


Is Christ's

Coming Imminent ?

A Prophetic Study for The New Century.

. By .

HENRY VARLEY.

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PREFACE.

INTIMATE knowledge of the Scriptures must yield an intelligent conception of what is properly known as dispensational truth. Rightly to allocate the testimonies, prophecies, and promises of God's Word in regard to His time, purpose, and intention, is proof of ability "rightly to divide the word of truth." To thousands of believers the Word of God appears to be regarded as a mass of precious material thrown together without either order, plan, or intelligent purpose.

They view the Scriptures very much as men might look upon the materials of which a magnificent house is to be built. They see, however, little connection between the parts, and possess neither skill to tell out the plan nor ability to erect the superstructure. They are what the Apostle describes as novices, and stand in marked contrast to those who, through careful study of the Word of God, are spoken of by the Holy Spirit as "wise master-builders." Through want of intimate acquaintance with the great lines of prophetic truth which stand for the believer's guidance, large numbers of Christians are constantly "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephes. iv. 14).

Prophecy rightly understood is a most important safeguard against rationalism and false views concerning the immediate future. It is the plan of the divine purpose graciously disclosed by God to His people, in order to their instruction, defence, and establishment in their most holy faith. Fulfilled prophecy, known and carefully distinguished, is indeed a sheet-anchor to the soul in these days of sceptical unrest and doubt. It is nothing less than a brilliant light shining out from the past, clear and bright. Unfulfilled prophecy, also, is a brilliant light projected by God into the future. By the knowledge which it imparts we know practically where we

are and what to expect. We are confident as to that which the Eternal God has declared shall be, and are preserved, on the one hand, from undue haste, and from false statements concerning the immediate future of the world on the other. The prophetic testimonies of God's Word are invaluable to the Church of God: neither jot nor tittle has failed in the past, neither shall any unfulfilled prophecy fail to be FULFILLED in the future.

The following pages show that we are at the end of an age which the Lord Jesus Christ declared will close in awful and solemn judgment. He called this dispensation "wicked, sinful, and adulterous"; that its end would see conditions as terrible as the days of Lot in Sodom; corrupt as the time of Noah, when human wickedness rose to such a height that the Lord's judgment of the flood destroyed the ungodly. It is not popular to write thus, but it is solemnly true. When the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed from heaven, He comes "with the angels of His might in flaming fire, yielding vengeance upon them that know not God and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9)...

This testimony is absolutely conclusive. Without any irreverence we write. The Lord could not thus come in flaming fire, yielding vengeance, unless human sin and iniquity merited this awful manifestation of the Divine vengeance. The time, moreover, is at hand. The tares are rapidly ripening for the impending judgment. The harvest is at hand. Further, we are face to face with many of the predicted signs which were immediately to precede His coming. Plague, pestilence, famine, and abounding disease have marked the past ten years over large parts of the earth's surface. These were to be among "the beginning of sorrows."

Earthquakes were to be "in divers places." This has been exactly the fact during the past decade; more earthquakes the past six years than in thirty preceding. Mark the expression, "in divers places," *i.e.*, in divers places at the same time. Again, "the sea and the waves roaring." The Atlantic storms have been terrific throughout this whole winter, with huge tidal waves—(lit.) "the sea and the waves roaring." Drought in India and Australia, with intense heat

and tremendous losses of sheep and all kinds of stock. Millions of men, women, and children have died of plague, cholera, disease, and famine in India. "Men's hearts surely are failing them for fear, looking for the things that are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven are being shaken." The times of the Divine judgment upon the sinners who have been and are destroying the earth is at hand. Nor can we wonder at this. Intemperance, racing, gambling, idleness, immorality, sodomy, the insane love of money and pleasure, represent the hot pursuit and idolatry of vast masses in the city of London.

Here, in its very centre, and within half-a-mile of the houses of the Legislature, what is known as the great "flesh market" of the world is found. It is estimated that about 50,000 stylishly-dressed harlots furnish and represent the chief attraction of the London season in this deadly area. Hundreds of thousands of wealthy and licentious human beasts in the form of men, from all parts of the world, contribute millions of money to sustain this horrible market, wherein Belgian, French, and English women congregate and keep this carnival of hell going for 365 days and nights in the year. This huge vortex of lawless iniquity and splendid sin is always in full blast.

At least four hundred theatres, music, dancing, gambling, drinking, and elaborate supper rooms contribute to maintain this gilded arena of metropolitan sin, disease, and death. Poverty cannot be spoken of as a factor in this shameless centre. Everything that great wealth and enormous expenditure could do, has been done to endeavour to make sin and iniquity respectable. The distillers, brewers, and drink-sellers by hundreds hold high and fascinating Court here, and millions of money are being made whilst thousands of men and women, splendidly dressed and apparently well educated and cultured, sink into the sensuality and damnation of hell.

The market could not last six months but for the thousands of harlots, fornicators, sodomites and adulterers who crowd the theatres, drinking-houses and streets of these temples devoted to sensual worship. Neither Corinth nor any other of the cities of Greece or Rome were in it as compared with this splendidly illuminated and gilded "flesh market" which centres in Regent Street, Piccadilly, Leicester Square, and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The beautifully dressed harlots and their first-class paramours are absolute masters of the whole situation. The Government dare not interfere with this long-established school and sensual iniquity. The police are utterly powerless to repress the "market." They quietly regulate it, wink at the splendid abominations, and keep order.

The licensed drinking houses furnish the strong drinks which weaken the power of the will, fire the brain, and stimulate the brutal lusts which burn until men and women become, as the Word of God puts it, "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin." There the sensual passions of the fair but fallen women, and unfaithful wives, are kindled to a dread white heat, and the demon takes the place of the human both in the men and women, and verily hell has enlarged herself in order to receive from this attractive Broadway in the heart of London the thousands who pass from the earthly into the sensual, and from the sensual into the devilish.

Said one of the stylishly-dressed women when spoken to about her constant drinking—she had known a very different experience in the past, and the woman in her, though crushed, was not yet quite dead—"Drink," she said, "why, in this calling you want to be always drunk." Yes, there is a direct connection between the fires of brandy, whisky, and champagne, the dread fires of human lust, and the tormenting fires of hell. I do not believe that Sodom and Gomorrah were one whit worse than this vast and vile centre in London is to-day. Here sodomy is awfully rife. Large numbers of young men walk these streets for these horrible sins. As of old, it is now: "And likewise the men leaving the natural use of the woman burn in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is nameless and cannot be written."

There is a difference, however. In London the tens of thousands who are in business, and take a criminal part in society's carnival of lust, are doing their level best to make the "great flesh market" with its brilliant illuminations and fascinating attractions to appear as the abode of angels of light, which Sodom never did.

The spectacular scenes at the theatres, many of them designed to stimulate lust, with hordes of splendidly-dressed prostitutes, are made to stand for accomplished and high-

class gentlemen and ladies, which Gomorrah did not attempt. The vile orgies of sensuality in London are to-day covered with a fascinating glamour of apparent respectability and dazzling light. The harlots and their paramours, looked at in the hasty light of dress and fashion, might pass for men and women of refinement and genteel manners, at the very time when their moral character is as black as the midnight which hides their nameless iniquities and brutal lusts. Sodom and Gomorrah did not act thus. London's brilliant hell upon earth is the largest and foulest blot upon our modern civilization that can be found in any city on the face of the whole earth. It is really high time that the fire of heaven fell upon this scene of vice. For the iniquities here have indeed come to the full. The splendid improvements in London's architecture present an awful contrast to its frightful moral conditions. Seven Dials in its worst days was never so vile as this vast gilded hell is in 1903. The buildings are better by far; the educated beasts in the form of educated men and women are worse. Seven Dials never attempted to make sin and vice respectable. This is what is being done in this brazen and shameless neighbourhood at the beginning of the twentieth century.

To this infernal centre may largely be traced the great diminution of marriages together with the appalling number of high class and divorce court cases and scandals! as also the remarkable dearth of men of political prominence, intellectual power, and moral grit. This splendid but disgusting flesh market is demoralizing millions of men and women, and is slaying thousands. Of this gilded den it may indeed be written, "She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain there."

