

Prophetic Gleanings

From Daniel and Revelation

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” —2 Peter 1:21

By Ike T. Sidebottom

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PREFACE

There are many “sensational” books on prophecy available these days which attempt to prove that present day events represent the fulfillment of many Bible prophecies. The problem with so many of these books is they fail to “rightly divide the Word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). They confuse God’s prophetic program for Israel with God’s program for His church today; a program which was a mystery kept secret from other ages, but now made manifest by the Holy Spirit through the writings of the apostle Paul (Colossians 1:24-27).

The two books of the Bible which are most often studied in regard to prophecy are the books of Daniel and the Revelation. In *Prophetic Gleanings from Daniel and Revelation*, the late Pastor Ike T. Sidebottom gives a clear presentation of the major prophecies of these books in light of a dispensational view of God’s Word.

It is our hope and prayer that this fine Bible study book will be a help and encouragement to its readers in their study of God’s precious Word, trusting in the Holy Spirit of God to give knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual understanding (Colossians 1:9).

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THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

is a period of human history named by the Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke 21:24. We notice from this Scripture that, during this particular period, Jerusalem, the capital city of the Jews, is “trodden down of the Gentiles.” We see also that this condition must prevail only “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Therefore, the Jews have a scriptural right to “look up” and lift up their heads in anticipation of the glory that is coming to them and to their nation at the end of the times of the Gentiles. The Lord has made promises to them that He will give them “signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” and that among the peoples of the earth there shall be distress, “men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” He declares that these certain signs will immediately precede the coming of the Son of man “in a cloud with power and great glory.” Furthermore, His imperative decree is that when these things “begin to come to pass” then Israel may know assuredly that the time of her “redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21: 25-28).

The present day “trodden down” condition of Israel is due to God’s just and righteous judgment upon her. Daniel said, “Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is 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” (Daniel 9: 11-12). These words were written by Daniel while he was in Babylonian captivity and they form a part of his prayer which he prayed for himself and for his people just before God revealed unto him their hope and glory through Christ the King at the end of the 70 weeks (Daniel 9:24).

From Nebuchadnezzar to the Anti-Christ

The kingdom of Babylon had its beginning under the leader-

ship of Nimrod (Genesis 10:9-10) and is therefore one of the oldest kingdoms of the world. Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon when God took the reins of government out of the hands of the nation of Israel and gave them over to the Gentiles. He was the first king of the Gentiles within that particular period spoken of by our Lord as “the times of the Gentiles.” The last king of this period will be the Anti-Christ. Nebuchadnezzar was a world ruler of unlimited power and the Anti-Christ will be a world ruler of unlimited power. A great bridge must have a strong foundation or buttress at each end, otherwise it could never span the chasm. In like manner the Gentile governments spanning the times of the Gentiles had a strong and powerful king at the beginning and will have even a stronger one at the end. As God deals with the various Gentile kingdoms He only records His dealings with those that come in direct contact with His people Israel. For instance, the successive kingdoms mentioned in Daniel’s prophecy are reckoned only as they obtain possession of Jerusalem. They existed before that; and each, in turn, was absorbed in the one that succeeded. At the very close of the Gentile times, the beast of Revelation 13:1 will be in power, and his “ten horns” or “ten kings” will join with him to “make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings” (Revelation 17:12-14).

The Meaning of the “Great Image”

King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream which troubled his spirit. He had forgotten this dream and his magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans could not bring it back to his mind. Daniel was brought before the king and the king said unto him, “Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof? Daniel answered in the presence of the king and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wisemen, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts

came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: And he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart” (Daniel. 2: 26-30).

It is important to note that the revelation concerning this dream came from the God of heaven, and that the dream itself had to do with the latter days and things that should come to pass hereafter.

In verses 31 to 35 of this same chapter the forgotten dream is dealt with. “Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image, This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron and the clay, and the brass, and the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like fine chaff of the summer threshingfloors; 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.”

The interpretation of this dream is clearly set forth in verses 36 to 45. The image whose brightness was excellent, and whose form was terrible, represents four Gentile kingdoms that are now historic and one that is yet future. Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian kingdom was represented by the head of gold; Medo-Persia, which according to history succeeded Babylon by occupying Jerusalem was represented by the breast and arms of silver; “the third kingdom of brass” represented the Grecians; the legs of iron represented the Romans; and the feet with the ten toes part of iron and part of clay represent the future kingdom of the Anti-Christ with the ten kings serving under him as suggested in Revelation 17:12-13.

