



AGE AFTER AGE

Illustrated by a
Prophetical Chart

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*Christ is the Key to prophecy; His
Cross the pivot upon which all turns,
for heaven and earth.*

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PROLOGUE

"JEHOVAH possessed me in the beginning of His way before His works of old. I was set up from eternity, from the beginning, before the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water.

"Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth ; while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust (particles) of the world.

"When He prepared the heavens I was there ; when He ordained the circle upon the face of the deep ; when He established the skies above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep ; when He imposed on the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment, when He appointed the foundations of the earth : then I was by Him His Artificer, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, and my delights were with the sons of men."

"Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world."

"Written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Slain Lamb."

The precious blood of Christ, as of a "Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world."

FOREWORD.

WE are living in times of exceptional interest to the Bible Student, who sees events which seem to point to the near coming of the Lord for His Saints and the approaching end of the dispensation of grace.

The Word of God traces God's purpose from eternity to eternity, and His ways and His doings through the course of time towards frail and sinful man.

The study of prophecy is of great importance (Rev. i, 3), and it should be the earnest desire of all believers to realise the blessing attached to it.

It is useful to review the past history of mankind, in connection with God's ancient people, whose blessings were all founded on the Cross. The Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is the centre of all God's purposes of grace.

Prophecy brings before us many definite predictions and promises which are for our encouragement and enjoyment, but God has not been pleased to reveal to us everything and we are not to dogmatise because, as someone has said, "Prophecy was not given in order for us to prophesy."

In the following pages, explanatory of the chart, the author has given us the various phases of divine revelation with a great deal of vital doctrine. The reader is

brought face to face with the wonders of God's grace in Christ Jesus.

This book should be the means of blessing to many. May God use it for the instruction of His people and the exaltation of Christ.

L. FORRER.

Bromley, Kent.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE accompanying Chart is designed to give at a glance a clear idea as to what has happened, and what will happen in human history. The trivial round of public and private affairs, important as they may be for the moment, are all too apt to engross the mind to the exclusion of far greater matters. Our interest in larger, wider affairs than those which press for immediate attention is commonly feeble and fragmentary at the most. But being in the stream of human history, we should acquaint ourselves with what has been written for our learning in this respect, and so learn to adore God in His ways with mankind.

The consideration of the beginningless past, and the unending future, Eternity, as we name it, leads finite minds into an element transcendent and incomprehensible to them, until the divine light of revelation from God comes to their aid. The consideration of the beginning of the world and all created things, also quickly serves to throw our ignorance out into relief ; we having no source of exact information as to the genesis of things, apart from the light of " Genesis " itself.

The end of all things too—as to how human history

will end—fills the mind with perplexity and amazement so that it becomes a commonplace to enquire, What *are* things coming to? The appalling misdirection of the results of much undoubted progress in certain directions of discovery and invention, to the more easy, and almost wholesale destruction of mankind by these means also fills the thoughtful mind with horror and terror at what may soon be the end of human civilisation and history.

The Christian mind turns to Holy Scripture learning there with relief of One Who is the “appointed *Heir of all things*”—Who is also the end of all human history, He for Whom all things were made. That this same One, too, is He “by Whom all things were made.” The *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the Beginning and the Ending. Heb. i, 1-3; is the basis upon which the Chart is constructed. Cf. Jno. i, 3; Col. i, 15-20.

The Heir of all things, and the Creator of all worlds, is, necessarily, before all things: “Being the brightness (effulgence) of His glory and the express image of His being,” though begotten of the Father yet equal with the Father. “The Father hath life in Himself, and hath given unto the Son to have life in Himself.” (Jno. v.) The Son is the effulgence of the Father, Light of Light, as St. Athanasius so forcibly affirms in the well-known passage where he demands of Arius, “Who is so void of understanding as to doubt concerning the eternal being of the Son? for where has one seen light without effulgence?” The brightness of God’s glory is the express, substantial, real image of His being; so that

“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”
(Jno. xiv.)

The Heir of all things ; the Maker of all worlds ; Himself the true living expression of GOD'S Person ; One Who also is “upholding all things by the word of His power”—this One throughout all human history, by His interest, providence and power reveals Himself as being that Eternal Wisdom Whose delights were ever with the sons of men. (Prov. viii.) The Creator, and Sustainer of all things is also the Redeemer of mankind, so we read that when He had “by Himself purged our sins,” He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. With CHRIST as the Key of Prophecy, and His Cross the pivot upon which all turns for heaven and earth, we may safely trace the ways of GOD through the ages of time, until time itself merges into Eternity.

The forty centuries of the forbearance of GOD, the twenty centuries of the long-suffering of the LORD, the golden age for earth, and the eternal glories of new heavens and a new earth are shown to be entirely bound up with, and dependent upon, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Lamb of GOD, the Revealer of the Father, the Reconciler of all things by His Cross, and the Redeemer of His people.

Starting then from Eternity marked by *Alpha* on the Chart, human history begins with man placed in Eden in a state of Innocence ; from which, alas, he quickly falls. The *first* period of time is then shown as from Adam fallen (in Gen. iii) to the Judgment of the Flood

(in Gen. vi-ix) ; and this is described as the *Age of unrestrained self-will*. Man when left thus for some sixteen hundred years without special manifestations of God, and guided only by Conscience, as a consequence quickly degenerated into a self-willed creature led captive by the Devil. (Rom. v, 12-19 ; Ephes. ii, 2.) There were marked exceptions as Abel, Enoch, Noah ; but the general character of this period was such that only the "Flood" could cleanse the deeply corrupted earth of a race that had become completely reprobate. Noah and his family were saved by the obedience of faith from this otherwise universal destruction. The world that then was perished.

The *second* period on the Chart lasting from the "Flood" to the "Call of Abram," opens the story of a new era for mankind. It was characterised by *The institution of Civil Government ; The Peopling of the earth ; The judgment of Babel ; and The introduction of Idolatry into human history*. Taken together these warrant us in calling this the *Age of Public Governmental dealing by God*.

The *third* period, like the preceding one, was roughly four hundred years, and extends from the Call of Abram to Moses the Lawgiver. Man is here placed upon a new ground, namely, that of Promise (Gen. xii ; Gal. iii, 16 ; Rom. xi) ; and Abram becomes the root of God's testimony on earth. This period therefore may properly be called the *Age of Promise and Testimony*.

The *fourth* period from Moses to CHRIST and

Christianity, one of some fifteen hundred years, covers the times of Priests, Prophets and Kings. It is the *Age of Law and Kingly Government*.

The *fifth* period shown on the Chart is from the Ascension of our LORD till the translation of the Saints to Heaven. "*Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom. v, 21.) It is the present age, an indefinite period, during which a world-wide testimony to the Risen Son of GOD is being proclaimed; it is the day of salvation, too, during which the heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST are being gathered out from all nations by the effectual testimony of GOD'S SPIRIT and Word. The *Age of God's long-suffering grace to a guilty world*, the times in which our lot is cast.

The *sixth* period is a short but severe one of some seven years only, lasting from the Translation of the Saints at the Coming of the LORD, to their appearing with Him in glory when He comes to this earth again to take the Kingdom. It is an *Age of Coming Crises and Satan's rule*.

The *seventh* and final period is the thousand years of the golden age of CHRIST'S reign on earth, the Millennium, extending from the Introduction of the Kingdom of the Son of Man, until its close. This is indeed the *Age of Righteousness, Blessing and Glory*, and the final dispensation. One brief, decisive clash with all organised evil led by the Evil One in person; then the final judgment of the Great White Throne; after which CHRIST having put

down all authority, delivers up the Kingdom to the Father, and time merges into Eternity. Eternity marked by *Omega* then begins, when GOD shall be all in all—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—the ever-blessed, all-glorious Trinity in Unity ; then appear the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness ; but throughout all, the Church in her predestined station eternally witnesses to the manifold wisdom, grace, kindness, power and glory of Him that is, and was and ever shall be ; and to the Lamb of GOD the Effectuator of all the Divine purposes, the One Who bore away the sin of the world.

But who that glorious blaze
Of living light shall tell,
Where all His brightness GOD displays
And the LAMB's glories dwell ?
GOD and the LAMB shall there
The light and temple be ;
And radiant hosts for ever share
The unveiled mystery.

CHAPTER II

HOW THE WORLD WENT WRONG

THE story of *HOW THE WORLD WENT WRONG* is comprised in some fifteen hundred years of history, and compressed into about one hundred verses in Genesis.

Two objections may be raised to the consideration of this subject, first, that it is now a matter of such very ancient history, a happening of so long ago, indeed an antediluvian story ; secondly, as to whether time would not be better spent in discussing how to put the world right, rather than in thinking of how it went wrong ?

The answer to the former is, of course, that history, especially moral history, has a way of repeating itself, and the civilisation of modern times being so uncannily like that of those very ancient days, great profit arises from considering what led to its catastrophic collapse. As to the latter objection—men *have* sought through all ages, and still are seeking without success how to put the world right. None has succeeded, nor will any succeed, until He, Who is the appointed Heir of the world, comes into His inheritance as King of kings and Lord of lords.

To help in our study, we must note first that the Scripture method of dealing with human history and affairs, is *selective*. The Bible has an Author, Who is also its

Editor ; and hence we discover the divine method running throughout Scripture is one by which not every event that happened is recorded, but such as are specially *significant*; that not every man who lived in Bible times has biographical mention, but that the men who have this distinction are themselves *typical* characters whose history possessed features of permanent value to the race. Historical, significant and typical, are three helpful ideas to store in one's memory as to the general design of the Sacred Scriptures.

The *Dawn* and *Doom* of the earliest recorded civilisation is given in a terse, pithy, pregnant style by the inspired writer. (Gen. iii-vi.)