I fear there is not a legislator that dare attack, expose, or denounce in either of the Houses of the Legislature this magnificent and fascinating stronghold of burning lust. Thousands of monied men, dressed as English gentlemen, literally thirst for fresh cases, and like incarnate fiends, attired in evening dress seduce and drag down to sin and shame the young and new comers from the continent and country for the vile shambles of the "great flesh market" of London. The day of reckoning is at hand, and the fires of divine vengeance will deal in indignant and righteous power with the fires of hot and brutal lust that burn there.

Terrible as the foregoing statements are, they are not the least in excess of the facts. Well might the Apostle Paul at the instance of the Holy Ghost sketch the conditions which to-day also are common in ordinary human society. Here are the words, "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead away silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts" (2 Tim. iii. 1-4).

What a picture is this of the actual conditions which exist in the year 1903 in this very city? The wretched novels, love of dress, and the insane love of pleasure has undermined womanly chasteness and virtue. Thousands of these would rather be on the streets than be respectable women and honest servants. Well may the census which has been recently taken of the attendance at the churches and chapels show a diminution, where the increase of population is taken into account, of something like one half as compared with fifteen years since. We are in the throes of the abounding iniquity of the last days of this evil age. God is not wanted, neither His fear, grace, love, or restraint.

It is not written in vain in regard to the coming of our Lord, "that day shall not come except there come a falling away first." We see this on every hand, it is not a falling away from Christ but from the hollow profession of personal religiousness, and the conditions will wax worse and worse until the end. Take the idolatry of self, instanced in the awful list which we have just quoted, and note the evident unbelief which holds in ungodly bondage the vast majority of the dwellers, *e.g.*, in London. Then let the question be asked, Are we not, at the commencement of the twentieth century, in the very midst of the predicted signs which tell of the end of "this wicked and adulterous age," and of the imminency of our Lord's Second Coming in power and great glory?

IS CHRIST'S COMING IMMINENT?

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."—LUKE xxi. 28.

CHAPTER I.

THE unwise and unscriptural attempt to fix dates for the great events connected with the Lord's second coming has tended to unsettle the minds of many believers in regard to the actual time of His glorious appearing. What is worse, it has led many to discredit the truth itself, and caused others to regard the subject simply as speculative, and to be avoided rather than intelligently studied and held fast.

To strengthen the faith of many of the Lord's people, and to aid those who have a limited knowledge of the Scriptures in regard to the glorious theme of Christ's coming kingdom, I have attempted to put in order certain statements made by our Lord which confirm the fact that we, in the year 1903, are close to the end of this wicked and sinful age, and, therefore, near to the time fixed for the second coming in great power and manifested glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (Dan. vii. 13-14; Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. xix. 11-21).

I need hardly say that, whilst carefully distinguishing the spiritual character of the reign of Christ in that "kingdom of God which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17), I do not for a moment confound it with the personal appearing in

power and great glory of the BLESSED and ONLY Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (1 Tim. vi. 15). The words spoken in Acts i. 11 are clear and conclusive : " This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." The coming of the King and the setting up of the kingdom in power and great glory must not be confounded with Pentecost, or be mistaken for the dispensation of the Holy Spirit at the close and end of which we, in the year 1903, are found. (See Acts iii. 19 to 22.)

It is one thing to fix dates as to the day, month, or year of the Lord's personal appearing ; it is quite another carefully to study, as Daniel did, by books (*i.e.* by Divine testimony) whereabouts upon the stream of time we now are. Against the former we are distinctly warned (Mark xiii. 32). Concerning the latter our Lord counsels us to be on the alert, to watch and not to sleep (Matt. xxiv. 32-33, Mark xiii. 37). There is nothing in the Scriptures, so far as I am aware, to justify the fixing of any actual day or date. Neither is there anything to justify neglect of the signs and proofs which the Lord Jesus has declared will precede His second coming to our salvation (Heb. ix. 28).

The prophet Daniel writes these remarkable words : " I, Daniel, understood by BOOKS the number of the years whereof the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem " (Dan. ix. 2). It was not vain speculation, therefore, but the Divine will and guidance which Daniel dealt with, when he looked forward to Israel's return from the Babylonish captivity. The time—viz., seventy years—was fixed and determined by God (see Jer. xxv. 11, 12), and the prophet was certain that the Divine will would be fulfilled and accomplished.

In the same definite way Daniel dealt with the then existing conditions of bondage. He recognized that " as it is written,

in the law of Moses, all this evil has come upon us, yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth" (Dan. ix. 13). Indeed, this whole passage (verses 10-14) proves conclusively that the key which unlocked the position—viz., Israel's bondage in Babylon—was to be sought for and found in the prophetic writings of Moses.

Moses and Modern Criticism.

Whatever modern criticism may advance concerning either the date or the authorship of the Pentateuch, it is obvious that Daniel believed that the testimony given by Jehovah to Moses nearly nine hundred years before the Captivity, and found in Leviticus xxvi., gave the needed light in order to understand the whole situation. No more striking reproof was ever administered to the rationalizing critics of our time than is found in Dan. ix. 11 and 12. The great prophet thus writes for Jehovah: "Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the OATH THAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES, the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him. And He hath CONFIRMED HIS WORDS, which He spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem" (Dan. ix. 10-14). The fulfilment of the OATHS OF JEHOVAH in the past should cause men to tremble and fear concerning the future. He is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should change His mind.

Following the admirable precedent given by the prophet, we also search the inspired books, and deal with the authority of the God of Daniel and Moses. The Lord Himself, instructing His disciples concerning the great interval of time

which would elapse prior to His coming again, and the reinstatement of Israel in her national position as His chief earthly executive, said of the city of the great King: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES be fulfilled" (Luke xxi. 24). Now, the expression, "the times of the Gentiles," as certainly gave a fixed, though long and protracted time, as the forty years defined the actual time for Israel's wandering in the wilderness, or the seventy years gave a definite period for Israel's captivity in Babylon. The question therefore arises, Can we be assured of the actual meaning of the expression, and the exact number of the years thus defined and marked off? (Numbers xiv. 33, 34).

We at once turn to the testimony given by the living God, through His servant Moses, in Leviticus, chap. xxvi., and which bears date 1490 B.C. To assign a later date for the books of Moses, as the higher critics do, does not alter the facts therein revealed, or impair the value of the prophetic testimony given. Here are found the threatenings and character of the judgments concerning Israel to which Daniel in his prophecy made reference. Let it not be forgotten that these were made known before Jerusalem as a city had existence, or Israel had place in the land of Canaan. They had place 884 years before the judgments determined upon by the living God began to come to pass. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."

Jehovah's Solemn Warning.

We carefully notice that four times over—viz., in verses 18, 21, 24 and 28 of Lev. xxvi.—the Eternal God carefully reiterates the solemn words of warning. The threatened judgments were conditioned upon Israel's obedience or disobedience to Jehovah as a nation. They are represented as

progressive, intense, and protracted, and they were to culminate in national judgment, the overthrow of the cities of Israel, and in the long-continued desolation of the land of Canaan which still exists (note carefully verses 29 to 38). National judgments always take place in time, viz., in this world.

This prophecy given by Jehovah, to whom "the end is known from the beginning," has become assured fact and Israelitish history. The twenty-sixth chap. of Leviticus in 1903 is prophecy that has mainly passed into actual history. It is also a concise statement of that which has happened unto Israel during the past 2,500 years. The expression SEVEN TIMES denotes not only the progressive intensity of the Divine judgments, but a veiled indication and testimony concerning the lengthened period made known to us by the Lord Jesus as "THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES." Now, according to the mind of God revealed to Moses (Numbers xiv. 34), and to Ezekiel (iv. 6, marg. also), a day is shown to stand for a year, or, as in Nebuchadnezzar's personal experience, for the ordinary day of twenty-four hours (Dan. iv. 30-34).

In the two prophetic cases cited, the day, according to the mind of God, evidently represented a year. Thus interpreted A TIME represents 360 years—*i.e.*, according to the measurement of the prophetic year, which is 360 days. "Seven times," therefore, give 360×7 : viz., a total of 2,520 years. Now, in the light of Daniel's prophecy, as also of our Lord's expression the "TIMES OF THE GENTILES," and Israel's history, we are instructed concerning the fact that 2,520 years was the period determined upon by God for Israel's chastisement, judgment, and national rejection so far as the earth is concerned. It was to this term of years our Lord referred when He used the words, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES ARE FULFILLED."