The Doom of the Top-Heavy Image

is certain. It is just as top-heavy as the Gentile governments which it represents. The head of the image was made of gold which has a specific gravity of 19.3. The silver in the breast and arms has a specific gravity of 10.51, the brass in the belly and thighs 8.5, the iron in the legs 7.6, and the clay in the feet and toes only 1.9. Such a top-heavy construction could never survive its own weight. It must tumble and fall. Gentile governments through the times of the Gentiles have been and will continue to be short lived because of their top-heaviness.

The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, is to be “broken to pieces together.” Thus we see that the kingdom of the Anti-Christ will possess the characteristics of all the former kingdoms represented by the different portions of the image. The “stone” which is to be cut out of the mountain without hands will smite the image “upon his feet.” That is, the smiting will take place in the time represented by the feet and toes. The ten toes are referred to as kings in Daniel 2:44. And it is “in the days of these kings” that the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. As I understand the Scriptures, the “ten toes” of the image, and the “ten horns” of the beast represent the same ten kings. These kings shall “have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (Revelation 17:12).

The “great mountain” which shall fill the whole earth (Daniel 2:35) represents the government of Jesus Christ during the millennium. It is “the mountain of the Lord’s house” spoken of in Isaiah 2:2, and it shall be established “in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.” This will be the time when God shall hand the reigns of government back to His people Israel and the “times of the Gentiles” shall be no more.

Jerusalem, which is now trodden down of the Gentiles, shall be redeemed when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. God hath said, “I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shall be called, the city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed” (Isaiah 1:25-28).

Surely this redemption spoken of by the prophet “draweth nigh.” It certainly seems that the signs of the times point clearly to the near realization of Israel’s hope. Down trodden Jerusalem and her children may well begin to “look up” and lift up their heads.

The church, which is the body of Christ, may be caught out and up and into glory just any moment; and when the church goes up, the 70th week of Daniel will begin and after the brief period of less than seven years the tribulation worn remnant of Israel will look upon Him whom they pierced and receive Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We, as members of the body of Christ, may scripturally join with John on the Isle of Patmos and say, “Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.”

THE LATTER DAYS

Fourteen prophecies of the latter days are set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures. A study of these will prove that the prophecy points to judgments and blessings associated with the days of the Messiah, and for the most part, they refer to the period of His second advent.

Those who are interested in making a thorough study of these fourteen prophecies, together with the context of each one, will find them very enlightening concerning the “end times.”

1. Jacob gathered his twelve sons together that they might receive the individual blessing which he had for them and the tribes they represented. The record is given in Genesis 49:1-33. Carefully compare verses 1 and 28 for ample proof that this prophecy, and the blessings associated with it, have to do with “that which shall befall” Israel “in the last days.”
2. Moses, moved by the Holy Spirit, promised mercy from God toward the people of Israel during their tribulation “in the latter days” (Deuteronomy 4:29-31).
3. He also gave them the reason for the evil that shall befall Israel “in the latter days” (Deuteronomy 31:29).
4. Jeremiah’s prophecy reveals the anger of the Lord, and the execution of the thoughts of his heart against the false prophets of Israel “in the latter days” (Jeremiah 23:14-20).
5. He speaks further in chapter 30 and verse 24, declaring that “the whirlwind” of the Lord’s fury “shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked,” and that they shall consider it “in the latter days.”
6. The same prophet speaks of the captivity of Moab “in the latter days” (Jeremiah 48:46-47).
7. He speaks again of Elam who shall also be brought into captivity “in the latter days” (Jeremiah 49:39).

8. The mighty army of God shall come up against Israel as a cloud to cover the land “in the latter days” (Ezekiel 38:14-23). In these verses, God declares that He Himself will bring this terrible army against His people, and cause “a great shaking in the land of Israel.” He also states that He Himself will plead against this invading army “with pestilence and with blood,” and that He will “rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone.” All these things God will do that He might magnify and sanctify Himself “in the eye of many nations,” and that they shall know that He is the Lord.
9. We are told that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was given that the old king might know what shall come to pass hereafter, and what shall be “in the latter days” (Daniel 2:28). For the most part, this dream had to do with God’s judgment upon the Gentile nations, however, the smiting stone which became a mountain that filled the whole earth refers to the kingdom of heaven and millennium.
10. Daniel’s vision, recorded in Daniel 10:8-21, made him to understand what shall befall his people “in the latter days.” Note carefully the time element of verse 14.
11. Isaiah has given us a clear picture of the establishment of the “mountain of the Lord’s house” above all other mountains and hills “in the last days” (Isaiah 2:1-4). The word “mountain” in the Scripture refers to government and the prophecy tells us that the government of the Lord will be above all other governments when Christ returns in power and great glory to judge among the nations.
12. This same truth is brought out in Micah, chapter 4. “But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of

the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.”