The root of all human failure ; the spring of human sin, sorrow, suffering and death, is seen there. *Disbelief in the goodness of God*—in His real care for man's highest development and blessing—and *disobedience to the known will of God* by our first parents are there shown to have been the root of all the misery of the human race. These two attitudes of heart towards GOD are as modern as anything can well be. God is set aside ; man's whole conduct being influenced by self-will. Is not this typical of the present attitude of man to GOD ? Our own hearts witness to the recurrent temptation assailing them to doubt His goodness in our personal affairs. And are not disobedience to GOD's will and self-exaltation characteristic features of modern life ? In considering the history of the human race we must never lose sight of the part played by SATAN from those earliest days. It

was at the instigation of SATAN in his conflict with GOD, that the subtle temptation "Ye shall be as gods," assailed our first parents in Eden.

In Gen. iv, we find man not merely as a sinner, but man now become a criminal. A brother is killed in anger and jealousy, and all responsibility for his brother's well-being, rudely repudiated by the murderer. "Am I my brother's keeper?" he insolently demands.

Here the foundations of civilisation are uncovered, as *disbelief in God's goodness, disobedience to God's will, and defiance of God and man*, introduced crime which remains still, as an evil legacy constituting one of the great problems of modern civilisation. If there were no sin and crime, there would be no need for prisons, policemen, courts and judges with all the paraphernalia of punitive and repressive force; but righteousness, peace and joy would be characteristic of what is now confessedly a groaning earth through sin, and the injustice of man to man springing therefrom.

CAIN and LAMECH are the two moving spirits in the setting up of that earliest civilisation. (Gen. iv.) It comes with something of a shock that in the lifetime of ADAM, violence and corruption in the earth had risen to an almost intolerable height; and that all God's institutions and injunctions were already being contemptuously flouted. CAIN, his crime having stained the earth with the blood of a righteous man, sets out to make a permanent place for himself in the earth, regardless of what he has done; settling down he establishes

a family ; and by calling the city after his son, thereby indicates established proprietorship and his intention to enjoy the world as it was spite of the curse upon it, and the innocent blood of the first martyr, and the witness that it bore as it still cried from the ground. GOD was not in all his thoughts ; so the curse that lay on the world on account of his father's sin, and the unrequited blood of an innocent man rapidly passed out of his reckoning. He builds and owns a city, and has a family, with a name in the earth. Says an able writer on this period, " It is very remarkable that we perceive in the Cainite race those very things *which afterwards formed the characteristics of heathenism, as we find it amongst the most advanced nations of antiquity, such as Greece and Rome.*"

The short but startling sketch given of LAMECH and the tragic history of his very talented family. confirms this. LAMECH's sword song (Gen. iv, 23, 24), the earliest piece of poetry in human history reveals the man, proud, boastful, self-confident, ready for any violence and cruelty to the full extent of his ability. He has two wives ; this too is significant. Our LORD said : " From the beginning it was not so." Marriage was instituted in the day of man's innocency for the comfort and continuance of the race ; but in that institution there was before the mind of GOD what it symbolises and signifies, the union subsisting between CHRIST and the Church. Hence Polygamy was at once a rebellion against a beneficent provision of GOD for man, and a confusing of the truth intended to be taught by it. His

mode of addressing his wives is also revealing. Significant and instructive too in connection with "*how the world went wrong*" are the names of LAMECH's wives and daughter.

"ADAH" is "beauty," or "adornment"; "ZILLAH" is "the shaded one" from her tresses, or alternatively "sounding," perhaps from her singing voice; while "NAAMAH," as the daughter was called, means "pleasant, lovely, graceful."

LAMECH's household thus presents a picture of a lawless man, one who fears neither GOD nor man; whose womenfolk bear names that speak of the "*lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh*"—just as ST. JOHN, centuries later in the Greek civilisation of Ephesus, speaks of these things as being emphatically of the world and not of the Father.

The occupations of LAMECH's sons help to complete the picture of the Dawn of civilisation. The "*pride of life*" was also included by the Apostle JOHN as part of the fashion of the world that passeth away; and commerce, culture, craftsmanship are each represented, by JABAL, JUBAL and TUBAL-CAIN.

"JABAL, was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle"; he it was who introduced the commercial spirit into pastoral life; making a regular business of what appears previously to have been more a supply for individual and family needs. He is the typical commercial man, the man of business.

JUBAL, the second son, was "the father of all such as

handle the harp, and the organ (or flute)," that is the inventor of stringed and wind instruments ; as old MATTHEW HENRY has it, " If brother JABAL will show them how to get rich, then JUBAL will show them how to be merry." JUBAL is the father of the fine arts, the man of culture. TUBAL-CAIN, or TUBAL the smith, is a metal-worker ; with considerable mechanical skill, able to instruct others ; the craftsman ; the father of mechanical arts and invention.

As a whole, the family of LAMECH present an essentially godless civilisation, finding pleasure, occupation, advancement in a world cursed by sin and stained with the blood of a righteous man ; they being all the while completely indifferent to the judgment overhanging the scene, of which warning was given by a contemporary as we shall see farther on in the chapter.

" Then began men to call upon the Name of the Lord,"
or *" to call themselves by the Name of the Lord."*

Here we have, what had been, in some measure, from the beginning ; a division of the race through the deepest things of life. CAIN and ABEL at first were divided by their way of approach to GOD. Then LAMECH and ENOCH—*both seventh from ADAM*—yet divided spiritually to the roots of their beings ; the one the typically godless man : the other a typically godly man. One had no fear of GOD before his eyes ; the other worshipped GOD and walked with Him ; two typical men indeed—one essentially an earthly-minded man, the other equally emphatically a heavenly-minded one.

The two significant events occurring in this period are (1) the Translation of ENOCH, and (2) the Flood that overwhelmed all LAMECH's kind of people.

Of ENOCH we read that "*he walked with God*"; that he "*prophesied of the judgment to come*"; "*that he had this testimony that he pleased God*"; that "*he was not for God took him.*" (Gen. v, 24 ; Heb. xi, 5 ; Jude 14, 15.)

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" asks the prophet. ("Shall two walk together except they have made an appointment?" R.V.)

For ourselves, in this day of grace, the appointed meeting-place is at the Cross of CHRIST where all GOD's grace and man's guilt met in the person of the sinless SAVIOUR. It has become indeed :—

The place where GOD and sinners meet
And thousands meet with Him.

Then having received CHRIST JESUS as LORD by faith, so walk ye in Him ; (Col. ii, 6) until taken to be with Him before the Day of Doom dawns for the ungodly world of CHRIST-rejectors. (1 Thess. iv, 15-17.) Let us summarize the teaching suggested by this first section of the Chart.

The Dawn and Doom of civilisation of "*the world that then was*" (2 Peter iii, 6) is given in Gen. iv-vi (cf. Rom. v, 12-19) ; and is shown to have been an age of unrestrained self-will issuing in corruption, violence and lawlessness. There had been some who called themselves

by the Name of the LORD, but at the end these disappear save NOAH and his family. Disbelief in GOD's goodness began the downward move, with disobedience to His known will ; defiance of GOD and man followed ; *and death reigned*, spite of the lie of SATAN " Ye shall not surely die."

Destruction then threatened, and judgment was pending on account of the blood of a righteous man, and of the curse which lay on the ground through the sin of man. Divine long-suffering waited, only to be completely disregarded by the mass of mankind ; and so doom overcame the disobedient, although deliverance was possible by the obedience of faith. There was a divinely appointed way of escape and those who were moved by fear, acting by faith, found the Ark of salvation available for them.

The first age of mankind's history thus ended in almost general apostasy, prophetic, too, of succeeding ages though under entirely changed conditions ; for widely different as the clothing and other circumstances of these men (of days so dimly distant from our own) are from those of cultivated busy men of affairs to-day, the human form and the human heart remain the same ; and fallen man is still alienated from the life of GOD through the evil that is in him. But the long-suffering of GOD, which waited in the days of NOAH still waits in lingering compassion over the guilty world to-day, as its doom draws ever nearer.

CHAPTER III

HOW THE NATIONS BEGAN

THE next period, marked as the Age of Public Governmental Dealing, extending from the "FLOOD" to the Call of ABRAM is a far shorter one comprising approximately some four centuries. Its special features are the Covenant made with NOAH on behalf of every living thing on the earth ; the building of BABEL ; the rise of nations ; and the call of ABRAM.

The typical men of this age are NOAH and his great grandson NIMROD ; around these and their activities the interest and instruction of the times revolve.

The significant events of this period are closely connected with the ALTAR and SACRIFICE (in Gen. viii, 20) ; and the CITY and TOWER (of Gen. xi).

NOAH (whose name signifies rest, repose, comfort), lived some 350 years after the judgment of the FLOOD ; long enough, alas ! to witness a general outbreak of rebellion against God, and the rise and spread of idolatry over the then inhabited earth.

When he stepped out of the ARK in which he had been borne through the waters of divine judgment (typical of those godly Jews and Gentiles who will be brought through the Great Tribulation after the Church like

ENOCH has been translated to heaven before this begins), a new era began. It was a fresh dispensation marked by a new earth cleansed by judgment ; a new authority given to man ; and a new covenant made with man. (Gen. viii, 20-ix, 17.) The rainbow set as a bow of peace now became a token of this.

In Rev. iv, where the LAMB OF GOD is seen as in the midst of the throne, there is also a rainbow round about the throne—Righteousness and Peace characterise the Eternal Throne and the LAMB is the One by Whom both have been established for ever.

NOAH is the man of faith who walked with GOD ; who feared GOD ; and whose first act upon the new earth showed him to be a worshipper of GOD.

Faith, fear, and worship characterise this typical man.

NIMROD (Gen. x) is the man of force, craft and ambition, and is typical of ANTICHRIST. The beginning of his Kingdom was BABEL ; and from the first mention of this ill-omened place until its final destruction (in Rev. xviii), BABYLON whether as city or system is always antagonistic to GOD. XERXES and ALEXANDER both conquered it in their respective days ; but its revival and final overthrow awaits a fast approaching future when the KING of kings and the LORD of them that rule shall end the Mystery of GOD, by personally putting down all other rule and all other authority.

This section of the Chart deals with the *Institution of Civil Government* (Gen. ix) ; *the peopling of the earth*

(Gen. x) ; *the judgment of Babel* (Gen. xi) ; and *the introduction of idolatry* (Josh. xxiv, 2).