No man can fail to see the force and importance of this

statement when read in the light of Daniel's "time, times and a half," as indicating the bisecting period (1260) of the SEVEN TIMES (Daniel xii. 7). No doubt the Hebrew words translated SEVEN TIMES in Leviticus xxvi. mean primarily intensity, severity, reality, and fulness in regard to the Lord's threatened judgments. Conditioned, however, as those judgments were as to fulfilment or otherwise upon Israel's repentance or hardening of heart against God, it is obvious that their force, extent, and meaning in relation to TIME must be looked for, not in Leviticus, for there the time was purposely veiled and hidden, but from the testimony found in the book of Daniel, and from our Lord's words in Luke xxi. 24. Jewish history says the threatened SEVEN TIMES of Leviticus xxvi. meant in regard to the extent and fulness of the threatened and appointed time 2,520 years.

The fourfold repetition of the expression "seven times" does not necessarily refer to successive periods, as some have inadvertently suggested, but, as the context clearly shows, to the diverse forms of punishment which should culminate in the overthrow of Israel's national existence, and the protracted siege and desolation of Jerusalem, the cities of the land, and Canaan itself. History and the present condition alike of Israel and the land interpret clearly the meaning of the "seven times" as representing, in regard to time, 2,520 years. The Jewish prophetic year is always reckoned at and given as 360 days. We cannot be absolutely certain, however, that the year of 365 days may not have to be reckoned. The dates may overlap somewhat. The outstanding fact, however, is that the times of the Gentiles are nearly run out. Our Lord's word to each one of us is "Be ye also ready," and "Watch," "Ye know not the hour when the Son of Man cometh."

Commencement of Israel's Judgment.

We are not in ignorance as to the actual time of the commencement of Israel's threatened judgments at the hands of Jehovah. We know that Nebuchadnezzar was permitted of God to carry Jehoiakim, the last King of the house of David, and Israel away captive into Babylon, either in the year 605 B.C., or close to that very date. The date, without question, is substantially correct. It is a remarkable fact that from that time onward no king of the line of David has ever sat upon the throne of Judah or Israel. Now, if we take the period 605 B.C., and add these years to the year 1903 A.D., we reach an aggregate of 2,508 years, or, by this computation of historic fact, we are within twelve or thirteen years of the close of the SEVEN TIMES fixed by the living God as the period for Israel's diverse and solemn judgment. This, as past history has shown, was the setting aside of Israel from her national place and position on the earth.

It is very important to observe that from the time that Jehoiakim was carried away captive to Babylon, no king of the house of David has ever reigned in Jerusalem. Zedekiah was a nominee of the house of Nebuchadnezzar. The fact is before us that the date of the beginning of the Babylonish captivity was also the time of the commencement, at the instance of God, of Gentile supremacy in regard to government. The taking away of earthly sovereignty from Israel was contemporary with its delegation from God into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the HEAD of Gentile power. Of this protracted period Hosea, writing for the living God, says: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image [or statue], and without teraphim. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days" (ch. iii. 4, 5).

We are thus confronted with the fact that "the times of the

Gentiles" began when God's judgments upon Israel commenced. Daniel ii. proves this to a demonstration. The truth is, that that which was foreview and prophecy in Leviticus xxvi. and Daniel ii. has become history in 1903. The great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision was the figure given of God to illustrate the character, course, and duration of Gentile rule and supremacy during the 2,520 years determined by God for Israel's judgment and rejection from national sovereignty and supremacy. Well, therefore, might the Apostle of the Gentiles write to the Church of God in Rome: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery; lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans xi. 25).

The Foreview of Gentile Government.

Inspired of God, Daniel gives the rise, course, character, judgment, and end of "THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES." He portrays in the progressive development of the great image shown by God to the king and revealed to the prophet Daniel, four distinct and successive kingdoms which should have governmental supremacy during the time of the "breaking off" of Israel and Judah (Rom. xi. 11 to 15). The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, was the first. "Thou art this head of gold" (Daniel ii. 38). The Medo-Persian was the second. The Grecian, under Alexander the Great, was the third. The Roman, in two phases, imperial and subsequently divided into ten kingdoms, the fourth and last. Therein the complement and full development of the great image representing Gentile sovereignty and national earthly government is made known.

Deterioration in quality marks its progress and development. The gold gives place to silver, the silver to brass, the brass to iron, the iron to iron mixed with potter's clay.

Instability, unfitness, and incompetency for government pertain to the great image. This is conclusively shown, inasmuch as the living God declares that when the bound and limit of "the times of the Gentiles" is reached, the whole colossal image should be suddenly, and by supernatural power and at the instance of Christ's coming in power and great glory dashed to pieces (Psalm ii. 9, 10; Rev. ii. 27; vi. 12-17).

The words which the living God gave to Daniel are conclusive: "Thou sawest till that a **STONE** was cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and **THE STONE** that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Daniel ii. 34, 35).

Such is God's testimony concerning His absolute rejection and solemn judgment of Gentile authority and government, and we know that the time appointed for this supreme and tremendous crisis draweth nigh. Clearly the wonderful events are necessarily of sudden, supernatural, and Divine working. There could be no such thing as the gradual falling of "the stone." Thus it is written concerning Christ's sudden coming and supernatural overthrow of all lasting rule and authority and power: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel" (Psalm ii. 9; 2 Thes. i. 7-10).

The Fifth Universal Sovereignty.

The fifth universal monarchy shown by God to Daniel reveals the coming sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ over the whole earth, and it follows the close of the fourth kingdom. It is not contemporary with, but, in regard to

time, succeeds the breaking to pieces of the great colossal image. These are the words of the living God: "THE STONE that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. ii. 35).

Identifying Himself and His coming again in power and great glory with this prophecy, the Lord says: "Whosoever shall fall upon this STONE shall be broken, but upon whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder" (Matt. xxi. 44).

It is remarkable to observe how in the expression, "THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES," our Lord refers to, and endorses, the testimony which He Himself gave to Moses, as also the prophetic statements spoken through Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and Zechariah. Nor this only, but the Lord has most graciously put into our possession an accurate determining measure, which shows that the end of Gentile rule so far as the Turkish power is concerned is within thirteen years, and that the treading down of Jerusalem, together with the persecutions and rejection of Israel, will continue until "the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled and run out. These conditions are literally being revealed and given shape to before our eyes.

Without fixing any date, therefore—for "of that day or of that hour knoweth no man"—we are instructed by the Lord of heaven and earth that the long corrupt and ungodly period of Gentile sovereignty and supremacy is now drawing to a close. The members of Christ's body, the Church, may well rejoice and "lift up their heads, for their redemption in very deed draweth nigh." We are as certain of this as though, having started for Australia, we had been away from England thirty-nine days, the voyage ordinarily occupying forty. Under such circumstances we should regard the voyage as being practically over. The land might appear in sight within twenty-four hours. In like manner we also know, NOT THAT THE END OF THE WORLD HAS COME,

as we are often thoughtlessly reported as holding and teaching, but that the END and consummation of this "adulterous and sinful age" is certainly at hand. Gentile supremacy and all existing earthly sovereignties and governments are about to be "dashed to pieces" and "driven away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor" by the advent, in overwhelming supernatural "power and great glory," of THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENATE, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30 ; 1 Tim. vi. 16).

CHAPTER II.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—THE WAR SPIRIT IN EUROPE.

THE present year (1903) sees the whole area of the former Roman Empire in Europe, yea, and beyond its limits, in the position of A VAST ARMED CAMP with 14,000,000 soldiers enrolled and ready for the terrible arbitrament of war. Such are the conditions which exist at the close of this "wicked and adulterous age" which began by rejecting God's Great Prince of Peace and crucifying the Lord of Glory. Every deadly engine, instrument, and agent which modern science and human ingenuity could devise, adapted to the wholesale destruction of human life in the event of war, is everywhere popular and prominent.

