire, not the prince who is at its head, we read: “The beast that thou sawest *was, is not, and shall ascend* out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition.” “Was” refers to the first stage of its existence; “is not” to the present period; “shall ascend” to its coming into form again. It is described in Revelation xiii.: John “saw a beast rise up out of the sea the beast was like a leopard, his feet like unto the bear, his mouth as the mouth of a lion.” In it are combined the characteristics of the four beasts of Daniel’s vision: it has affinities with them all: it is the final development of the greatness and power of man; but it is *against* God, His Christ, His name, and them that dwell in Heaven. It was Satanic power, the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority (verse 2); of course, it was against God. Turn again to Revelation xvii., and we see this beast using his Satanic power at first to uphold and support another enemy of Christ—the woman, the apostate Church; but a

little later he becomes the unconscious executor of God's wrath upon her ; in verse 16 we read, " The ten horns . . . shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts *to fulfil His will.*" Chapter xviii. gives another witness to the same thing. As the true Church is likened to a woman, the Bride of the Lamb, and also to a glorious city, the new Jerusalem ; so is the false one, to a woman in the 17th chapter, and to a magnificent city in the 18th ; the name " Babylon the Great," with all the riches, glory, and splendour of this world, being given to both woman and city. In chapter xix. 1, 2, heaven attests and vindicates the judgment of God. " True and righteous are his judgments, for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornications, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. Alleluia."

Thus we have finished with the upper band of our chart —the true Church, the blue, was caught up to heavenly glory, and the false church, the red, destroyed by the beast : we will next see what this beast, this prince, did with the Jews. Turning again to Daniel ix. 27, we read, " And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week ; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." *He* is " the prince that shall come," spoken of in the previous verse, whose people destroyed the city and the sanctuary ; this cannot refer to the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, for it is sixty-nine weeks from the re-building of the city and after the cutting off of the Messiah ; this destruction of the city and temple was accomplished in A.D. 70, by Roman armies, the people of the " prince that shall come," who will be the future head of the Roman power ; but this verse says, " He will make a covenant with many for one week," seven years, and that the week will be divided *in the midst* into two parts, the latter variously named as " time, times, and the dividing of time," in Daniel vii. 25, and Daniel xii. 7 ; as forty-two months, in Revelation xi. 2, and xiii. 5 ; and as a thousand, two hundred and three score days, in Revelation xi. 3, and xii. 6.

We must now turn to Revelation xi., and I would remark that the visions and chapters of that book are not always consecutive ; some are parenthical, and enlargements of what has preceded. In chapter xi. two temples are mentioned— one in Heaven (verse 19) and one on earth (verse 1). With the later we have now to do. It is called " The temple of God " ; there is an altar there and worshippers : it is in

Jerusalem—called in verse 2 “The Holy City,” looked at according to the counsels of God, but in verse 8 it is “called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” This is looking at its actual condition and mighty sins. Who rebuilt this temple and set up this worship ? We are not expressly told ; still there is no doubt they are Jews, mostly still in belief, who have returned to their own land. I say “mostly” because they are divided into two classes—“the many” (Daniel ix. 27) and necessarily the rest, “a few” or remnant. Possibly all are together at first, and rebuild the temple and re-establish the old Jewish worship, the daily sacrifice and the oblation ; omitting details, clearly a mighty enemy threatens them from the north, the Assyrian spoken of as “an overflowing river” in Isaiah viii. ; as “an overflowing scourge” in Isaiah xxviii. This impending danger divides them into “the many” who trust in an arm of flesh, and the remnant who trust in the living God. “The many,” headed by their rulers, “the scornful men that rule this people, that is in Jerusalem” (Isaiah xxviii. 14-18), accept the patronage and protection of the mighty prince of the Roman earth, who confirms a covenant with them for one week (seven years) ; but it is a covenant with *death*, for that will be the end of it, and it is “an agreement with hell,” or “sheol,” for the beast is said to come from thence (Revelation xvii. 8).