13. Hosea speaks of these days in chapter 3, verses 3 to 5, as being a time when Israel shall return from her harlot ways to the Lord their God and to David their king, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness “in the latter days.”
14. All of these judgments upon the enemies of God’s people, and the blessings which shall come upon Israel, are in keeping with the prophecy which God forced Balaam to make against Balak and his people. A careful study of Numbers, chapter 24, will reveal the fact that Balaam spoke of blessings for Israel and judgment upon their enemies at a yet future date. Beginning with verse 14, Balaam said to Balak, “And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days. And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.”

God Shall Turn Away His Anger

from Israel and be their salvation in the time of their helplessness at the close of this age. After He has redeemed His people from the hand of the enemy and has established them in their own land, under their own king, they shall worship Him according to Isaiah, chapter 12—“And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

Ten Men Holding the Skirt of a Jew

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:20-23).

The Prominence of Jerusalem

is seen in all of these prophecies which point to the earthly ministry of Christ after His return in glory. Jerusalem shall be the center of world government, also the center of worship. Christ, the King, shall teach the nations how to get along without war and

bloodshed. He shall also have the nations looking to Jerusalem for leadership in worship. Zechariah says, in chapter 14, verses 16 to 17—“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.” He states further in verse 20 that “in that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.”

Thus we see that the one who was rejected as king by a wicked nation which said “we will not have this man to reign over us” will one day be received by the ones who pierced Him, and will be hailed as “King over all the earth.” This same one was rejected by the religious leaders of Israel as an imposter and a blasphemer, but when He returns at the end of this age He shall receive worship not only from His own people, Israel, but all the nations of the earth shall worship Him.

JERUSALEM AS A BRIDE

“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee” (Isaiah 62:1-5).

The prophet continues in verses 10 to 12 of this same chapter saying, “Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.” The word “Hephzibah” of the above quotation means “my delight is in her.” The “new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name” the city of Jerusalem is revealed in Jeremiah, chapter 33, verse 16, “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

This new name for the city of Jerusalem fits in with God’s promises to the saints of the seven churches of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. We quote verse 17 of chapter 2 and verse 12 of chapter 3. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon

him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”

Throughout the millennium, her righteousness shall “go forth as brightness” and her salvation shall be “as a lamp that burneth.” The Gentiles and the kings of the earth shall see her righteousness and her glory for a full thousand years. She is now forsaken and her land is desolate, but then the Lord shall be delighted in her and her land shall be married. God’s rejoicing over her, in that day, shall be as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

After the millennium, in the new heaven and the new earth, and after the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, this “holy city, new Jerusalem” shall come down from God out of heaven, “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:1-2).

One of the seven angels talked with John on the Isle of Patmos saying, “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Revelation 21:9-14).

The angel continued his talk with John concerning the bride, the holy city, saying, “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any

thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Thus we see the brightness and the glory of the new Jerusalem, "the bride, the Lamb's wife," carried on into the new heaven and the new earth.

It is significant that the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are to be written on the twelve gates of the city, and that the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are to be in the twelve foundations of the city. It is also significant that the saved nations of the earth and their kings shall bring their glory and honor into the city. All of this is in keeping with God's promise to Abraham concerning Israel and the nations, but it doesn't fit with that blessed hope of the body of Christ as revealed through Paul.

BABYLON, THE GREAT WHORE

One of the angels said unto John, “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration” (Revelation 17:1-6).

The holy Jerusalem is spoken of as the “bride, the Lamb’s wife” and in righteousness and glory she shall shine forth before the nations and their kings during the millennium and in the new heaven and the new earth. Babylon is spoken of as the “great whore” and in filthiness and fornication she shall be associated with the Anti-Christ and shall commit fornication with the kings of the earth during the tribulation period. The holy Jerusalem is the mother of all the “children of promise,” but Babylon is “the mother of harlots,” compare Galatians 4:26-28 with Revelation 17:5. The nations that are saved shall be associated with Christ the Saviour in the holy city (Revelation 21:24-26) in the new heaven and the new earth; while all the nations and their inhabitants who will not hear the voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:3-4) will be associated with the abominable whore in her filthiness and fornication during the reign of the Anti-Christ.