Nor this only, but the flower of the young manhood of Europe has been, and is being, trained and disciplined in order to serve the ambitious purposes of Imperial greed, or to preserve what is called, by earthly legislators, "*the balance of power*" in Europe. Besides this, £300,000,000 of the world's

wealth is spent every year to sustain these vast military and naval armaments. Well may wars and rumours of wars be heard and abound, and commercial depression inducing chronic social poverty and misery sit as a self-inflicted and burdensome yoke upon the neck of the nations. Two or three of the European Governments may certainly be described as somewhat superior to and more stable than their peers. Weighed, however, in the balances of the Divine purpose and intention in regard to righteous authority and good government, they, as a whole, are proved to have been disastrous failures. Nebuchadnezzar in his personal history and character foreshadowed the signal failure of the great majority of Gentile kings and rulers. Through a bitter experience as a proud and despotic sinner he was compelled to learn that his kingdom and glory represented at its close a miserable proof of incompetency, and that in order to peace and righteousness on the earth the "heavens as distinguished from the earth must rule," and that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and He giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan. iv. 32).

The testimony pronounced by the prophet against the great despotic king was thus given. Four times over Daniel writes "SEVEN TIMES shall pass over you" (see Dan. iv. 16, 23, 25, 32). There was necessarily in Nebuchadnezzar's experience the limitation before referred to—viz., SEVEN ACTUAL YEARS OF DAYS, that is, 2,520 ordinary days (see ch. iv. 32, 33). Addressed, however, at the instance and will of God, as the chief representative of the great Gentile image, or as the fourth chapter gives it (20-22), as the fully-developed tree "which was strong, and the height thereof reached to heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth," it is clear that Daniel did but emphasize the intention, mind, and word of Jehovah in regard to the fixed and definite limit of Gentile power, that SEVEN TIMES—viz., 2,520 years—was the period fixed by the living God for "THE

TIMES OF THE GENTILES," *i.e.*, government in the hands of Gentile kings and rulers, to continue.

Michael the Archangel's Testimony.

Let the reader carefully ponder Daniel's prophecies given in chaps. ii. and iv. of this divine record, and observe how completely their figurative testimonies are in agreement with the words of God spoken to Moses in Leviticus xxvi. and Deuteronomy xxviii. Well might Michael the Archangel speak to Daniel and use the significant words : " Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people [Israel]* *in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days*" (Dan. x. 14). We understand more clearly now why Daniel was commanded to *shut* up the words and *seal* the book to THE TIME OF THE END. We can more deeply sympathise with his ardent inquiry, " O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things ?" and enter into the meaning of his word, " I heard but understood not," and perceive the need which existed for the divine reply, " Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are CLOSED AND SEALED till the time of the end." " But go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shall stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Dan. xii. 4, 8, 9, 13).

What deep and real significance is thus given to the words which concern Jehovah's plan and purpose. " Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts xv. 18). Here is the key which exactly fits the lock which opens the door of Israel's approaching national sovereignty. Just before our Lord's ascension the disciples asked him (Acts i. 6), " Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel ?" Hearken to His remarkable answer. He did not state that the disciples were mistaken in regard to the great fact, and had become possessed of a carnal and untrue conception concerning the restoration of the earthly kingdom to Israel. No ; His welcome and intelligent reply was thus given : " It is not for you to know the times and the seasons

which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts i. 6-8). The mistake into which the disciples had fallen was not in regard to the fact of the coming sovereignty of Israel, but in regard to the future appointed time.

The Lord Jesus knew perfectly the times and seasons, which the Father had put in His own power, and was necessarily acquainted with the fact that nineteen centuries of "the times of the Gentiles" had to run on and out before those appointed times could be fulfilled. There would be no restoration of the kingdom to Israel in the face of His prophetic word that "Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles until THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED" (Luke xxi. 24). Oh, the marvellous wisdom hidden in the Lord's admirable silence as well as in His gracious words. Had he *at that time* revealed that which was then *necessary to be concealed*, how should believers in each succeeding generation have "waited in joyous expectation for the Lord from heaven"? The blessed hope of His coming and glory could not have cheered the hearts and stimulated the faith of His people from the apostolic age right onward had they been informed of that by our Lord which we now clearly see and know. Well does Paul, writing for Christ, say: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephes. iii. 10, 11). See specially Titus ii. 11-14: "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Times of Jesus Christ.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the Apostle Paul never confounded "the times of the Gentiles," which are still in progress, with those of our Lord's approaching sovereignty over the whole earth. His times are yet future

(see Psalm xlv. xlviii. and lxxii.). The mind of the Holy Ghost, given in the New Testament, clearly regards "the times of the Gentiles," now rapidly closing, as having nothing in common with the coming times of Jesus Christ. The times of the restitution of all things, when God shall again send Jesus Christ (see Acts iii. 19-23), are certainly future, and must not be mixed up or confounded with this "wicked and adulterous age" (2 Tim. iii. 1-5).

The Apostle, writing to Timothy, charges him to keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. vi. 14, 15). Mark how he adds, "which in His times He shall show, who is the BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." There is here no confounding of the fourth monarchy, Rome, which Daniel describes as "the fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, which had great iron teeth, that devoured in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it," with the coming supreme and beneficent sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. xx. 6).

The terms BLESSED and ONLY evidently are words purposely intended for contrast. The Blessed Potentate, "God's King, whom He shall set upon His holy hill of Zion," is here contrasted with the ambitious and corrupt kings and rulers which have been common to "the whole course of the times of the Gentiles." The ONLY Potentate is the purposed and striking contrast with the MANY monarchs common to the experience of the dispensation which is now closing. Seeing there are now many earthly sovereigns reigning in various parts of the world, we know and are sure that "the times of the Gentiles" are still in progress. These times MUST RUN OUT AND BE FULFILLED before the reign and times of the Blessed and Only Potentate begin. Gabriel was instructed to state, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His

kingdom there shall be no end." These words shall as certainly be fulfilled as that the times of the Gentiles are near their end. It is also written : " The Lord shall be King over all the earth ; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one " (Zech. xiv. 9). When the Supreme Sovereign, Jesus Christ, sits upon the throne of David He will have no peer, fellow, or rival. Of Him it is written : " A great king over all the earth " (Ps. xlvii. 2).

New Testament Distinctions.

That the Lord had instructed Paul in regard to the times of the Gentiles we have already noticed (Romans xi. 25). He also knew that many centuries of THOSE TIMES must pass before the times of the Blessed and Only Potentate could begin. Guided of the Lord, and writing in one of his latest Epistles, he uses the emphatic future tense, " Which in his times He SHALL show " ; not He is showing. With equal clearness the same is taught by the Lord in Ephes. i. 10. Paul writes : " Having made known unto us the mystery of His will according to the good pleasure which He purposed in Himself ; that in the dispensation of THE FULNESS OF TIMES " (mark the words) " He might gather together in Christ all things both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him."

Here, also, the dispensation of " the fulness of times " is evidently contrasted with and distinguished from the times of the Gentiles which certainly precede. Here, also, the future tense is used. The fact is evident, neither the Lord, nor Paul, nor the Scriptures ever confound " the times of the Gentiles " now about to close with the times of the Blessed and Only Potentate that follow and which are so soon to be inaugurated " with power and great glory " (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30).

For want of intelligent discernment in regard to dispensational truth and the prophetic Scriptures which belong thereto,

may be traced one half of the rationalistic errors which exist in regard to the meaning of the Word of God.

In this connection the reader's especial attention is asked to Isaiah's prophecy (ch. xxiv. 17-23). Here is given the graphic foreview of the judgment of the Lord upon Satan and his hosts in the heavenlies, and also upon the kings of the earth prior to His reign in Mount Zion and Jerusalem. This scene is not only clearly contemporary, but it is identical with that described in Rev. xx. 1, 2. In still more remarkable words does the Apostle John speak of "that same great and terrible day of the Lord" in Rev. vi. 15-17. He gives the testimony of Christ in these wonderful words: "And the kings of the earth and the great men, and the chief captains and the mighty men, hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (See also Acts ii. 19-21.)

Writing from Syria, and now somewhat familiar with the steep and rugged mountain heights and extraordinary rocky fastnesses which exist in Lebanon and Palestine, and aware that amid *these scenes* the wrath of the Lamb is to rest upon the earth's assembled kings and their armies, how striking is this solemn appeal to the overhanging cliffs and mountains! Evidently earthquake convulsions of stupendous and destructive force will attend "the great day of His wrath" (Zech. xiv. 1-6). In like manner Paul writes, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of His might, in flaming fire yielding vengeance upon them that know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8). So also the Lord's words, "For as a SNARE shall that day come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Luke xxi. 35).