The peopling of the earth was in view of the coming of the Heir of all things, He for Whom all things were made. "When the MOST HIGH divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of ADAM, He set the bounds of the people (peoples R.V.) according to the number of the children of ISRAEL. For the LORD's portion is His people ; JACOB is the lot of His inheritance." (Deut. xxxii, 8, 9.) In the New Testament, also, we read "Known unto GOD are all His works from the beginning of the world." "GOD that made the world . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts xv, 18 ; xvii, 24-26.)

The outbreak of rebellion, which culminated in the attempt to build the Tower of BABEL, took place roughly one hundred years subsequent to the FLOOD. It was a determined gesture of defiance and independency of the MOST HIGH prompted by human pride and ambition. "Let us make us a name."

In the only possible language understandable, we are told that the "JUDGE of all the earth" gave attention to this fresh portent in the history of fallen man. Unmoved by the past terrible judgment (of which there were then living witnesses to testify from first-hand knowledge), men now banded themselves in an unholy confederacy to try to defeat the known purposes of the MOST HIGH.

But, as ever, His purpose prevailed, to the utter confusion of ungodly opposers.

Idolatry appears to have been closely connected with the BABEL scheme, as it has certainly so continued in BABYLON (whether as system or city) until this day.

We are told that NIMROD eventually completed the TOWER ; indeed made it a TEMPLE of BEL, with eight towers, 75 feet each in height and an Observatory on the top. It is well known that the worship of the heavenly bodies was the first known form of idolatry as a system ; and BABEL with its Observatory quickly became the headquarters and centre of this.

We get no account of the adoption of idolatry in Genesis ; but JOSHUA's reference to the prevailing conditions at the Call of ABRAM some three centuries later, leave no doubt that in the days of NOAH this had become established in the earth. It is striking to find that as in the case of ADAM, so with NOAH, men who were witnesses of new dispensations or ages commencing well, lived to see the tide of apostasy rapidly rising, and over-running the scene.

In connection with the BABEL confusion of tongues an interesting assertion by some scholars that the Phœnician, Egyptian, Chaldean, Greek and Chinese languages can all be traced from this time on, to the Persian Empire, and that all but one—Chinese—were eventually embraced in the Roman Empire, may be noted.

The period shown as the age of public governmental dealing ends with the Call of ABRAM in Ur of the Chaldees.

Recent discoveries by archæologists in that neighbourhood have done much to confirm the facts of the man, the place, and the date.

The days are passed when the "FLOOD" stories, the "ABRAHAM and UR" story, and the "JOSHUA and JERICO story" could be treated cavalierly by really intelligent persons who are unprejudiced. No discovery has ever contradicted the Scriptural account, but many have confirmed it within very recent years, to the discomfiture of the enemies of our holy faith.

The peopling of the earth, and the beginning of the nations as such was divinely over-ruled to make a place for *the people*, ISRAEL, through which the knowledge of the ONE TRUE GOD was to be conserved. Hence the Call of ABRAHAM *from the midst of idolatry*. But chiefly it was, by this means, to provide the channel through which the HEIR of the ages, the SAVIOUR of the world, was to come in the fullness of time, when from other nations should come enquirers asking, "WHERE IS HE THAT IS BORN KING OF THE JEWS . . . FOR WE ARE COME TO WORSHIP HIM?" CHRIST is the Key of prophecy and as the tiny arrows upon the Chart are intended to show, all events look onward or backward to the great events to which they stand related—His Coming, His Cross, His Crown.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE JEWISH NATION AROSE

THERE follows a period of similar duration from ABRAM to MOSES marked by the Promises that ABRAM's posterity should inherit the land of CANAAN, and that he should be the father of a heavenly race to "plant the heavens," and of an earthly race through which all nations should be blessed.

The typical men of this period are quite obviously ABRAM and MOSES ; the two most significant events the exoduses from UR and EGYPT, at the beginning and ending of this age.

From the Call of ABRAM to MOSES at Sinai was some four hundred and thirty years, an age of *Promise and Testimony*. (Exod. xii, 40, 41.)

"The GOD of glory appeared unto our father ABRAMAM, when he was in MESOPOTAMIA, before he dwelt in CHARRAN." (Acts vii, 2.) "Now the LORD *had* said unto ABRAM," and further, "The LORD appeared unto ABRAM, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land : and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him . . . and pitched his tent . . . and called upon the Name of the LORD." (Gen. xii, 1, 7, 8.)

This is the first person to whom GOD is spoken of as

“appearing” in Scripture ; that is as being seen in a way to convey the impression of His “BEING,”—His NATURE, as GOD of glory with promises of blessing.

The result is seen, in the character formed by the recognition and reception of the promises. ABRAM is marked at once as a worshipper and a pilgrim—the altar and the tent showing how he was persuaded of the ultimate realisation of these gracious assurances of GOD’s special blessings.

So marked was this that (Gen. xiv. 13) he is soon referred to by Canaanites as “ABRAM the HEBREW,” being recognised as a “stranger,” one who had passed over the river. (Gen. xiv. 13.)

The fact of his worldly circumstances plays no part in this. True, he is a rich man ; a man of growing importance, and one who in time of need proves himself a most useful and good neighbour ; but it is as a pilgrim ; a stranger ; one not settled in the land ; not seeking aught from the great ones in the earth that he is known. He is ready to help the distressed ; but will accept nothing except from the priest of the MOST HIGH GOD, possessor of heaven and earth.

He is the first man, too, of whom it is definitely recorded that he was a believer ; this belief, being not merely an intellectual act of assent, but also a moral act of confidence in GOD, is accounted to him for righteousness. (Gen. xv, 6.) (1) so we find ABRAM “*justified by faith*” (Gen. xv, 6) ; (2) “*justified by works*” (Gen. xxii) ; (3) *the root of a new testimony on earth* (Gen.

xvii, xviii) ; (4) *the Friend of God*—intercessor for others (Gen. xviii) ; (5) vindicated as a man of faith and works (Gen. xxi, xxii) ; (6) *and as seeing the Day of Christ* (Gen. xxii, 18).*

The offering of ISAAC, the going into EGYPT of JACOB and all his family, discloses the providential way whereby the channel for the HEIR of the ages was kept open.

Says JOSEPH to his troubled brethren, "God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." (Gen. xiv, 5, 7.) The meaning of the formidable-looking polysyllable—Zaphnath-paaneah—(which Egyptian lips found easier than our own to pronounce) while somewhat uncertain is generally agreed by scholars to have reference to "Food of life," or "Bread of life"; some saying, following the Vulgate—*Salvator Mundi*—Saviour of the world; others, the Coptic—"Revealer of secrets." Such interpretations are intensely suggestive and interesting when we consider the position of JOSEPH in the scheme of human history. But "JOSEPH died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of ISRAEL were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty ; and the land was filled with them." (Exod. i, 6, 7.)

* (1) Justified by faith. Gen. xv, 6 ; Rom. iv, 1-3.

(2) Justified by works. Gen. xxii, 12 ; Jas. ii, 21.

(3) Friend of God. Gen. xviii, 17-19 ; Isa. xli, 8 ; 2 Chron. xx, 7 ; Jas. ii, 23 ; cf. Psl. xxv, 14. R.V. S. Jno. xv, 14, 15.

(4) "Saw my day and was glad." Gen. xxii, 18 ; S. Jno. viii, 56 ; Gal. iii, 8, 16.

EGYPT, however, was not the land of the Promise made to their fathers, but speedily became the house of bondage, where they toiled in slavery, and groaned with anguish of spirit for long years.

So the story of the Chart now moves from out of GENESIS the book of Election, into EXODUS the book of Redemption, with its history of this bitter bondage and oppression ; but also with the story of redemption by blood and power because of the promise made to ABRAHAM.

MOSES now appears on the scene and the day of deliverance begins to show the first streaks of dawn. This multitude of downtrodden slaves is to be made a nation, a holy nation ; a people for GOD's own possession. (Exod. xix, 5, 6.) " The time of the promise drew nigh which God had sworn to ABRAHAM," (Acts vii, 17) and the purpose and providence of GOD are seen in the preservation of the infant MOSES ; in the long years of preparation both in EGYPT and in the desert ; by the call, commission and confirmation at the " Bush that burned " yet remained unconsumed. (Exod. iii.) " By faith when he was come to years, he refused to be called the son of PHAROAH's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of GOD ; esteeming the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than all the treasures of EGYPT."

The decision for CHRIST and the people of GOD having been made, he quickly follows it with an outburst of ill-timed zeal, which his newly-recognised brethren promptly proceed to quench. " He thought they would

have known." He is disheartened and discouraged by the very people with whom he has thrown in his lot at so great personal sacrifice. Like many a young disciple, forward and zealous, the rebuff so disheartens him, that nothing more is heard of activity for the LORD for many years. He marries a wife, and settles down in a regular occupation ; the routine of daily affairs now occupies all his time and energy, and the years drag along uneventfully. Then one ordinary day the extraordinary thing happens, and he turns aside to see the "common bush aflame with God." "And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, GOD called unto him." To a definite call, and commission, the gracious confirmation is added, "Certainly I will be with thee." But first his attention had to be gained. How often the principle of MOSES' attitude has been repeated. GOD waiting to use and bless, so soon as He can gain our interest in what He is doing ; about to do ; or willing to do through us. With MOSES obedient, the promises to ABRAHAM quickly began to be realised in the Exodus and Wanderings.

On the night of the last terrible stroke of God's judgment upon PHAROAH and the EGYPTIAN oppressors, some six hundred thousand men, beside women and children, departed in haste and the Exodus was complete.

With GOD as their Guide and Protector by day and night, they advanced towards the Red Sea ; and spite of PHAROAH and his pursuing hosts were safely brought through it into the Wilderness, leaving their foes overwhelmed, by their foolhardiness in attempting what Israel

had achieved through faith. To imitate faith is a disastrous mistake.