Those “which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” will en-

joy citizenship in the holy city where there is nothing that defileth and nothing that worketh abomination or maketh a lie; (Revelation 21:27) while those “whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world” shall “wonder after the beast” and be made drunk with the wine of the fornication of the whore (Revelation 13:3; with 17:8 and 3).

Babylon shall fall in the day of judgment. Much shall she glorify herself and live deliciously during the reign of the Anti-Christ; and in the same proportion God shall measure unto her torment and sorrow in the day of His wrath (Revelation 18:7). “Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men” (Revelation 18:8-13).

The Holy Spirit mentions twenty-eight different commodities to be merchandised by this great city, the mother of harlots, during the future days of her pride and glory. “Drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,” she shall traffic in the bodies and souls of men. It is no wonder that her judgment shall be swift, even in “one day” and in “one hour” of that day (Revelation 18:8 and 17).

The wicked merchants who will be made rich through her merchandise will “cast dust on their heads,” and cry, weep and wail while the wealthy city burns; but the command of the angel to the heavenly host will be, “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and

ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her” (Revelation 18:20).

The time of judgment for the wicked city Babylon will be the time of glory for the holy city of Jerusalem. The God of glory, who shall destroy Babylon in His wrath, shall make Jerusalem “a crown of glory in his hand.” When His wrath is poured out upon the great whore, He shall rejoice over Jerusalem as a “bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.” His holy city, Jerusalem, shall be given a new name, which will be in keeping with her eternal glory, but the wicked city, Babylon, shall be “thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

FUTURE JUDGMENTS

“A Great Earthquake”

that shall shake the earth from its center to its circumference, and shall cause the stars of the heaven to fall unto the earth, is mentioned by a number of God’s prophets. Christ spoke of “earthquakes” in connection with wars, famines and pestilences (Matthew 24:6). These earthquakes are becoming more frequent and severe in these closing days, but the “great earthquake” of prophecy will cause all former quakings of the earth to fade into utter insignificance. Earthquakes that we know about cause certain sections of the earth surface to tremble and often destroys life and property, but THE EARTHQUAKE of prophecy shall “shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”

Haggai speaks, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, saying, “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts” (Chapter 2, verses 6 and 7).

Zechariah, referring to the second coming of the Lord, said, “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Chapter 14, verse 4). The context of this verse proves that this event will take place in connection with the “day of the Lord” and at the time of the gathering of “all nations against Jerusalem to battle.” This will be a time when the Lord shall “go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.” We know that these things will be done at the close of this age and immediately preceding the return of the Lord in great glory. The moment His feet touch the mount of Olives again the “great earthquake” will be felt throughout both earth and heaven.

John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw this terrible judgment of the future. He says, “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal,

and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the 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?" (Revelation 6:12-17) John speaks again in the 16th chapter, verses 18-21, saying, "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

Christ Jesus spoke of this same terrible judgment in His Olivet discourse concerning the end times, as recorded by Matthew, chapter 24, verses 27 through 30, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

This universal shaking of both heaven and earth will remove "those things that are shaken, as things that are made, that those

things which cannot be shaken may remain” (Hebrews 12:27). After the destruction of all that is man made, God shall set up “a kingdom which cannot be moved.” We need to remember that the mere work of man cannot endure the coming judgment, but “whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him” (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

Pestilences

are also spoken of by Christ in His Olivet discourse recorded by Matthew in chapter 24, verse 7. These pestilences are many in our present day, and it is true that the human race is being tormented with an increasing variety of pestilences and they are becoming more and more severe in their attacks upon mankind, but the pestilences spoken of in connection with the day of the Lord shall be such as mankind has never known before.

We quote Revelation 9:1-12, “And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they

had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”

The “star” of verse 1 will be a person as the word “him” of the same verse denotes. He shall be none other than Satan himself. We remember the words of Christ, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:18). The key to the bottomless pit was “given” to him because he could not open the prison house of demons without Divine permission. Perhaps this is why the demons which possessed the Gadarene besought Jesus that He would not command them to go out into the “deep” (Luke 8:31). They knew that if they were cast into the “deep” (Bottomless Pit) they would be confined until a time of Divine release.

The locusts that are known to man destroy grass, green things and trees, but the terrible locusts of this future time of trouble will only hurt “those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads” (verse 4). They will not be permitted to kill men, just “torment” them for a period of “five months” (verse 5). The torment will be such as to cause men to “seek death” but they shall not “find it” for death shall “flee from them” (verse 6).