In the midst of the week the prince will break the covenant, cause the worship of Jehovah to cease, and set up an idol, an image in the temple. This was spoken of by Jesus (Matthew xxiv. 15-22), “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. . . . For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world,” etc. This is the time spoken of in Daniel xii. 1 ; also Jeremiah xxx. 6, 7 : “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.” We must remember that previous to this, open Christianity had disappeared ; the true Church had been translated to heavenly glory—fulfilling God’s promise, “I will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world” (Revelation iii. 10), and the false Church had been destroyed by the beast. This may have encouraged the Jews to think it a favourable time to set up their own worship again, but they turn not to God from whom they have so deeply revolted, and only add sin to sin (Isaiah xxx. 1).

At this juncture arises another terrible personage, variously described as "the Antichrist" (1 John ii. 18) ; "the false prophet" (Revelation xix. 20) ; as "another beast" (Revelation xiii. 11) ; as "that man of sin"—"that wicked" (2 Thessalonians ii. 3, 4, 8) ; he sits and shows himself in the temple of God, as God. Everything God sets up is imitated : God has set a *Man* at His right hand for every knee to bow to, and His arch-enemy sets up man-worship too. Thus, Christianity being gone, the beast causes the sacrifice to cease, stamps out Judaism that has been revived before God's time and without His sanction (compare Deuteronomy i. 42-45) ; and through the agency of his partner the second beast, the false prophet, he sets up man or devil worship : "They worshipped the dragon which gave power to the beast, saying, Who is like unto him ? Who is able to make war with him ?" This goes on for 42 months ; "the many" under pain of death, succumb and yield, and receive the mark of the beast, having no true fear of God in them. And what do "the few," the God-fearing remnant, do ? Some warned by Christ's words in Matthew xxiv. will flee when the image is set up in the temple : these are presented under the emblem of a woman in Revelation xii. 6, 14 ; others are faithful and put to death : these are spoken of in Revelation xii. 11, also in Revelation xx. 4, which states they are accorded a special resurrection. But some, the two witnesses of Revelation xi., stand their ground ; they wield miraculous powers as well as the false prophet, a warning to men not to be deceived by his lying wonders. God never leaves Himself without witness, and for 1260 days they testify for God against all these abominations. Then the darkest point is reached : their testimony being finished, they are slain, and the wicked one seems to have triumphed, even as in a still darker day long before, the Christ of God was slain by wicked hands. But the triumphing of the wicked is short, and their merriment and joy are turned into fear, when after three days and a half the spirit of life from God enters into the bodies of the witnesses and they are called on high, and ascend up to heaven in a cloud. Then a great earthquake, in which 7000 men are slain, and a tenth of the city falls. For God has arisen to judgment ; and is not only employing men as the rod of His anger, but the seven angels are sounding, and the vials of His wrath are being poured out upon the earth.

Thus we have the mass of the Jews, apostate, submitting to Antichrist and receiving the mark of the beast, and thus coming under the fierce wrath of Almighty God, present and

eternal ; also the faithful remnant who fled to the wilderness, and are preserved there, to be the nucleus of the future Jewish nation, and soon to be restored to their own land, repentant and forgiven (See Zechariah xii. 10, xiii. 1).

Some of these faithful ones will publish the everlasting gospel, called "the gospel of the kingdom" in Matthew xxiv. 14, "in all the earth for a witness unto all nations," resulting in the gathering out of the great multitude of Revelation vii. who together with them go through great tribulation. We have nearly reached the end of the "times of the Gentiles"; not of Gentile history—that continues for a thousand years longer. *Man* has reached the summit of earthly glory and power, and from first to last has used it for himself and against God, His Christ, and His saints; intoxicated with success, he (the beast) blasphemeth God, His Name, His tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven (Revelation xiii. 6). But his time is come: the forty and two months given him to continue here have run out, and *heaven opens*, not now to receive, but to display God's Man, God's King of Kings and Lord of Lords. John describes it in Revelation xix. 11-15, "And I saw heaven opened and behold, a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Then Christ comes forth, not now as Saviour, but as Judge and to make war. He is faithful alike to Him who appointed Him, and to the feeblest one who trusts in Him. And His name, The Word of God, expresses what is in the mind of God at the time. Once before, when on earth, He bore that name; then He was the expression of *grace*—now of judgment and vengeance. I quote from another: "But if men reject Christ and refuse the reconciliation, how can there possibly be mercy for them? In past dispensations, man's sin and failure have always drawn out some better thing from God's great goodness, wisdom and power; but now the climax has been reached, His best gift has been

given, His master work has been achieved ; Heaven is flung wide open and the scum of the earth are called to oneness with Christ in glory."