“The LORD hath triumphed gloriously,” sang Israel, to whom it was indeed a glorious day of deliverance ; one ever to be remembered with grateful praises. It was a most important crisis in their history ; the commencement for them of entirely new circumstances and conditions of life. They are now to become a nation ; to be instructed and disciplined by GOD in His governmental principles and ways through the instrumentality chiefly of MOSES their GOD-appointed Leader. He accordingly brings them to SINAI, where a new dispensation—not of promise and testimony, but of Law and Kingly Government, with priestly mediatorship, and prophetic ministry—now begins.

CHAPTER V

HOW THE GENTILE POWERS STARTED

THE much more extended period of time now indicated upon the Chart, the fifteen centuries from MOSES to CHRIST, were the times of the prophets, priests and kings, and may be termed the Age of Law and Kingly government. "The law was given by MOSES ; grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST." (Jno. i, 17.) And of the Law, its period of duration is shown by ST. PAUL (Gal. iii, 24) to have been "unto CHRIST," that is until His coming in grace.

ABRAHAM, the chosen man, separated by the Call of GOD and his obedience of faith, has now become the father of a chosen and separated people. Through this nation the HEIR of the ages is to come into the inheritance of all things. For this reason the JEWISH people were redeemed out of EGYPT, brought into liberty, and constituted a nation, *the* nation. From that time the ways of GOD with other nations depended upon His ways with *the* nation—ISRAEL. When ISRAEL obeyed, the other nations served her ; when she rebelled against GOD, the other nations were used to chastise her. The lesson that *relationship regulates responsibility* is plainly taught in the words of the prophet : " You only have

I know of all the families of the earth : therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos ii, 2.)

This section of the Chart begins then with the Law received, and the Law rejected. (Exod. xx; xxiv, 3, 8; xxxii, 7, 8 ; Acts vii, 51-53.) Apostasy, alas, was very rapid ; for the Law as expressed in Commandments and Ceremonies, being calculated to regulate outward conduct, although most solemn and significant, yet being a Law of outward observances did not give life—made nothing perfect. Right under the very shadow of Sinai and even before the tables of stone upon which it was engraved had actually been received, its terms were openly violated. The Priesthood, too, in the hands of even most favoured men pursued the same sad course of early apostasy. (Exod. xxviii ; xxix ; xxxii ; Lev. x.) In little over one month, AARON the high priest-elect is making a golden calf at the people's bidding ; building an altar to it ; offering sacrifices, and proclaiming it a feast of the LORD.

Still darker is the story of JONATHAN, the son of GERSHOM the son of MOSES the Lawgiver, who first fills the rôle of an idolatrous priest in the house of Micah, and afterwards for the tribe of Dan, in which idolatry was so firmly established that it persisted throughout their entire history. (Judges xvii, xviii.) So, alas ! hard upon the appointment of the priesthood, follows the falling away and failure of the priests. Prophets, too, were appointed, established, and sent to ISRAEL that the voice of GOD might be heard by

the chosen people of GOD in spite of failure in the priesthood.

SAMUEL the prophet (I Sam. iii, 20), is a notable example of a prophet appointed, established and known throughout the whole land as the Seer, the Man of GOD. He was a true, faithful prophet. But we read of disobedient prophets, false prophets, schools of the prophets who certainly in one classic instance had no right conception of the mind of GOD at that time. The ominous words : ‘ They prophesy falsely unto you in My name,’ serve to show how far the apostasy of the prophets eventually proceeded ; but a yet more withering judgment upon both priests and prophets is pronounced : “ Her prophets are light and treacherous persons : her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.” This sentence confirms the general failure of priests and prophets alike.

The appointment of Kings for ISRAEL in answer to the popular clamour for a visible monarch is recorded in I Sam. xii, 13, where SAUL is chosen by the people, the choice being judicially ratified by SAMUEL as GOD’s representative.

SAUL proves himself to be a man of earth ; men not GOD are before him as the motive and spring of actions as his request to SAMUEL “ to honour him before the people ” shows. He, therefore, quickly proves himself an utter failure as a King, and is rejected. Typical Kings of ISRAEL are SAUL the man of earth ; DAVID the Shepherd King, who with SOLOMON, the man of peace,

gives some expression to the divine thought of Kingship, only to be fully realised hereafter in the reign of DAVID's greater SON and LORD; AHAB—who did more to provoke the LORD GOD of ISRAEL than all before him ; JEHOIAKIM—typical Modernist of his day, using penknife and fire upon the written word sent him by the LORD ; and ZEDEKIAH the last Apostate King in whose reign direct disaster fell upon the Kingdom, the King who feared his subjects, but had no fear of GOD before him. (Jer. xxxviii, 19, 20.)

Kingly government committed to ISRAEL and forfeited by them was now to be transferred by the GOD of Heaven to the Gentile NEBUCHADNEZZAR, whom GOD styles, " My servant." (Cf. Jer. xxvii, 4-7; Dan. ii, 20, 21, 37.)

Then began " The times of the Gentiles," when the GOD of Heaven gave NEBUCHADNEZZAR authority to exercise lordship over ISRAEL (Dan. iv, 17, 36, 37). These times still run on and will only end when the SON of MAN the true King of ISRAEL, comes in glory to judge the living Gentile powers, and to reinstate repentant ISRAEL in the land promised to their fathers ABRAHAM, ISAAC and JACOB.

The four great prophetic empires of BABYLON, MEDO-PERSIA, GREECE and ROME, are symbolised by the four metals : Gold, Silver, Brass and Iron ; and by the four beasts : the Lion, the Bear, the Leopard and the fourth Beast (Dan. vii).

The sixty-nine weeks of DANIEL's vision end at the CROSS where MESSIAH the PRINCE was cut off, but not

for Himself. The last week awaits the end of the present dispensation of grace with which our next chapter is occupied.

The age of Law and Kingly Government ended for the JEWISH nation in the apostasy of priests, prophets, and kings alike.

MOSES at first filled these offices for awhile—as priest, in being Mediator for the people; as prophet, in making known to them the will of GOD; as King he reigned in Jeshurun. As prophet, in another aspect of the prophetic office, he predicted the coming of the ONE Who must be obeyed. “A prophet shall the LORD your GOD raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear.” (Acts vii, 37.) Samuel also exercised the priestly, prophetic and Kingly offices for over a generation with dignity and ability. But the world waited for a greater than these, and the time was long. Then in the fullness of time the day dawned when CHRIST the true Prophet proclaimed the Kingdom (Matt. iv, 17); when CHRIST the true King entered the capital city of JERUSALEM (Matt. xxi), as prophesied by ZECHARIAH, acclaimed by Hosannas of the temple children to the sore displeasure of the rulers of the people; when CHRIST the true Priest having been rejected as the prophet of GOD, the King of ISRAEL ascended to heaven to commence that eternal priesthood whereby He is able to succour evermore all that come unto GOD by Him. (Heb. vii.) “Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things.”

The history of the period covered by the fourth division of the Chart, shows, therefore, that the Gentile powers started through the failure of the JEWISH nation to continue in the goodness of GOD. The Kingly power committed to them having been sinned away was forfeited by them ; and government then given into Gentile hands. The JEWISH people themselves thenceforth were under Gentile rule until A.D. 70, whatever their false boast of never being in bondage, and JERUSALEM itself was then totally destroyed by the Romans as our LORD foretold on the Mount of Olives. The people scattered throughout the world (like Cain to wander as vagabonds, with a mark set upon them on account of the Blood of the Righteous One—their rejected Messiah), await the last and most glorious chapter of their national history. Scriptures that should be carefully pondered in this connection, are 2 Chron. xxxvi ; Jer. xxvii, 6 ; Dan. ii, 20, 21, 27 ; Matt. xxiv, 1, 2 ; Luke xix, 41-44 ; xxi, 20-24.

The age of Law and Kingly government ended with the Coming of the ONE Who magnified the Law and made it honourable ; Who is Himself “the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth” ; Who was born King of the Jews ; crucified as KING of the Jews ; and Who has gone away to receive the Kingdom and will return to be owned as KING of kings and LORD of them that rule, in the very place where He was once refused.

Meanwhile, in His personal absence, things of great

moment take place, springing from, reaching back to, and fulfilling divine counsels made *before the foundation of the world*; then broadening out beyond Jewish, national and racial boundaries to the greater glory and eternal satisfaction of the rejected King of the Jews. To this we proceed in the next section of our Chart, represented by an unfinished circle, where the story of the Church which is His body and His bride, tells of the unique position for Eternity of all who in this day of His rejection as KING own Him as SAVIOUR and LORD.

CHAPTER VI

HOW THE CHURCH COMMENCED

THE birthday of the Christian church was the Day of Pentecost. In no sense is it a continuation of the Jewish economy ; being, as ST. PAUL teaches, a “ new man,” CHRIST having broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and having reconciled both unto GOD in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby. (Eph. ii.)

During this, the age in which we live, “ Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD,” (Rom. v, 2). It is emphatically the age or period characterised by GOD’S long-suffering grace to a world that has been proved guilty not of sins only, grievous as this is, but of the crowning sin of crucifying the LORD of glory Who had come through the tender mercy of GOD in lowly grace to save mankind.

This is the charge which the HOLY SPIRIT on that ever memorable Day of Pentecost brought home with convicting power to the hearts of thousands in Jerusalem.

Goodness Incarnate had been basely betrayed, brutally treated, and rejected, and by solemn judicial forms, ecclesiastical and civil, condemned as worthy of death in its most shameful form. “ This is the Heir : come

let us kill Him," had been the language of the leaders of the nation. But "GOD raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory" ; thereby entirely reversing the verdict of the world.

The Day of Pentecost was the public testimony to the dignity of the Person, the value of the Work, and the present position of the once hated and despised Nazarene. "JESUS of Nazareth . . . being by the right hand of GOD, exalted, and having received of the FATHER the promise of the HOLY GHOST, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear . . . therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that GOD hath made that same JESUS Whom ye have crucified both LORD and CHRIST." (Acts ii.)

So on that great day, the HOLY SPIRIT came to inaugurate a new era, by forming a holy society of redeemed people based upon the Death and Resurrection of the LORD JESUS. "By one SPIRIT are we all baptized 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 Cor. xii, 13.)