The ordinary locusts “have no king” (Proverbs 30:27); but these tribulation period locusts will have as their king the “Angel of the bottomless pit” (verse 11).

This painful plague, along with the many others prophesied in the book of Revelation, will not produce repentance on the part of the sufferers. They will seek death, but they won’t repent of the “works of their hands.” Evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived as they “worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk” (Revelation 9:20).

Suffering and misery are powerless to effect the work of regeneration. Man may think that if they have trials and troubles in this life that resemble hell on earth they will be spared the condemnation of the lake of fire, but not so. The devil will give man hell both here and hereafter. There is only one way to escape the

death grip which Satan has on the natural man. Jesus Christ is that ONLY WAY. He, Himself, said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

God offers His own eternal life to sinners through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. His salvation is centered in a person, and not in a religion. The sinner must come to know Christ, and not just know about Him. Every saved person has a personal Saviour, and the only person who can save is Christ.

Jesus Christ was delivered on the cross in our stead and for our offenses. He was raised from the dead on the third day for our justification. He now lives in glory as the "one mediator between God and men." Soon He will be coming to catch us up unto Himself and change us into His own likeness.

He died to save us, He lives to keep us, and He is coming soon to glorify our vile bodies.

Famines

are mentioned by our Lord as recorded in Matthew 24:7. These famines are in connection with "the beginning of sorrows." The famine of all famines will fall upon the earth during the great tribulation period.

John describes the effect of this famine in Revelation, chapter 6, verses 5 and 6. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

A "measure" of wheat represents about one quart dry measure, the daily allowance of corn for a slave in the days of our Lord's earthly ministry. A "penny" was considered a days wage when our Lord was here among men (Matthew 20:2). The penny of that day was silver coin with a value of about 17 cents in our money. This means that in the time of trouble mentioned above the famine will be such as to cause wheat to be sold by measure and for a penny per measure, or approximately 17 cents per quart. At the same time barley will be selling 3 quarts for 17 cents.

These prices are something like seven or eight times the average prices of our day.

Ezekiel points to this future day of trouble and describes the famine in the following language. “Moreover I will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by. So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken it. When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread: So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it” (Ezekiel 5:14-17).

God used “a famine in the land” to test Abram (Genesis 12:10). The Book tells us that “Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.” He left the land which God had given to him and his seed after him. We may be sure that the famine in his own land made the green fields of Egypt look greener. However, God’s grace was manifested toward Abram and his seed. He was brought back to Bethel, the place of prayer in the land of Canaan. Abram was tested and failed; God was faithful and restored him.

“Seven years of famine” in Egypt and the surrounding territories brought Joseph into prominence before the king of Egypt; thereby making it possible for him to nourish and comfort his father, Jacob, eleven brothers, and their families in the time of starvation. The careful student of Genesis, chapters 41 to 50, will readily see that the famine which was “sore in the land” in the days of Joseph is highly typical of the famine that will prevail over the whole earth in the future day of Jacob’s trouble.

Over and over God uses the famine to test and purge the peoples of the earth. In recent years we have felt God’s hand of judgment in this respect. Famines and dust storms in increasing numbers have reminded us that we are living in the days immediately preceding the “great tribulation” with its earthquake, famine, and

pestilences.

Wars and Rumors of Wars

such as are now raging in Europe were prophesied by our Lord according to Matthew 24:6. However, we are definitely told that we should not trouble ourselves about such; “For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Indeed, we may expect wars to increase both in number and in destruction of life and property as we draw toward the close of this present age. But let it be understood that the war of all wars will be the battle of Armageddon at the very close of the great tribulation period.

John explains the assembly of kings with their armies for this great day of battle. “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:12-16).

The “kings of the earth and the whole world” mentioned above are included in the “ten kings” which shall “receive power as kings one hour with the beast,” and which “shall give their power and strength unto the beast” in the great battle against the “Lord of Lords, and King of Kings” (Revelation 17:12-14).

This battle between the Anti-Christ and the kings of the earth with their armies on the one side, and the King of Kings and Lord of Lords with His “called, and chosen, and faithful” ones on the other side will be the battle wherein the blood shall flow to the bridles of the horses (Revelation 14:19-20).

This will be the time when the angel standing in the sun shall “cry with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper

of the great God: That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great” (Revelation 19:17-18).

The outcome of this battle is clearly set forth in Revelation 19:19-21. “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

The destructive sword which shall slay the remnant will proceed out of the mouth of the Son of God as He returns in power and great glory to judge the nations and to set things right in the earth.