The love and grace even of God are now exhausted, and the only possible alternative and sequel is vengeance. If men insist on defying God, and maintaining the place of adversaries, there is nothing for them but " judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

The second Psalm has its full accomplishment now. The beast, his confederated kings and their armies, gather together to make war, and rush to their doom, and he and the false prophet are cast alive into the " lake of fire." This is the end of the fourth beast—great and terrible.

The great image in the other vision, illustrating the "times of the Gentiles," is ended by the falling of "the stone," which crushes its feet, grinds it to powder and becomes a great mountain which fills the whole earth. *Thus* the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, and "the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled. The nations, however, continue to exist, and the distinction between them and Israel is maintained all through the next dispensation, usually called the millennium.

But the Roman empire did not comprise all the nations of the earth ; there were others which we must notice a little. Throughout the prophets, we read of a mighty power, the king of the north, the Assyrian ; an enemy of Isreal, but often used by God as His rod to chastise His rebellious people (Isaiah x.). He is spoken of as an overflowing flood and a scourge ; and it seems from Isaiah xxviii. that the rulers of Jerusalem accepted the covenant of the Roman prince as a protection against him. They had better have turned to the living God, Who is Faithful and True and does not break His covenant as the false prince did. The 14th chapter of Zechariah seems to describe the destruction of this foe, while successfully besieging Jerusalem. Later on, when Christ's kingdom has been established on earth and the people are quietly settled in the land, another enemy, regarding them as an easy prey, will rise up against them. This enemy, named Gog, is from "the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal" and seems to answer to Russia. It is all described, with his complete overthrow, in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix.

We will now notice what should have been pointed out sooner—that in consequence of the sin of Solomon, his

kingdom was divided into the kingdom of Judah with two tribes and the kingdom of Israel with ten. The latter, spoken of in the Prophets as Israel (in contrast with Judah) also as Ephraim, was on account of their sins overthrown by the Assyrians and the people carried away captive and apparently lost.

The kingdom of Judah lasted 133 years longer, and then Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the people carried into captivity : seventy years later a remnant returned ; these were afterwards known as Jews, and it is their history we have been considering. But we must now briefly refer to the lost ten tribes. In Jeremiah xxxi. 1., it says, "At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of *all* the families of Isarel"—not alone the Jews ; in verse 3, He reminds them His love is an everlasting love ; and in verse 8, their return is described, "I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the coasts of the earth . . . they shall come with *weeping* and with supplications will I lead them . . . for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn" (verse 10) "He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock." Mark, they come with *weeping* and mourning : they are repentant. The ten tribes went into captivity, long before the first coming of Christ ; they were not guilty of the sin of crucifying Him, and do not, as the Jews, pass through the great tribulation *in the land*. They are dealt with before they get there, as stated in Ezekiel xx. 33-38. Thus no rebels enter the land, only repentant ones. The *new covenant* will be made, spoken of in Jeremiah xxxi. 31, with the house of Israel *and* the house of Judah : "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people . . . they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." Thus they will be right with God and also right with one another : "The envy of Ephraim also shall depart . . . Ephraim shall not envy Judah and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isaiah xi. 13) ; and in Ezekiel xxxvii. 21-end : "Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen . . . and will bring them into their own land ; and I will make them *one* nation . . . 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." Thus is ushered in that time of universal blessing under the reign of God's King : it will last 1000 years (Revelation xx. 6, 7) and is

therefore called the “ millennium.” Little is said of it in the New Testament, which chiefly describes spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ; but very much is said of it in the Old Testament.

Every sort of material earthly blessing will abound (Deuteronomy xxviii. 1-14) ; “ 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. . . . And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness and my people shall be satisfied with *my goodness*, saith the Lord.” (Jeremiah xxxi. 12-14.)

The Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in His wings, and Psalm lxxii., Isaiah xi., lx., lxi., lxii., and many other blessed scriptures are fulfilled to the letter. Thus Israel is blessed *under* Christ, their King on earth ; while the Church has her portion in and with Him above ; and the light lightens and blesses the Gentiles too, far and near. Psalms xcvi. to c. celebrate this time.

I will here quote the words of another describing the “ world to come ” :—

“ The age to come (will be) the day of resurrection, when Israel will be morally raised from the dead and be in relationship again as ‘ Saith the Lord, thou shalt call me Ishi ’—my husband (Hosea ii. 16).

“ Then Israel will be converted as described in Ezekiel xxxvi., and morally raised from the dead, and made to live as in chapter xxxvii. The ten tribes will be united with Judah and be one kingdom, each individual blessed in his own tribe and under his standard. Then the water of purification will become the wine of joy, and they will say ‘ Thou hast kept the best wine until now.’

“ ‘ To take away the sin of the world ’ is to bring the world in its present condition to an end. Sin is lawlessness—and the whole system of this world is away from God in a state of lawlessness.

“ Sin is put away sacrificially, and at His appearing He will take away the sin of the world and give life to the world : for all who had refused the grace of God, will have been cut off in judgment. The Lord will clear this scene of what is contrary to God. For John had proclaimed him as the one

‘which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost.’ The Church has been formed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and will be the only company that has the Spirit *indwelling*; but the Spirit will be *poured out* on *all* flesh, so that all will be brought under the gracious influence of the Spirit. ‘The Lord will purge out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity’ (Matthew xiii. 41), and the whole sphere will come under the power of the Holy Ghost.

“The age or world to come will thus commence with all the wicked being cut off, and all those left alive on earth will know God. God, in His ways, establishes a thing in pefection, and then commits it into the hands of man. All things will then be in the hands of Christ, who will reign with perfect wisdom, as typified in Solomon, and like him, detect and execute judgment on all who have yielded a feigned obedience. Then, during the reign, millions will be born into the world, many of whom will own Christ outwardly but not in heart, so that when Satan is loosed again—which is necessary to test those who have been under the reign of Christ—they listen, and come up against the saints. The judgment of God will at once consume them; and thus, finally, the earth is cleared of the ungodly, never to be the scene of rebellion again.”

A few words on what succeeds (the resurrection of damnation):—

The Lord Jesus in John v. 29, spoke of *two* resurrections—one, the first, to life; the other to damnation. The first is also called in Luke xiv. 14, “the resurrection of the just,” and those who have part in it are called “blessed and holy,” and they reign with Christ during the thousand years. But the *rest* of the dead—what of them? Can’t they and their deeds be forgotten? No! Peter tells us “the unjust are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished” (2 Peter ii. 9). Ah! things are not forgotten. There is a record of everything. Every idle word, everything is coming out in that awful day. No hiding then. John saw a great white throne and the dead, *small* and *great*, stand before it: the books, which are being written, filled now (say not thou before the angel it was an error), are opened and the dead are judged according to their works. The righteous judgment of a holy God, Who will be justified in all His ways then.

From the face of the Sitter on that throne the earth and the heaven flew away: the same word of God by which they came into being has reserved them unto this day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. The earth has fulfilled its end;

its work is done. It is only a little speck in the universe, but how important ! On it have been worked out all the problems of sin and of the goodness of God. It is said that when James I. came to the throne of England one of his first acts was to have Fotheringay Castle, where his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, was imprisoned and beheaded, razed to the ground, because of what happened there.

Think of what crimes this earth has been the scene of—all the righteous blood shed, and above all, the murder of the Son of God. How fitting it should be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Then—the eternal state (Revelation xxi. 1-8).

The sea gone—no separation ; man there—the nations (owing their origin to sin) gone, and Israel gone too ; the Church there, however—the holy city ; 1000 years after the marriage of the Lamb in all its bridal freshness and beauty undimmed : no change, because like Christ now ; change impossible—prepared for God and by God.

“ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !

“ For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been his counsellor ?

“ Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again ?

“ For of him, and through him, and to him are all things ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”—Romans xi. 33-36.