This great act took place historically at Pentecost and is the only baptism of the HOLY SPIRIT of which Scripture speaks. In PETER's sermon preached with the HOLY GHOST sent down from heaven (much of which is omitted from the record of that notable occasion) two essential things are plainly brought out, first the change of heart-attitude towards CHRIST, followed by the open confession of this by baptism ; and secondly, the twofold gift to be

immediately received, remission of sins and the gift of the HOLY SPIRIT.

As a result, some three thousand repentant believing persons were baptized and added to that little band which the SPIRIT had already baptized into one body earlier in the day ; and from that day until the day of grace ends, the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD is engaged in this gracious occupation of gathering individuals out from all nations and adding them to that one body.

The family of mankind is no longer sharply divided into two sections as Jews and Gentiles, as was the case for the preceding fifteen hundred years, but now, while all the world is guilty before GOD, there are to be found on earth Gentile nations, the Jewish race, and the Church of GOD. So ST. PAUL, in giving instructions to Christian believers at Corinth, bids them " Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of GOD " (I Cor. x, 32), carefully recognising and distinguishing each from the other.

This period is represented by an incomplete circle on the Chart, because it is an indefinite period ; already through the long-suffering grace of GOD it has been nearly two thousand years in duration.

It is a period specially characterised by three important things :—

(1) A world-wide witness to the Risen SON OF GOD.
(Matt. xxviii, 20 ; Col. i, 23.)

(2) A gathering out from *all* nations by the SPIRIT

of GOD through the gospel, of such as are to be' Heirs of GOD, Joint-heirs with CHRIST, His body, church, bride. (Acts xv, 14 ; Rom. viii ; Ephes. i, ii, iii.)

- (3) A great but very mixed profession of Christianity. (Matt. xiii.)

That the commencement of such an age should be marked in a special way was only to be expected ; hence we find the early chapters of the Acts full of " signs and wonders and divers miracles, and gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT." Most striking from their gracious character are the reversals of the curse of BABEL, and of the judgment executed at the giving of the Law. In the former instance, when the builders at BABEL all spoke indeed the same language, they were all fatally in the wrong so their speech was confounded. At Pentecost every man heard in his own tongue the wonderful works of GOD, and they " continued praising GOD." " Let us make us a name in the earth," produced the BABEL confusion and scattering. " There is none other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," was the Pentecostal secret whereby the language barrier was removed, and the gathering power disclosed.

Then at the actual giving of the Law in Exod. xxxii (as the Lawgiver appears with the very tables of stone, the work of GOD and the writing of GOD graven upon the tables) " there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (v. 28.) Upon the manifestation of

grace through the work of GOD and the proclamation thereof (Acts ii), "there were added to them about three thousand souls." (v. 41.)

What contrasts are shown. "But if the ministration of death written and engraved in stones was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the SPIRIT be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." (2 Cor. iii, 7-9.)

Three thousand perish at Sinai; three thousand saved at Pentecost.

Again, the Coming of the HOLY SPIRIT (Acts ii, 1) was not only for the purpose of baptizing believers in CHRIST into one body and thus to form the Church of GOD; but also very definitely He came to energise for effective testimony to the absent LORD "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." The testifying of the gospel of the grace of GOD; the preaching of the Kingdom of GOD; and the teaching of those things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST; can each and all only be done effectively in the power of the SPIRIT of GOD—hence His presence, and the necessity of recognising Him as the Vicar of CHRIST now here on earth. He is the LORD the SPIRIT, Who has come to reside in the Church to administer for CHRIST in every way, during His absence on high, at the right hand of the MAJESTY.

As such He forms an habitation for GOD in the Assembly; as such He graciously enables the Body of

CHRIST to function ; as such He compassionately helps our infirmities, witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of GOD, and makes us to know (to apprehend and grasp) the things that are freely given us of GOD. He is the other COMFORTER Whose presence our blessed LORD said was so necessary to us, as to make it expedient for Himself to go away to the FATHER. The age in which our lot is cast is a singularly blessed one for believers, for " the FATHER Himself loveth you " ; " the love of CHRIST constraineth us " ; and " the love of the SPIRIT " makes the things of GOD real to us.

So the special witness of this church period is to the Resurrection of the LORD JESUS ; the outpouring and indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT ; while outward and visible signs of confession of the Lordship of CHRIST are shown when the initiatory ordinance of believer's baptism is properly administered ; when the LORD'S SUPPER, the perpetual remembrance of Himself in His death until His coming again, is rightly observed ; and when the LORD'S DAY is treasured as the weekly festival of the Resurrection and employed in worship, fellowship and service to His praise. All days are His, but if the believer lets slip the importance of the first day of the week, then whatever the ostensible profession of observing all alike to His glory, the practice insensibly tends to a lowering of them all.

As we realise our privilege in this day of grace, this age of long-suffering mercy to a guilty world in which we once had our part, our hearts are thrilled by the

enheartening words of our LORD as He proclaims the four great "alls" of Christianity. "*All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach (make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always (all the days) even unto the end of the world.*"

"All power," all authority vested now in Him ; "all nations," the sphere of service ; "all things whatsoever I have commanded you," the scope of the commission ; "always," all the days, the confirming presence even unto the end of the age.

So may we "occupy till I come," when in "a moment in the twinkling of an eye" His faithful people will be translated into His immediate presence as His Coming in the air closes this Age of God's long-suffering grace to a proved guilty world.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE PRESENT AGE WILL END

THE present dispensation, or age, will end catastrophically by the Coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST into the air to take His people to the FATHER'S House, according to His gracious promise in Jno. xiv, 1-3. This is the Christian Hope ; not referred to in the Old Testament but running throughout the New because bound up with the Church—the mystery hidden from the ages.

It is independent of prophetic or other events ; just as the Church itself is not the subject of prophecy but of special New Testament revelation, as we have seen.

“ 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.” (1 Thess. iv, 16, 17.)

This passage, taken with the companion one (in 1 Cor. xv, 51, 52), *“ Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and*

we shall be changed” ; clearly establishes the fact of the present age of grace ending catastrophically.

The suddenness of CHRIST's coming *for* His Saints at the commencement of this period, is only comparable with the suddenness of CHRIST's appearing *with* His Saints at its conclusion. These two distinctly different events introduce and close the short solemn impressive period shown on the Chart as the *Age of Coming Crisis and Satan's rule*.

The Morning Star appears for the Rapture of the Church to heaven before the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings to bless the earth ; and the Rapture of the Church stands as intimately connected with the former, as the Kingdom of the SON of MAN is with the latter.

Many signs herald the approach of the Day of the LORD ; prophets of the Old Testament are almost exclusively occupied with the coming Kingdom glory ; but no sign or O.T. prophecy announces the Return of CHRIST to take His bride ; the personal assurance of the LORD being the sole basis of her hope : “ *If I go away, I will come again ; and receive you unto Myself ; that where I am there ye may be also.*” CHRIST is our Hope. (1 Tim. i, 1.)

So in 1 Thess. i, the simple but sufficient description of those early believers is “ Ye turned to GOD from idols to serve the Living and True GOD ; and to wait for His SON from heaven ; even JESUS, Who delivered us from the wrath to come.”

This period so blessedly ushered in for the saints of God, is, however, solemn and impressive to a degree for the world of guilty mankind. Terrible events crowd these most eventful seven years, for those who know not God, and who have not obeyed the gospel in the present age of grace. Many signs of the approach of these may already be discerned by those who are awake to what is transpiring in the world to-day—of these we make a special note on page 59.

First, will come the utter apostasy of Christendom. Christendom is a word not found in Scripture but one which may very conveniently and aptly describe the home of *nominal Christianity*. In the parable of the Mustard Tree (in Matt. xiii) the tiny seed becomes a great tree, and the birds of the air lodge in its branches. The profession of Christianity likewise has become a great thing in the earth though springing from so humble a beginning.

It is sadly possible for one to be of those who “have a name to live but are dead,” and to find a place in the great branches of the tree of Christian profession; maybe, one even of official position and gain; and yet to have no more organic union with the true body of believing possessors of life in CHRIST than the birds with the tree in whose branches they lodge. All such will be left behind for judgment on the earth, when CHRIST comes for His own people, and will go to swell the ranks of apostate Christendom which will be dealt with by CHRIST at His

appearing to judge the quick (living), of which Scripture so solemnly assures us.

Ecclesiastical institutions, buildings and offices being no part of the spiritual body of CHRIST will remain on the earth intact ; and liturgical services (needing no special operation of the HOLY SPIRIT or presence of real believers for their maintenance) will go on as usual for awhile ; endowments, foundations and funds can be maintained and augmented without spiritual help ; the rising tide of ungovernable lawlessness will undoubtedly lead to the closer federation ecclesiastically of denominational interests ; Bibles, prayer books, hymnals will still be available for use and misuse in religious services ; but with the calling away of every true believer in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the withdrawal of the HOLY SPIRIT as restrainer of evil, Christendom will rapidly fall away from the nominal profession of Christianity even in its most corrupt forms. It will be judged at the Appearing in glory when, at the end of the seven years, CHRIST comes attended by the saints and angels to purge His Kingdom of all things that are offensive.

The greater privileges of Christendom necessarily ensure the greater doom upon its apostasy.

Secondly, there will be a SATANIC revival of the Roman Empire, accompanied by

Thirdly, the Rise of the Jewish Antichrist (2 Thess. ii) ; whose schemes and godless activities lead on to the solemn time of JACOB's trouble ; so that there is to be during the latter half of that period,

Fourthly, the Great Tribulation (Matt. xxiv) mercifully shortened, however, for the elect's sakes, as our LORD prophesied in His Olivet discourses.

A godly remnant of converted Jews having been themselves turned to repentance, will be preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of heaven (the LORD calls them His brethren, Matt. xxv, 40) ; and having gone out with it to the nations, will be persecuted to death for their faith and testimony ; as also will a great multitude of their Gentile converts. (Rev. vii.)