Limit of Jerusalem's Downtreading.

I proceed to notice the Lord's words concerning the time allotted for the treading down of Jerusalem. This, as we have seen, was to continue for a protracted period. This in 1903 is also become history. Such has been the experience of the city, without break or interval, from the time of its overthrow by Titus. Nor let it be forgotten that there is at the present time proceeding in Jerusalem a remarkable Jewish national revival. This is true in regard to the Jewish people and in the marked increase of house-building and extension. Not only has there been during the past ten years the predicted return of thousands of Israel, but "the measuring line" of the builder is, indeed, passing over "the hill Gareb," and hundreds of houses have been and are in course of erection at the very places named by Jer. xxxi. 28, 29. Our Lord's limit for the desolation and downtreading of Jerusalem was to be UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES are fulfilled. Until the times, be it observed, and not beyond. It will not be in excess of the fact to state that fifty thousand of the people of Judah and Israel have, despite the Sultan's unwillingness, returned to Jerusalem and its vicinity within the past fifteen years. Judged by the fact of the great majority of Jews now resident in Jerusalem, it has become a Jewish city. I do not pretend to be a prophet, but I have the deepest conviction that within fourteen years Jerusalem will be delivered from the sovereignty of the Turkish Mohammedan rulers.

Probably some of my readers will imagine that I am laying undue stress upon these items. I do not acknowledge it. At our Lord's first advent, excepting Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, Anna, John, Simeon, and the small company who waited for Christ, the time for the Lord's first advent was not only unknown but utterly disbelieved. Nevertheless, Paul wrote that "the fulness of the time" for the coming and Incarnation of the Son of God had then arrived. Let my readers be

careful to notice and study the memorable words found in Gal. iv. 4.

To the Scribes and Pharisees, to the elders and religious teachers of that day, the Lord's coming was not only discredited, but we may rest assured the comparatively small company who were "waiting for the consolation of Israel" were certainly regarded as so many fanatical enthusiasts. How well we can understand the jest and unbelieving laugh which would be heard from the materialists and rationalists of those days when Simeon declared that it had been "revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke ii. 26).

The Testimony of the Scriptures.

Isaiah, speaking as a prophet seven hundred years before the birth of the Lord's Christ, wrote thus of the condition of the land of Palestine in these striking and exact terms: "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations" (lxi. 4). Let the words be carefully noted, "the desolations of MANY GENERATIONS." These words state the actual facts of the case. Of Jerusalem, the Lord instructed him to write: "Whereas thou hast been hated and forsaken so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations. Violence shall no more be heard in thee, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise" (Isa. lx. 15-18). Jeremiah teaches the same precious and comforting truths concerning Israel: "And it shall come to pass that, like as I have watched over them to pluck up, and break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and plant, saith the Lord" (Jer. xxxi. 26-40).

Such passages abound in the prophetic testimonies con-

cerning Jerusalem and the land of Israel which remain unfulfilled to this day, but which shall as certainly be fulfilled as that God lives.

CHAPTER III.

WITHOUT question we are rapidly approaching the appointed time when the comforting words concerning Jerusalem, referred to in the preceding chapter, shall be fulfilled. How this great subject was presented by the Holy Spirit for the instruction and guidance of the Church of Christ in the Apostolic days! It formed one of the chief topics at the time of the first great council held by the assembly at Jerusalem (see Acts xv. 13-18). The important distinction which exists between the Church, which is His body, and Israel's future earthly national kingdom is most imperfectly apprehended. The members of the Church, which is Christ's body, are all partakers of His divine nature, and they await "the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 17-23). This wonderful and instant change into the likeness of the body of His glory will take place when the Lord descends into the air, and without question PRECEDES, in order of time, Israel's national reinstatement in Syria and Palestine, and the Lord's occupation of David's throne in his supreme position as the Blessed and Only Potentate over the whole earth (Rom. viii. 19-21 and 1 Thess. iv. 14-17).

God has not spoken of Israel in vain. Has he not said : "For I will take you from among the nations, and will gather you from all countries, and bring you unto your own land" ? And again : "I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better for you than at your beginning, and ye shall know that I am the Lord" ? In marked contrast to the present

desolation Jehovah says : " For I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field that ye shall receive no more the reproach of famine, and they shall say this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden. I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it " (Ezek. xxxvi. 33-38).

The testimony of the living God given by the prophet Jeremiah confirms this fully. In chap. xxxi. 31 it is recorded : " Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant they brake. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel ! After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying, ' Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

Here is the new covenant ; it is an entire contrast to the old. Here is personal and national regeneration to all who have part therein. Their sins and iniquities are forgiven and put away. All the spared of the nation know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, the youngest to the oldest. Here is the righteous nation concerning whom Isaiah asks the striking question, " Shall a nation be born in a day ? " Here is the answer to that question and the proof that Jehovah will fulfil his promise : " Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd ; and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all " (Jer. xxxi. 12-28).

The careful study of this whole chapter must confirm the faith of all believers in regard to the new covenant and the future blessing that is surely coming to Israel and Judah when the fixed time of Jehovah arrives.

The Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God.

It is melancholy how few believers intelligently recognize the distinction which exists between the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God (1 Cor. x. 32). These represent the three great divisions into which the human family is divided until the Lord comes at His Second Advent. The future of the Church, dating from the time of the Lord's descent into the air, is to be with Him where He is, and to be like Him even in bodily glory. Their magnificent destiny is to be His associates, the "fellows" of Christ, "the bride, the Lamb's wife," the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17). They will not sin, neither can they die any more for ever (Luke xx. 34-36).

The future of Israel as a nation is to be Christ's theocratic and governmental executive upon the earth. They will be partakers, as now, of human life, and share the knowledge, love, and fear of the Lord ; but they will not be members of His Body, neither will they partake the divine nature, as the Church of the firstborn will. The Church, in her completeness and glory, is purposely and intelligently called the Elect of God, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. These are they for whom Christ interceded (see John xvii. 9, 10) : " I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me ; for they are Thine, and all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them." Israel, on the contrary, will be, according to the covenant made with Abraham, an earthly people, possessing an upright human nature, as distinguished from the divine nature possessed by virtue of being regenerate and members of Christ's Body. Their high position will be the Elect Nation for Christ's government unto

the ends of the earth. Having received Christ they will be a righteous nation, and intensely loyal to their Redeemer and King (Isaiah lxi. 4-9).

Israel will then be reigned over by the Lord, in whom, at that time, will be fulfilled the words spoken by Gabriel to Mary : " He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David ; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end " (Luke i. 32, 33 ; Isa. vii. 6-7).

It is certain that the Lord Jesus never yet has reigned over Israel, neither has He occupied the throne of His great ancestor David. In the light of Gabriel's word He must so reign. Is it written in vain : " God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that he should change his mind ? Hath He not said and shall He not do it, or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good ? " (Num. xxiii. 19). Dispensational and prophetic Scripture, very much of which remains to be fulfilled, is God's sheet-anchor in these days of the rejection of the inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures at the hands of the unsanctified intellect of the vast majority of the sons of men. It has been spoken by the Eternal Lord : " Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away " (Luke xxi. 33). His authority outweighs all the rationalism in the world.

An Important Distinction Indicated.

In this connection let it be carefully borne in mind that there must be no confounding of the Holy Father's throne and supremacy in the highest heaven with the sovereignty of Christ, the Son of God and King of Israel, on His throne on the earth (John i. 49). I ask the reader's careful examination of the following passages :—

" I saw the Lord sitting upon His throne, and all the host of heaven standing on His right hand and on His left " (2 Chron. xviii. 18). " The

Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven" (Ps. xi. 4). "The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all" (Ps. ciii. 19). "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1).

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool" (Is. lxvi. 1). "But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne" (Matt. v. 34). "And he that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon" (Matt. xxiii. 22). "Who, being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when he had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3).

"We have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. viii. 1). "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrew xii. 2). "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them" (Rev. xx. 11).

These passages refer to the throne of God in the highest heaven. Failure to distinguish at this vital point has proved to be as mischievous in regard to Christ's coming earthly kingdom as the confounding of Israel as a nation with *the body of Christ* has been. The Word of God needs to be rightly divided at all times, but especially in regard to this great question. Note carefully the following:—

"Give the king Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the king's son." "In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun. All nations shall call Him blessed. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory" (Psalm lxxii. 1, 7, 8, 11, 17, 19).