Fifthly, then shall the sign of the SON of MAN be seen in the heavens ; then shall all nations wail because of Him ; then will He execute speedy judgments on the nations (Matt. xxiv ; xxv.) ; when He appears upon Mount Olivet to the deliverance of the faithful remnant and the discomfiture of their enemies at the fearful Armageddon (Zech. xiv ; Rev. xvii, xix). Upon how they have treated His Jewish brethren, will the King apportion the sentences in the solemn judgment of the nations. He separates the godly from the ungodly in those living nations ; they have each proved themselves to be what they are, by their treatment of Him in the messengers whom He has sent to announce the Kingdom, just before He comes to reign.

During this short but solemn period of Crisis and Satan's rule, the power of the Enemy of GOD and mankind is exerted to the full. Wilfully, and without a tempter, the DEVIL rebelled against his MAKER, and leaving his first estate persistently and malignantly sought the ruin

of mankind. In the Man of Sin, in the Antichrist, during this awful time, evil appears incarnate and apparently invincible ; until CHRIST the SON of MAN appears in His glory. Then by His word of command Beast, False Prophet, Antichrist the Man of Sin disappear from the region of human affairs while the DEVIL himself, prime instigator of all opposition to GOD and CHRIST, is bound, restrained, and shut up in the abyss for a thousand years. The grand purposes of GOD for the reversal of the world's ruin and misery now take immediate shape and permanence in the Kingdom prepared *from* the foundation of the world, under the personal sway of Him Whom the heavens received until these times of the restitution of all things. Great days for the "blessed of MY FATHER" as the King describes some ; but sad prelude to a yet more sad eternity for such as preferred the DEVIL to GOD, and had pleasure in unrighteousness.

A brief outline of the parables of the "Kingdom of the heavens" as given by our LORD prophetically, in Matt. xiii, may perhaps be of some service to the Bible student.

The seven connected parables afford a complete sketch of the "Kingdom of the heavens," which is to be set up by power in manifested glory at the Appearing in glory of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

1. The Sower, obviously a commencement.
2. The Tares, equally clearly a development.

3. The Mustard Seed, i.e., Christendom.
4. The Leaven, i.e., Bad doctrine with its corrupting and inflating effect.
5. The Hidden Treasure, i.e., What Christ saw in Israel and the Church.
6. The Pearl of great price, i.e., Church in unity and beauty in His eyes.
7. The Draw-net, i.e., Chiefly expressive of the Gospel of Kingdom after the Church is taken up.

The Design of the Sower is evident ; the SON of MAN sows the good seed of the Kingdom in the world.

The Development through unwatchfulness of man is patent to every observer ; as the enemy busily works " while men slept."

The Departure from faith and practice (*cf.* 2 Tim. ii, iii), is what characterises " Christendom " in an ever-increasing measure in our day.

The first four parables apply to the *outward* profession of Christianity, and verses 41 and 43 of the chapter describe the two regions of the same Kingdom : the " Kingdom of their FATHER " (v. 43), where the righteous shine, being the upper region ; and the Kingdom of the SON of MAN—" His Kingdom "—(v. 41), where the once rejected King of the Jews is to be acclaimed and honoured, forming the lower region of what taken together forms the KINGDOM of GOD.

In view of what has been before us in this short chapter dealing with the Age of Coming Crisis and Satan's rule, the reader is urged to consider three things, namely, (1) Christianity and its solemnity ; (2) Christendom and its apostasy ; and (3) Conscience and its exercise, in connection with both the foregoing.

Such Scriptures as 2 Timothy ; 2 Peter ; and Jude, must be studied if the subject is to be apprehended as in the full light of the truth of God.

Signs of the nearness of the Coming of the LORD for His saints may be found in the general and growing expectancy of this event among all true believers of every denomination ; and in the return of the Jews to Palestine and the extraordinary developments there during the last quarter of a century. A further note on this appears later in this book. The gradual but increasing apostasy of Christendom ; its Modernism, spiritist movements ; and the loosening of what were once regarded as sacred bonds of honour in domestic life ; the rise of Dictators, too, foreshadowing the re-constituting of the old Roman Empire and the revelation of the Man of sin. The atmosphere both nationally and internationally is electric, and men's hearts fail for fear of what is coming on the earth.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW THE GOLDEN AGE WILL COME

THE Golden Age for this world will come with the Coming of CHRIST as King ; and will last for that thousand years called *the Millennium*. A complete, concise account of all who will share in this millennial reign of our LORD is given in Rev. xx, 4, 6. Blessed indeed and holy are all who have part in the first resurrection and millennial glory.

It will be that age of righteousness, blessing and displayed glory to which prophets looked forward ; of which poets and psalmists sang ; for which the heart of humanity has yearned ; to which GOD Himself promised ABRAHAM so great blessings should be attached, that all nations should be blessed in him and his seed. * “ For GOD does mean to bless this long groaning creation, and inspired the mouth of His holy prophets to speak of it since time began. They therefore do greatly err who deny the immense and universal blessing in store for ISRAEL, the nations, the earth, yea, even the lower creation. They do not know how God intends to crown men here below with loving kindness and tender mercies, when He shall open His hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

* W. Kelly.

That this scene shall first have been swept by the besom of judgment, when GOD shall punish the host of the high ones above and smite the Kings of the earth below, we have seen in our last chapter.

What marks the introduction of this golden age of blessing is not only the exclusion of SATAN and his hosts, but the personal reign of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in power and blessing, when He will do justice to the poor, and plead the cause of the meek as the Psalmist sings prophetically in his seventy-second Psalm. This Psalm, though entitled a Psalm for SOLOMON, leads us to look for a greater than SOLOMON to fill the inspired picture presented. Great DAVID'S SON and LORD is the One Who shall fill the whole earth with the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea, as more than one inspired prophet says.

How the vision of this falls upon the great Evangelical Prophet Isaiah, as he predicts it, is clearly shown, as, speaking of CHRIST'S glory, he says : " Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together ; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain ; for

the earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of JESSE, which shall stand for an ensign of the peoples : to it shall the Gentiles seek ; and His rest shall be glorious." (Isa. xi, 5-10.)

To this glowing description of the coming golden age of MESSIAH's reign with all its great and glorious changes in honour of the once rejected King, the same prophet adds fresh interest and beauty (as in chapters xii, xxv, xxvi, xxxii, xxxv, lv, to indicate but a few references), where he shows the joyful flourishing of CHRIST's Kingdom and the acclamations of His subjects during that so peaceful and so prosperous age. While the LORD JESUS as King righteously takes in hand the sceptre of the earth ; of the land of ISRAEL in particular ; all nations will come indirectly under His reign ; for there will be, as the prophet affirms, "one King over all the earth," not to the setting aside of others, but as the One Supreme Governor to Whom all others will be compelled to submit. This (as shown in Isa. xlix, 23 ; lx, 3, 10, 16) will last throughout the unbroken period of the thousand years of the golden age for this world. This Kingdom is not to be transferred to any other, as in the history of the world has always happened, so it is called "the everlasting Kingdom" ; "the throne of His father DAVID" ; and of CHRIST it is said "He shall reign over the house of JACOB for ever ; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i, 32, 33.)

Not "everlasting" in the sense of "eternal," but as

age-enduring ; lasting so long as the earth endures. It is the earthly Kingdom of the SON of MAN, when Psalm lxxii shall find complete fulfilment.

The deliverance of creation (now groaning and travailing in pain) ; the miseries, sufferings and sorrows of a world that for six thousand years had been subjected to vanity and grief now ended ; and GOD demonstrating that whatever SATAN may have introduced into the world, yet goodness and mercy are His own delight ; and that He rejoices in His works, and in the prosperity of them that fear Him. A golden age indeed for a world that has known little else save strife, sin, woe and sorrow, since the day when the first Adam brought such a sad entail upon his hapless descendants. This then will all be reversed by the LAST ADAM ; the SECOND MAN ; the HEIR of all things ; now come into His inheritance. *Here is the common point of time where the bright visions of all the prophets meet.*

This is the gathering up of all human history in the hand of " the only Potentate " ; each of the ages having typically contributed to the " many crowns " seen upon His head. The first Adam with earthly headships pointing to the LAST ADAM as SON of MAN. (Psl. viii.) Civil government given to NOAH speaking of CHRIST as Judge of the habitable earth ; the age of ABRAM to MOSES telling of the true Melchizedec, Priest and King of righteousness and peace indeed ; the period of Kingly rule under DAVID and SOLOMON bringing to mind the true SON of DAVID to Whom the Kingdom is given by

the LORD GOD; His title of Bridegroom being added for the Church period as forming no part of predicted earthly glory, but most personal, and truly blessed in the eyes of those who form His body and His bride ; and lastly, the times covered by the four great Gentile monarchies, are seen as giving deep meaning to His title of " KING of kings and LORD of lords."

Having come with myriads of His saints to execute judgment upon the Beast and false Prophet (Rev. xix, 17-21) and their allied forces ; having bound SATAN ; and restored the Kingdom to ISRAEL He then blesses all nations with a thousand years of righteous rule ; and so this period is marked on the Chart as *The Age of righteousness, blessing and glory.*

DAVID, in Psalm cxlv, speaks of " the glorious majesty of His Kingdom " ; and a beautiful and sublime picture of the millennial scene is also presented in the Transfiguration of the LORD JESUS on the holy mount.

Three of the Evangelists record this (Matt. xvi, 28 ; Mark ix, 1 ; Luke ix, 27) ; the impression made upon the APOSTLE PETER by this transcendent scene may be gathered from the references in his epistle. (2 Peter, i, 16-18.)

It was a striking representation of the coming day of earthly glory. MOSES and ELIAS representing the two classes of saints of the first resurrection who shall reign with CHRIST—those who have fallen asleep as MOSES, and those who at the Rapture will not sleep but will be changed ; while PETER, JAMES and JOHN represent most

surely those living inhabitants then on earth in that day of displayed glory, rejoicing in the presence of the LORD and of the risen glorified saints attending Him.

“ They spake with Him of the decease (exodus) that He should accomplish at Jerusalem ” ; for while CHRIST is the Key to all prophecy ; His Cross is also the pivot upon which all turns for God’s purposes of blessing for heaven and earth.

CHAPTER IX

THE FINAL JUDGMENT

UPON our Chart between the "Age of righteousness, blessing, and glory," and Eternity marked "*Omega*" introducing new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, there is a brief section "The Great White Throne." This is the last judgment of all ; the end not merely of an age, but of the world itself. The long stream of time is now about to merge into the ocean of Eternity. Ere this actually happens, the Great Assize takes place on the Day of wrath ; and the final scene of the life stories of all the ungodly and impenitent who have ever lived now transpires.

Nothing can exceed the solemn description given in Rev. xx. "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell (hades) delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man

according to their works." Only one class is found here—Scripture knowing nothing of "the general judgment" so commonly spoken of in prayers, hymns and sermons. It does speak of eternal judgment, when time has ceased and Eternity begun. Strict justice is meted out to every man according to his works followed by speedy, irrevocable execution. The day of mercy then having passed away, the day of judgment is present. And who can abide it? None of those there present. "The resurrection of judgment" to which our LORD refers in Jno. v, will have taken place; and all the evil deeds of lives lived on earth, the blotted pages of their history appear in the books now opened. The book of memory too, is opened as the ominous "Son remember that thou in thy lifetime" falls upon ears, alas! all too late awakened to their responsibilities as moral beings.

The book of life—with its record of the infinite goodness of GOD, Who had provided a way of escape and deliverance from the dread wrath to come—will be a silent witness at that great tribunal of the Great White Throne. "Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged." (Rev. xi, 18.) Death and the grave had claimed their bodies as prey from many successive generations; and hades had been the abode for ages of their disembodied spirits. These, and the great sea, that had swallowed its millions, now pour forth in countless myriads the dead that are in them, to appear before the judgment throne of GOD. Immortal bodies are given them, that they who have sinned through

their bodies, and in their bodies, should as men, *not as disembodied spirits*, answer for their persistent impenitence and rebellion against their MAKER ; should have opportunity, too, to explain their deliberate refusal of all His gracious offers of mercy and salvation provided at infinite cost for mankind by the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

It is a day of judgment ; not one of wholesale, indiscriminate condemnation ; hence the solemn, searching, judicial procedure, which so invests the Great White Throne with its awful terrors. For as truly as GOD is just and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS, so surely is His justice manifested in the condemnation of the unbelieving, fearful, impenitent, ungodly, who neglect, despise, or reject so great salvation as that provided by the Cross of the LORD JESUS CHRIST at Calvary—" *Who gave Himself a ransom for all.*"

Of the apostate traitor apostle, JUDAS ISCARIOT, the record solemnly runs : " JUDAS by transgression fell that he might go to his own place." Upon which a writer comments : " He *made* his own place ; he *went* to his own place ; and *knew* that it was his own place." Alike in the justification of the believer, and the condemnation of the unbeliever, *the righteousness of God will be manifested to the higher unfallen intelligences surrounding His eternal throne* with their unceasing adoring ascription of HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.

Connected with the judgment of the Great White Throne is the end of the world, and everything in it, all being now completely destroyed. " The heavens shall

pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter iii, 10.) "The first heaven or firmament (Gen. i, 8), the earth's atmosphere, will be dissolved or decomposed, passing away into space ; probably by a terrible explosion," so says a writer of some fifty years since ; and in this very year, the Astronomer-Royal in his new book, entitled : *WORLDS WITHOUT END*, discusses ways in which the world may come to an end. Says he, "Should the sun become a new star, everything on the earth would very quickly be burnt, and in the course of a few hours the earth itself would become merely a cloud of hot gases ; the sun might even swell up to such an extent that it would swallow the earth. A sudden death by heat is one possible end of our earth."

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming day of GOD ? . . . Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Peter iii, 10-14.)

CHAPTER X

THE ALTAR, THE TABLE, THE THRONE

THE characters of the various groups of ages or dispensations are also indicated by the position of the diagrams representing The ALTAR, The LORD'S TABLE and The THRONE under the line which runs across the Chart.

Each is typical of the period shown above with the added point of their general and particular relation to the Cross which stands central to everything. The importance of the Cross in the affairs of mankind is second only to the supreme importance of Him Who suffered thereon and into Whose hands all human affairs are committed. He is the SON of MAN ; the only SAVIOUR of men ; and the appointed JUDGE of men. " The FATHER hath committed all things into His hands because He is the SON of MAN." To this the ALTAR, TABLE and THRONE each bear witness.

From ADAM as a fallen creature until CALVARY a series of tiny arrows point onward to the Cross ; from the restitution of all things by the LAST ADAM in the Kingdom circle on the Chart, a similar line is traced backward to the Cross. The redeeming mercy of God

through the Dayspring from on high (Luke, ii) is the theme of sacred story throughout the ages of time.

“ Soon as the reign of sin began,
The light of mercy dawned on man,
When God announced the blessed news,
The woman’s Seed thy head shall bruise.”

For some forty centuries, altars—whether authorised by divine appointment, or unauthorised ones erected as a witness to man’s fear of an unknown Deity, or as a sign of man’s sense of need—had been laden with victims whose sacrifice could never take away sins. For two thousand years, the TABLE with its BREAD and WINE has witnessed to the One Offering made by CHRIST Who appeared in the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and so :—

“ One Offering single and complete,
With heart and voice we say ;
And what He never can repeat,
We show forth day by day.”

The LORD’S DEATH which is shown by the faithful, as in His own appointed way He is remembered, is what gives all point and meaning to the feast of remembrance until He comes.

The THRONE, too, is the sequence to the Cross, for did not our Lord Himself say : “ Ought not the CHRIST to have suffered, and to enter into His glory ? ”

The HOLY SPIRIT, also, the divine WITNESSER to

the SAVIOUR's merits, leads the 'POSTLE PETER to write of : " The sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow."

ALTAR of sacrifice, TABLE of remembrance, and THRONE of glory all find meaning and explanation in the CROSS of CALVARY.

Says the appointed minister of the Gospel, and of the Church, one, too, who never tired of preaching " the Kingdom of GOD and the things concerning JESUS CHRIST " : " GOD forbid that I should glory save in the CROSS of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

Righteous ABEL brought his sacrifice by faith, but it was the light from the hill of Calvary reflecting back upon it which gave it deep value and meaning in the sight of GOD.

The Levitical sacrifices received all their value in the sight of GOD likewise from that One Sacrifice of the LAMB of GOD foreordained from before the foundation of the world and consummated at Calvary.

Penitents were forgiven their sins for four thousand years through the forbearance of GOD in view of that tremendous transaction on the Cross as yet, then, unaccomplished. For in virtue of the precious blood of CHRIST all the Old Testament believers were pardoned, though the full consciousness and joy of being "ransomed, reconciled and forgiven" necessarily awaited the complete atonement made upon the Cross and the witness of the HOLY SPIRIT to the resurrection and glorification of our blessed and most adorable REDEEMER.

The altar was also a standing witness of the holiness of GOD, and of the dire need of sinful men : loudly proclaiming that “ without shedding of blood there is no remission.”

The LORD'S TABLE (the phrase in Greek is adjectival, authority rather than possessiveness, being the thought as in the only other use of same in Rev. i, 6, “ the LORD'S DAY ”) is so connected with, and dependent upon, the Cross, that it has no meaning apart from what it commemorates, celebrates, and is the communion of. The elements of bread and wine, so simple, so significant and hence so solemn in this sacred feast of remembrance, speak to our hearts of the Body and the Blood of the LORD. Not CHRIST as He was in the days of His flesh : not CHRIST as He is now in heaven as the MAN in glory : but CHRIST as He became once—and that when the offering of the Body of JESUS CHRIST—the one offering took place ; when His precious blood was shed, and the Atoning Death of the Incarnate SON of GOD accomplished the will of GOD.

“ Once, only once, but once for all,
His precious life He gave ;
Before His Cross we prostrate fall
And own Him strong to save.”

“ The Bread of GOD come down from heaven,” and
“ His flesh given for the life of the world.”

Bread the staple food of humanity is only produced from the corn which has grown up on the earth, being

cut down, subjected to great pressure of the mill, and to the fierce flame of the oven ; so the true Bread of life giving His flesh for the life of the world was subjected to the pressure of our sin's burden upon the Cross, where the fierce flame of divine judgment which they necessarily called forth, came upon our sinless Substitute and Surety, in that hour when He suffered for our sins.

As we reverently receive the broken bread at the Holy Supper, we remember the travail of His soul, and how His sinless body was bruised and broken for our salvation on the Cross of shame.

We *have* eaten by faith, and we live because He died ; and so we ponder that deep saying on the night of His betrayal, " This is My body which is given for you ; this do in remembrance of Me."

In the same manner the fruit of the vine has to be passed through the winepress ere it can be used to fill " the cup of blessing "—the cup in which we give thanks. With contrite spirits, and hearts bowed in His presence we worship, and drink of this " cup of the LORD " at His bidding, as we remember what He suffered for our sakes. It is indeed a solemn feast of grateful remembrance of our holy LORD and SAVIOUR in His dying but undying love for us.

" LORD, let us ne'er forget
Thy rich, Thy precious love ;
Our theme of joy and wonder here,
Our endless song above."

And this holy feast is peculiar to this *Age of God's long-suffering grace*, during the period of the Church's sojourn on earth.

It is "till He comes," and so it links the Cross with the glory.

"See the feast of love is spread,
Drink the wine and break the bread ;
Sweet memorials till the LORD
Calls us round the heavenly board ;
Some from earth, from glory some,
Severed only "till He come."

The Throne of His Kingdom, the last of the trio of typical diagrams, speaks of that glorious Kingdom characterised by the Reigning of the King in righteousness and peace ; the Restraint of SATAN for a thousand years ; the Restoration of ISRAEL ; the Reducing of all rule and authority by CHRIST's own power ; and then the final Resignation of the Kingdom to GOD ; when after Armageddon, the Millennium, and the Final Judgment of the Great White Throne, time itself merges into Eternity. Altar, Table, and Throne all are linked with that Cross which is the Pivot upon which all turns for heaven and earth in the purposes of GOD.