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace

there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth and even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this" (Isaiah ix. 6, 7).

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom. that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel vii. 13, 14).

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth ; in that day shall there be one Lord and His name one" (Zech. xiv. 9). "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28). "And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She said unto Him, Grant that these my sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on the left in Thy kingdom" (Matt. xx. 21).

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom as My Father hath appointed unto me ; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 28-30). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. iii. 21). "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 6).

The sovereignty in all these passages evidently has relation to the earth and to the Son, and must be carefully distinguished from the throne of God in the highest heaven. The spheres of heaven and earth must not be confounded. Far from the throne of Christ on the earth being confounded with the Father's throne in heaven, the Word distinctly reveals that when the Son has "put down all rule and all authority and power," and has subdued all things unto Himself, then He will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and Himself as the Son of God be subject to the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24-28). Then will the Lord's prayer of faith be answered,

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. vi. 10). To this end and for this magnificent result the competent King cometh. He cometh, He cometh to judge the earth. With righteousness shall He judge the world and the people with His truth (Psalm xcvi. 13 ; Psalms xcv. and xcvi. also).

The Conference at Jerusalem.

Further, I note the fact that the assembly in Jerusalem possessed the knowledge of, and were guided by, this important truth of Our Lord's Second and Pre-millennial Coming (see Acts xv. 13-18). Paul and Barnabas having testified concerning their ministry among the Gentiles and the grace of God seen by them, James led the thought of the assembly to the prophetic Scriptures, which told of the design and intention of the Lord in regard to the purpose of their ministry amongst the Gentiles. These are his words: "Men and brethren, hearken unto me, Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name." These words refer to the Gentile members of Christ's complex body (Eph. iii. 6). And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I WILL RETURN AND WILL BUILD AGAIN the tabernacle of David which is fallen down ; and I will build again the ruins thereof and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles [nations] upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Amos ix. 11, 12).

The order of the Lord's working is thus carefully given. First, the taking out of the Gentile members of His body, the Church, prior to His return and in view of His coming kingdom. After this magnificent election of the august company of the Jew and Gentile members of His body is complete, the Lord will return. Observe the words, "After this I will return." And be it remembered that one great

object of His coming again to the earth is to restore the kingdom to Israel, according to the Divine purpose and promise made to Abraham and confirmed to David. Meanwhile, the earthly conditions are precisely as God declared they would be. "The whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together until now. The Church of Christ is waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." For this stupendous crisis, involving the redemption and manifested glory of the saints, heaven and earth now waits (Rom. viii. 19-23). Meanwhile sin and iniquity abound everywhere, and rationalistic anti-Christianism is increasingly developed and will be until the man of sin, the Antichrist, Satan's counterfeit of the Christ of God, appears (2 Thess. ii. 7-12).

The Bitter Cry Answered.

Thank God, the bitter cry of His people Israel in despotic and persecuting Russia will soon be over, and the time of Jacob's great sorrow in connection with the awful power of the Antichrist an experience of the past. The days of dark Africa's oppression at the hands of the superior races are numbered, and the times of the submerged masses in Europe and America ready to come to an end. Darkest England and the still blacker darkness of the eleven hundred millions of the heathen world await the coming, the salvation, and glory of the Great King's magnificent reign. As Peter, taught of the Holy Ghost, said after the Ascension and beyond the time of Pentecost be it noted, "And God shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 20, 21).

In furtherance, I ask the reader's attention to what with reverence I may call the common-sense of this Divine programme. The close of the times of the Gentiles finds human

government and kingly authority throughout the earth a miserable failure. The peace of Europe and the world is not to-day worth six month's purchase. Incompetency, to use no stronger term, pertains to the condition of every earthly potentate and government so far as righteousness and peace are concerned. The "pleasures of sin" were never more popular or more ardently embraced than in 1903. The conclusive proof is found in the fact that the average of human life to-day is only thirty-four years. This awful truth shows that sin and iniquity still hold in the bonds of weakness, disease, and death the millions of Great Britain. Were I asked, as a politician, the world's greatest need at the beginning of the twentieth century, I should certainly answer, A wise and competent ruler! As a student of Scripture, I reply, He whom the world needs, without whose manifested power and presence right and good and truth will never have sway, is "God's Anointed and Coming King, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Zech. xiv. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15).

Who need fail to see that, given the supreme sovereignty of Christ as King over the whole earth, and war necessarily ceases to the ends of the world? Given that which is to take place when He comes, viz., the reversion of all property and power unto His Almighty hands, and the earth must be at peace, and will be speedily filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and of His glory also. Let His supreme will rule the whole earth, not such a ruler as Alexander, Cæsar, or Napoleon, but "Jehovah's fellow," the Christ of God, and at once the military and naval forces which exist would and must be disbanded. Supremacy could have no peer. His universal power and goodness no rival.

"The Blessed and Only Potentate."

The logic of "the position of the Great King over all the earth" is that peace becomes universal, and the nations learn

war no more. Then shall be fulfilled Isaiah's welcome fore-view of the beneficent issues which will pertain to his coercive goodness. "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be prepared in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah ii. 2, 4). The oath sworn to David, and which awaits fulfilment, stands in the following terms: "That of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh God would raise up Christ to sit on His [David's] throne" (2 Sam. vii. 13-16, 24-29; Acts ii. 30).

The Earth's Anthem—Psalm xlvii.

Then shall the prophetic anthem of the forty-seventh Psalm girdle the whole earth: "O clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible, He is a great King over all the earth." "Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our King, sing praises." "For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding." In the light of these glorious words, how striking is our Lord's answer to the inquiry of Pilate, "Art thou a king?" Christ's reply was, "To this END was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice" (John xviii. 38). Well might David write the graphic and glorious testimony of Psalm xlv. No wonder that, inspired of God, he breaks out,

"My heart is bubbling up [flowing over] with a good matter, I speak of the things which I have made touching THE KING." The supreme object of Christ's birth was that He should reign over the whole earth.

How powerfully does the Apostle confirm the truth concerning Israel's coming reinstatement and national pre-eminence (Rom. xi. 15-29) ; how he enforces the truth of God's ability and willingness to "graft them in again" (23). These are his words : "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, SHALL BE GRAFTED IN, for God is able to graft them in again." For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead ? "And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob ; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [change of mind]" (verses 26-29 ; see Isa. lix. 20, 21).

Israel's Earthly National Restoration.

Israel's restoration and national reconstruction as a theocratic kingdom in Syria, Palestine, and the Euphratean valley is thus shown to be contemporary with the commencement of "THE TIMES OF THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE." The coming of the Lord must be imminent, for the COMING of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ FOR HIS PEOPLE takes place before the close of the times of the Gentiles, even as His glorious appearing WITH His people in power and great glory will fittingly inaugurate His glorious reign. His coming, therefore, is not only "the hope of the Church," but His appearing will yield AFTER THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH the deliverance and salvation of the world from the curse and power of sin. The post-millennial view, which maintains that the Lord will not come until the end of the world, I am altogether at a loss to understand. Certainly in all earthly kingdoms

the presence and coronation of the king must precede the reign. Christ's manifestation, with ten thousand times ten thousand of His saints, must inaugurate His universal and magnificent reign over the whole earth. Such a manifestation with power and great glory is according to the testimony of the prophetic Word (Psalm xlv. 1-7 ; Rev. xix. 11-21).

Finally, a few thoughts which deal with two other items. It will be seen that the Scriptures distinctly identify the direct and, in that sense, supernatural intervention of the Most High in connection with the future sovereignty and government of the earth. "The world is His and the fulness thereof." To limit the Divine working and operation, therefore, either to morals, ethics, or the spiritual energies and results which have pertained to the ministry of the Holy Spirit during this dispensation, reveals the need of a much more comprehensive discernment of the Lord's will.