EPILOGUE

THE AGES OF THE AGES

"Fear not ; I am the first and the last, and the living One : and I became dead, and behold I am living to the ages of ages."

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea exists no more."

"And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

"And I heard a loud voice out of the heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God. And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son."

And His servants shall serve Him . . . perfect service.

And they shall see His face . . . perfect vision.

And His name shall be in their foreheads . . . perfect likeness.

And they shall reign to the ages of ages . . . perfect victory.

HE THAT TESTIFIES THESE THINGS SAYS, YEA, I COME QUICKLY.

AMEN ; COME, LORD JESUS.

NOTES

NOTE A.—*The inhabitants of the earth during the Millennial reign.*

First, in every sense the 144,000 (Rev. xiv, 1-5) who are associated specially with the Lamb on Mount Sion, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. These, having gone through the horrors of chapter xiii, during the awful time of the ascendancy of the Beast, endured to the end, *and are saved into the blessing of the Kingdom*, according to Matthew xxiv, 13. Redeemed from among men, the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, their portion is nearest of all to that of the heavenly saints. But unlike these they are not in glorified bodies, yet they sing the song of heaven on earth, and are privileged to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth throughout His earthly dominions.

Secondly, the true remnant of His people who had been *slain* for their faithful testimony, either during the beginning of sorrows (Rev. vi, 9-11) or under the more severe testing of the last sore troubles form another company. These having lost their lives after the Church was translated, and yet before the Kingdom was established in power, are rewarded with the yet better portion of the heavenly saints. The longest verse in the Book of Revelation (xx, 4), shows these to have been included in the first resurrection. These "lived" (having been raised from the dead to do so) "and reigned with Christ." They are possessors of glorified bodies like all who have part in the first resurrection, and will never again have their localised habitation on earth, but will be used by Christ in the administration of His world-wide Kingdom.

Thirdly, a further company seen enjoying the privileges and blessings of the Kingdom of righteousness, blessing and displayed glory, find mention in Matt. xxiv, 31; Rev. vii, 1-8. These will form the nation, come at long last into full enjoyment of the promises made to the fathers, with the sure mercies of David realised under the sway of Him that was born King of the Jews, Jesus Christ the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Matt. i, 1.

With them also are found a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples and tongues who have come out of the great tribulation (*cf.* Jer. xxx, 7, Jacob's trouble; Dan. xii, 1; Matt. xxiv, 15; Mark xiii, 19) and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. These are the fruit of the missionary testimony by the Jewish brethren sent to all nations outside guilty Christendom after the Church is translated to heaven. (Isa. lxvi, 21; Matt. xxv, 31-46; Rev. vii.)

NOTE B.—*As to children born during the Millennium.* (Isa. lxi, 9.)

The manifested glory of the established power of the Lord on earth ; the Spirit poured out upon all flesh (Joel ii) ; and the forcible restraint of Satan preventing his evil activities, Rev. xx, 1-3 ; are the marks of the Millennial Kingdom. So children born during this period come upon the scene under the happiest auspices, yet needing a new birth to truly enter the Kingdom ; this is evidenced by the revolt of myriads against the King directly Satan reappears at the close of the thousand years. Even a thousand years of peace, prosperity and entirely beneficent government fails to change the heart of fallen man—" Except a man be born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of God " is a fundamental truth conditioning divine and human relationship in every age of the history of mankind. Children of saints do not become saints by natural generation, neither in this day of grace, nor in the age to come. Hence at the end of the thousand years the final expression on earth of the irreconcilable enmity of the unregenerate human heart against God is seen in the speedy revolt of myriads who enroll themselves under the more congenial banner of the Devil, only alas ! to share his doom. Children born during the Millennium have immense privileges, but as always, with corresponding responsibilities.

NOTE C.—

Others mentioned as coming under the predicted allegiance of the King-Messiah, are referred to in Psalm xviii, 44. " As soon as they hear of Me, they shall obey Me ; the strangers shall submit themselves unto Me." The reign of righteousness begins with desolating, destroying judgments, taking away the obstinately wicked, while the Spirit of God poured out upon all flesh bows the hearts of those who survive making them submissive to the yoke of Christ's authority. " For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." And, " the Lord is known by the judgment He executeth." (Psl. ix ; lix, 13 ; lxxxiii, 18.)

NOTE D.—*The Judgment Seat of Christ.* (2 Cor. v, 9, 10.)

This solemn manifestation of the believer takes place between the Coming *for* His saints, and the Appearing *with* them in glory. It is intensely solemn, but in no sense humiliating ; for we appear in bodies of glory like unto His own body of glory ; and the object is twofold, first in reviewing the pathway trodden and fully seeing how active and patient the love and grace of our Lord has been in preserving, protecting and providing for us and at the same time bearing with us, enduring us all the days of our lives, which will eternally enhance His grace and glory in our eyes ; secondly, to make the awards for faithful service by appointments in the Kingdom. Faithful in a few things here, ruler over many cities there. Such is His own gracious assurance. The twelve Apostles have their distinctive appointment, " judging the twelve tribes of Israel,"

as well as their exceeding blessedness in the church built upon them. The saints judging the world, and indeed judging angels, are seen in the administration of the Kingdom. As a result of manifestation at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. v, 10; 1 Cor. iii, 13-15, 17; iv, 5), there will be reward for faithfulness, and a distinct sense of loss where there is unfaithfulness towards Him now. Two well-known hymn verses seem to express the believer's apprehension of what it will mean.

" Then Lord shall I fully know
Not, till then, how much I owe."

and,

" How shall I meet those eyes
Mine on Himself I cast
And own myself the Saviour's prize
Mercy from first to last."

To live *this day* in the light of *that day*, will check pride, ambition, self-will, sloth, evil speaking and general worldliness of conduct to an unsuspected degree; at the same time giving room for love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, fidelity and self-control to be manifested here and rewarded there. When, later the Marriage of the Lamb has come, to his wife "was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and bright; for the fine linen is *the righteousnesses of saints*." Present conduct tends to permanent character.

NOTE E.—*World situation in the Closing Days.*

In Isa. xviii, it is intimated that the Jews will be restored to Palestine through the intervention of a friendly maritime power; and Lord Balfour's mandate since which incredible prosperity has come to the Holy Land confirms the belief that Britain is the power referred to.

Ezek. xxxviii. "Gog, the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Mesekh and Tubal." Rosh unquestionably signifies Russia, Mesekh and Tubal being equivalent to Moscow and Tobolsk; the former the recently restored ancient capital of Russia in Europe (and only recently restored) under confessedly Anti-God auspices; the latter a chief town of Russia in Asia.

Rosh, Mesekh and Tubal = "All the Russias," and together with China, India and Persia represent the hosts of the King of the North who will come against Israel, and after terrific conflict will be utterly routed, Ezek. xxxix, 4, and destroyed at the beginning of the Millennium. Rev. ix, 16 gives the number of the great armies also from the East, as two hundred million armed men. India, Japan, China and other races will show that the long-feared Yellow Peril was not a dream, in the times of what is termed "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Joel iii; Zeph. iii, 8.) "Gomer and all his lands" refers to Germany and Confederate States when they become the allies and vassals of Russia, according to many able expositors of Ezek. xxxviii, 6.

Significant, too, of the closing days of the world's history is the emergence into importance of Abyssinia, Ethiopia, Libya, all named as playing their part in the great Armageddon catastrophe yet to be fought out in the land of Palestine.

Of the revived Roman Empire, earlier mention has been made. It is a matter of ancient history that Charlemagne and Napoleon Bonaparte endeavoured to achieve this. It is a matter of current history that it is still ardently desired. Russia, Germany, Italy, with the Anti-God, Anti-Jew obsessions of the former two, and the braggart boastfulness of all three, are ominous signs of the times, dark shadows upon the walls of contemporary history. It may be the law of ebb and flow will remain in operation for a time, but it is arresting to mark that each time the tide of godlessness, lawlessness, and apostasy rises higher and higher.

NOTE F.—*The significance of the following extract from "The Church Times" of January 10th, 1936, will appeal to readers of "Age after Age."*

" 'The agony of German Jewry has reached such a degree of urgency, and has become such a complex international problem, that something great must be undertaken immediately, not only by the Jewry of the world, but by the whole of humanity.' The one thing that can be done is to assist emigration, and almost the only country to which any large migration is possible is Palestine. There is no limit to the number of 'capitalists,' families that possess at least a thousand pounds, who may settle in Palestine, and a great effort is being made by leading British and American Jews to raise a sufficient sum—£10,000,000 is mentioned—to finance a mass movement from tyranny to freedom. A large increase in the Jewish population of Palestine will unquestionably arouse Arab protests, but Great Britain is pledged to the National Home policy, and there is no doubt of the capacity of the country to support a much larger population."

PROGRESSIVE PALESTINE

" A STRIKING story of the development of Palestine is told in the report of the British Commercial Agent at Haifa. Imports, exports and revenue have alike risen by leaps and bounds. In 1934 all three were from twice to two and a half times as high as they were in 1931. The Government had a realised surplus of £5,587,837. What country would not be proud of such a recovery from the depression ? Within the same period the town of Tel-Aviv, which stands near Jaffa, on a site where 25 years ago there was not a single house, increased its population from 46,000 to 120,000. This indicates one of the great causes of the expansion of trade—the recent flow of immigration, which is likely to show a further increase in the present year.

" Over the proper amount of such immigration there has been much dispute. The Arabs complain that it is excessive ; the Jews argue that the quota is unwisely low. To adjust it to ' the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine,' is the principle of the Government's policy, and the general economic results have clearly been good. Immigrants have brought not only labour but capital, and so produced an extraordinary balance of trade. Imports last year were £15,150,000, exports £3,220,000. This is not to be regarded as undesirable. The adverse balance of £12,000,000 is actually accounted for by expenditure on capital goods and investment in agriculture on behalf of the Jewish immigrants compelled to transfer their resources and energies to Palestine. The establishment there ' of a national home for the Jewish people ' which Lord BALFOUR proclaimed in 1917 is being aided by causes then unforeseen."