The Lord distinctly revealed the solemn fact of the rejection of the Holy Ghost's witness and ministry by the world in the following weighty words : "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth Him : but ye know him, for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you" (John xiv. 17). This testimony is final and conclusive. Besides this the awful judgment of Christendom at the close of this sinful age arises in consequence of the rejection of the Holy Spirit's testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ, as Heb. x. 28-30, *e.g.*, clearly shows. How, then, can His ministry and sufficiency in order to the subjection of the world to Christ be sustained or made apparent ? The truth is that the Scriptures do not make known or declare that the Holy Spirit by His ministry will convert the world. His ministry is thus stated : "To convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," "of sin because they believe not on me," such is Christ's own testimony. These are very different issues from world-wide submission, conversion, or regeneration.

Some readers will ask, Is the Lord Jesus Christ, as "the great King over all the earth," going to dwell in Jerusalem according to the fashion of a temporal monarch? If by this is meant permanent local residence, certainly not. This would mean the denial of what has been called "His proper Deity." On the morning of the resurrection, after comforting the heart of Mary, the Lord Jesus ascended at once to the Holy Father, as John xx. 17 and 18 clearly proves, and as the type in Lev. xxiii. 10, 11, absolutely required that the Great High Priest should do. (See also 1 Cor. xv. 20-23; compare for proof also Heb. ix. 11-14.) As the first fruits from the earth, Christ at once ascended and "offered Himself through the Eternal Spirit without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14).

Facts Connected with His Resurrection.

These facts show that after the Lord's resurrection from the dead He was no longer subject to the limitations which pertained to the human body as at that time constituted. With the rapidity which now attaches to the activities of the mind, so will resurrection condition pertain to personality and meetness, in order to presence and localization, and inhere in each member of His Glorious Body. The principal dwelling-place of the King and His august Bride will be the magnificent residence in the heavens, which His own wisdom and power during nearly two thousand years has been fashioning, and which He is even now completing (John xiv. 2, 3).

Absence either of personality or locality, as the old thinkers used to express it, is "not thinkable." "Nowhere," "Nothing," and "Nobody" are simply terms of usual and ordinary stupidity. That elect members of His body, His Bride, will come with the august King, THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, to visit the earth again and again, is as clearly revealed as that the Scriptures are inspired of God. The "heirs of God and the joint heirs with Christ" will not be separated.

from their Great Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. The occasions of the coming to earth from the sphere of the incorruptible inheritance will be many, the manifestations magnificent, and, if necessary, as swift and sudden as our present mental activities. Probably the manifested glory of Christ and His glorified fellows, Moses and Elijah, followed by the withdrawal of the manifestation and immediate presence, in glory, on the Mount of Transfiguration, was indicative of that which will pertain to the heirs of God and the joint heirs with Christ in the millennial age. (See Matt. xiii. 43 ; Mark ix. 2-8.)

The dwelling-places of the incorruptible saints, who will at that great crisis have received their incorruptible bodies must be with their Lord, and their dwelling-place necessarily will be in the inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, ready to be revealed. (1 Pet. i. 4, 5 ; Phil. iii. 21.)

Accurately stated, the Church of Christ, with her King and Lord, will reign over the earth during the millennial age, *i.e.*, "the dispensation of the fulness of times," rather than upon it. An earthly illustration is to hand. His Majesty the King reigns over India, Canada, and the Australias, but he is usually found either at Sandringham, Buckingham Palace, Balmoral or Windsor.

I may add that I have no sympathy with any statement which argues a permanent local residence on the earth (*e.g.*, such as at Jerusalem) of the Great King. When our Lord said to Nathanael : "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," he probably intimated an experience which will be common throughout the whole period of the millennial reign (John i. 51).

The Lord's Power and Rationalism.

Of course we are prepared for the scoffing spirit of modern rationalism in regard to this whole subject. Now that human in-

telligence has reached the goal of the Agnostic who possesses so much intelligence that he knows not God or that He has being, what room is there or could there be for God, or miracle, or for the supernatural? The "higher criticism" assumes to be the final court of appeal. Happily believers in God and the inspiration of His Word are not dependent upon the grey matter of the cultured human brain in order to be sure concerning the great facts which have been revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord knew how the pride of intellect and the exaltation of reason would darken the human mind at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Concerning the materialistic scepticism which clearly marks the end of the times of the Gentiles, God has given the clearest testimony. These are His words: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4). Here is the baldest rationalism and the plainest denial of prophetic truth, as also of any miraculous supernatural or divine intervention. This corrupt assertion, be it observed, is founded upon their denial of the fact of miracle in the past. The fathers referred to are politely discredited, and seeing that the fathers were dead, the scoffers had no fear of their scepticism being answered. No wonder that the attack upon the Word of God and its Divine inspiration is so persistent. Happily the living God forewarned us concerning the existing conditions, and disclosed to view well-nigh 2,000 years since what the nature of the educated unbelievers' tactics would be. They are exposed and exhibited to the life in the words just quoted.

Here also is another dynamic broadside from the batteries of the Great Apostle of the Gentiles. Writing to the Church of Christ in Philippi he says: "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall change our humiliated bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory [His glorious body], according to the POWER whereby He is able also to subdue all things unto Himself." Evidently the rationalistic spirit of the present day had its representatives in the first century. Here is given the answer of the Great King to their sceptical reasonings (Phil. iii. 20-21), viz., "ACCORDING TO THE POWER WHEREBY HE IS ABLE TO SUBDUER ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF."

Christ's Prophetic Testimony.

It will greatly interest the readers of this paper, and confirm their faith in the fact which John writes, that "Jesus Christ is the true God" (1 John v. 20), if, in conclusion, we carefully examine the passage in which the remarkable expression, "THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES," occurs. The words are found in Luke xxi. 23, 24. Speaking a few weeks at most before His betrayal and death, the Lord Jesus Christ prophetically sketched the events which would happen to Jerusalem and the Jewish people. His prophecy covered nearly two thousand years of human history. With masterly delineation and marvellous brevity the Lord stated: "There shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations! And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

These remarkable words not only have been proved absolutely accurate, but they include and comprehend the whole time which has intervened between their utterance and this present year. They predicted in the early part of the first century the occurrence of events which at the close of the nineteenth the evidences of history declare to have happened. Let us briefly examine the words and show the facts disclosed by history. We take the testimony in the

order given by the Lord, assuming it to be the year 34 A.D. : "There shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people."

The siege of Jerusalem began in the year 64 A.D. It lasted for seven years. Its fearful severity probably was never exceeded in the whole of the world's past history. Titus, the head of the Roman forces, was so amazed at the awful carnage which the siege of Jerusalem involved that it is affirmed he attributed to the wrath of God the awful sufferings and deaths which took place. Josephus, the historian, says that 1,200,000 of the Jews fell during this terrible judgment of God, involving, as it did, the overthrow and desolation of the land, the people, and the City of Jerusalem. Well might the Lord speak of "distress in the land and wrath upon this [the Jewish] people." Then follow these words : "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword"—mark ! the slaughter of 1,200,000 of the Jews during the seven years of siege at the hands of Imperial Rome. Then these words follow "and shall be led away captive into all nations."

History Authenticating Prophecy.

With profound reverence we ask how did the Lord Jesus Christ know this ? Because, as the Eternal God, He "knoweth the end from the beginning." This remarkable prophecy has been literally fulfilled. The unhappy captives and prisoners who survived were expelled with inexpressible cruelties from the land, sold and hurried into bondage and slavery among the nations. Sixty generations nearly have passed since the Lord uttered these words, and this wonderful people, the Jews, are still found, as He declared they would be, among all nations. Their sufferings, persecutions, and captivities in the past have been terrible, and yet they have retained their unity and identity as a people, and that despite the fact of their world-wide separation, and the lapse of nineteen centuries of time.

Whether countries such as Russia, Germany, Austria, France, England, America, Canada, or Australia be considered the Jews have been and are found in all these, and yet they are not identified with, nor have they been absorbed by any of the nations. Driven, by reason of their sin, from the land which God gave them as an inheritance, they, until the times of the Gentiles are run out and fulfilled, have been, and are, scattered amongst all nations, as the Lord predicted they would be. The commencement of the twentieth century sees this Jewish people, now numbering nearly 11,000,000, in the very positions which Christ's prophecy declared they would occupy. They are now the richest and, without question, amongst the best educated people on the face of the earth. They are also ready for national resuscitation and reinstatement in the land which Jehovah gave to their father Abraham for "an everlasting possession," when the time fixed by God arrives (Gen. xvii. 4-8 ; Jer. xxxi. 12, 23, 28, 37). It is a deeply interesting fact that in Chicago about six years since the national flag of the House of David was unfurled and consecrated in a large and enthusiastic meeting of Jews.

Broken off from national position, prominence, and power because of their sin, their unbelief, and the rejection of Christ their King, they have continued amongst all nations according to His Word. Their land continues desolate, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Upon the very site of the costly and beautiful temple which the Lord declared should be utterly destroyed, there stands the splendid mosque of Omar Pasha, dedicated to and identified with the worship of the false prophet Mohammed (Matt. xxiv. 1-2). What manner of man is this that the unfolding of the centuries confirm and establish his prophetic words ?

Despite the prowess of Constantine, and the lavish expenditure of life and treasure which was identified with the wars of the Crusaders ; despite the historic facts which have invested Jerusalem with such paramount and sacred interest ;

in the face of the gathering prowess of the Western nations and their identity with Christianity, the fact stands out with astonishing reality and prominence that none of these forces, nor others that might be named, have ever been able to overthrow, nullify, or repeal the prophetic words of Jesus Christ : that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

So the words were spoken by Him "by whom all things were created" in the year 34 of the Christian era ; and so stands the fact of the condition of Jerusalem in the year 1903. The City of the Great King is still under the dominion and power of the Sultan of Turkey, himself the official representative of Mohammedan rule and sovereignty. Mark what was spoken by Christ in connection with these facts : "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Luke xxi. 33). Well did Christ say, "This generation [this Jewish house and people] shall not pass away till all be fulfilled" (verse 33).

"This Generation"—Its Meaning.

In reference to the words of our Lord, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all be fulfilled," Dr. Bullinger, dealing with the original Greek, writes : "This generation shall not pass till all shall begin to be fulfilled." Certainly that generation saw the commencement of the fulfilment of Christ's words. In the sense of "that generation" as from father to son, could not refer to the exhaustion of the times of the Gentiles, or His own "coming in power and great glory." The prophecy, as we have seen, covers at least nineteen centuries. Those parts which have not yet been fulfilled will as certainly be fulfilled as those have been concerning which we have given conclusive proof.

In this connection how profoundly interesting is the testimony of God through the Apostle ! "I say, then, hath God cast away His people ? God forbid" (Rom. xi. 1). Such

are the striking words in which the Apostle disclaims any change in the purpose and intention of God concerning His people Israel. I know of nothing more conclusive in the study of the Lord's pre-millennial Advent than this remarkable section of the Epistle to the Romans. Chapters ix., x., xi. are pre-eminently national and dispensational. They concern almost exclusively the houses of Israel and Judah as the elect of God unto governmental supremacy throughout the millennial age. The testimony concerning them is historical and prophetic. This part of the Epistle stands out with unique suggestiveness.

Strictly speaking, the argument which concerns the Church of Christ and the individual believer in the Epistle to the Romans reaches its culmination at the close of the triumphant eighth chapter. Its correlative, viz., the walk and work of the Church, and the believer, is taken up at the commencement of chapter xii. We ask : Why this marvellous parenthesis—this wonderful breach in the Apostle's argument ? Is not the answer this, God designed that the Church of Christ in Rome might know something of the glory which shall be seen when Israel is by God "again grafted into their own olive tree" as the foremost nation of the earth ? Let it be remembered that at the time Paul wrote, the land of Israel was trodden down beneath the despotic sway of the Cæsars. Judea was regarded as a distant and feeble dependency. Abject submission to the Roman Empire had taken the place of those vigorous strivings after national life which had characterized the past and stirring days of the noble Maccabees. Nor this only. These memorable chapters were written after the Lord had been crucified, and shortly before the overthrow of Jerusalem. The Apostle had told of the coming desolation in the striking prophetic words : " Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish : for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you " (Acts xiii. 41). These words (quoted from Hab i.

5) had evident reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the national desolation of Israel and Judah consequent upon their shameless idolatry, and their rejection, betrayal, and murder of the Lord of Glory (Matt. xii. 45 ; xiii. 13-15 ; xxiii. 35-39 ; 1 Cor. ii. 8).

Light in the Darkness of Israel.

With these facts in our minds, how remarkable is the position which the Apostle assigns to Israel in these wonderful chapters! Well might he write, in the gloomy days which preceded a still darker night, concerning the long-suffering love and mercy of God : "God hath not cast away His people, which he foreknew" (Rom. xi. 2). And again, referring to the degenerate times when debased and idolatrous Israel left Elijah alone, he writes : "But what saith the answer of God unto him, I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then, at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (chap. xi. 4, 5).

Imperial Rome might oppress the Israel of God, and in her tyranny of strength join the princes of this world in regarding the Lord of glory as a troublesome fanatic, but the time should assuredly come when the despised Judean colony would represent the magnificent centre of Israel's national life before which Rome's imperial glory should pale into insignificance. Zion, though trodden down in 1903, shall rise again, and when the last of Cæsar's proud Gentile representatives have passed away for ever, that same Lord of Glory whom Cæsar crucified shall reign as King over the whole earth. Jerusalem, also "the city of the Great King," shall be rebuilt on a scale of magnificent grandeur such as Rome in her Imperial might never knew (Ps. xlviii. ; Isa. lx.)

With his mind fixed upon the fearful sin of His people in the rejection of the Christ of God, the Apostle, in words of irrepressible tenderness, says : "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh : who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the promises ; and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, and who is over all, God blessed for ever." But he immediately adds : "Not

as though the word of God hath taken none effect ; for they are not all Israel which are of Israel (Rom. xi. 2-6).

With profound insight given by direct inspiration of God, and with a glowing admiration of His abounding grace, does the Apostle in these three wonderful chapters show out the eternal counsel and purpose of God in regard to the future history of Israel.

God's Covenant made with Israel.

The great truth of the election of God disclosed in these chapters cannot be rightly understood, unless the choice of Israel as the leading nation of the earth during the coming millennial age is intelligently recognized. History and prophecy attach to Israel in a sense which cannot be affirmed of any other nation on the face of the whole earth.

Moved by the Holy Ghost, Paul writes concerning Israel : " I say, then, have they stumbled that they should fall ? God forbid : but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles. . . . Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness ? And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written " . . . (Rom. xi. 11, 12, 26.)

How intelligent is all this ! Rejecting their King, God, as we have already seen, in His abounding grace, over-ruled the crucifixion of our Lord, so that the reconciling of the world by His death became an accomplished fact. In their blindness of heart the Jewish people had cried out : " Away with Him ! Away with Him ! Crucify Him ! Crucify Him ! " What then ? Shall the purpose of God be overthrown ? Had not God sworn with an oath unto David that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne ? That promise shall assuredly be fulfilled.

Thus, recognizing the great object of the Divine purpose, how grandly the Apostle of the Gentiles adds ; " As concerning the gospel they [*i.e.*, Israel] are enemies for your sakes : but as touching the election [their coming national glory on the earth], they are beloved for the fathers' sakes " (Rom. xi. 28, 29). How suggestive are the words of Isaiah : " And the Redeemer shall come to Zion—and shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously " (Isa. xxiv. 23 ; lix. 20).

What a complete answer do these chapters give to the mischievous exegesis attempted by certain expositors who attempt to show that since Christ came, the terms Israel and Jerusalem, and the kingdom and reign of Christ, are to be understood in what they call a spiritual sense only! Certainly Paul had no such thoughts in his mind. Israel, as a nation, had been for a lengthened period broken off. Their place was taken by the Gentiles, at the instance and will of Jehovah, and was to be so occupied until the end of the times of the Gentiles. Then Israel will be "grafted in again," their receiving by God unto national life and glory being "as life from the dead" (Rom. xi. 15).

Surely if Israel's national distinction was to give place to, and be absorbed in, a great spiritual economy, the Apostle would not have spoken thus! The Church of God at Rome should certainly have had fundamental teaching on so vital a theme. It is truth to affirm that these three wonderful chapters completely overthrow the spiritualizing theories of those who are known as post-millennialists.

In conclusion, let us carefully notice the sublime outburst of the Apostle concerning the purpose and overruling power of the Eternal God alike in Israel's rejection and her future national glory: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen (Rom. xi. 33-36).

Hearing the expectant and joyous language of the Holy Lord, "Surely I come quickly!" we also add: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven saying: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (Rev. xxii. 21-22).

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