The great earthquake, the pestilences out of the bottomless pit, the sore famine, and the sword which shall proceed out of the mouth of Him who shall tread “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” all go to make up the four-fold judgment of God upon the earth in the future period of great tribulation.

The “Four Sore Judgments”

of Ezekiel 14:21 are, “the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence.” These four judgments are determined upon God’s people, Israel, and they shall not be felt in their fullness until the day of “Jacob’s trouble.” The prophet declares that these judgments will fall upon the people “when the land sinneth against” God “by trespassing grievously.” He says, “Then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof,” and will “cause noisome beasts to pass through the land,” and will “bring a sword upon that land,” and I will “send a pestilence into that land” (Ezekiel 14:13-20). He declares also

that even if Noah, Daniel and Job, were numbered with Israel in this day of judgment “they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness.” Even though these three outstanding men of God would not be able to deliver the people, “yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters.”

This shall be done on a basis of God’s grace. He says, “Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it” (Ezekiel 14:22). He is telling us here that the nation of Israel shall be comforted concerning the evil that shall befall Jerusalem. This will be so because the judgment shall cause the people to change their ways and their doings. God’s only reason for judging His own at any time is that He might bring them to Himself and to His ways and doings.

When the great tribulation shall have ended the little remnant of Israel will be looking upon Him whom they pierced (Zechariah 12:10). Their song will be “We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:1-3).

The Psalmist saw this day of glory for Israel and said, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah” (Psalms 24:7-10).

THE COMING WORLD DICTATOR

God's prophecies concerning the "end times" are woven around two outstanding kings. One is the "king of fierce countenance" (Daniel 8:23); and the other is the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:16). The former is the Anti-Christ, a usurper, and he shall obtain his worldwide dominion by "flatteries" (Daniel 11:21). The latter is the Christ of God, the rightful heir to the world throne, and He shall take the throne through "the zeal of the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

The coming world dictator is commonly called the Anti-Christ. He is given twelve different titles in the Scripture. Note these titles: "The king of Babylon" (Isaiah 14:4); "The Assyrian" (Isaiah 14:25); "Lucifer, son of the morning" (Isaiah 14:12); "The prince that shall come" (Daniel 9:26); "The king of fierce countenance" (Daniel 8:23); "The vile person" (Daniel 11:21); "The willful king" (Daniel 11:36); "The man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:3); "The son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3); "That wicked one" (2 Thess. 2:8); "The beast with ten horns" (Revelation 13:1); and "The little horn" (Daniel 7:8). A careful study of the context of these references will prove that each title has to do with the Anti-Christ.

The "Four Great Beasts"

of Daniel 7:2-6 are "four kings, which shall arise out of the earth" (Daniel 7:17). The first beast was "like a lion" (verse 4); the second was "like a bear" (verse 5); the third was "like a leopard" (verse 6); and the fourth was so terrible that the Holy Spirit has not compared it to any known animal.

It is this fourth beast or king that we are primarily concerned about just now. In chapter 7 and verse 7, Daniel describes this dreadful personality in the following language, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." These "ten horns" demand our close attention if

we are to have understanding concerning this fourth beast. The “great red dragon” of Revelation 12:3 had “ten horns,” and the beast which John saw “rise up out of the sea” also had “ten horns” (Revelation 13:1). John also declares that these “ten horns” are “ten kings” which shall have “one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” Furthermore, they shall stand with the beast against the “Lord of Lords, and King of Kings” and shall be overcome by Him in the day of His glorious appearing (Revelation 17:12-14).

The “Little Horn” of the Fourth Beast,

described in Daniel 7:7-8, is the power of the end time, so far as the world is concerned. The “ten horns” are kings, but the “little horn” is the king. In the closing days of the great tribulation period, the ten horns will represent the governing powers of the world, and will be backed up by strong armies. The little horn will be the world dictator and will be supported by these ten governing powers and their forces.

Let us examine Daniel’s testimony concerning this “little horn.” “I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Daniel 7:8).

It seems that Daniel was not so concerned about “the rest of the beasts,” but he inquired particularly concerning the “fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows” (Daniel 7:19-20).

Daniel asked that he might “know the truth of the fourth beast,” and after God gave him the truth, which he sought after, he said, “As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my

heart” (Daniel 7:28).

God’s revelation to Daniel concerning this coming world dictator, the dreadful beast, is recorded in Daniel 7:21-27. “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

While it is true that this “fourth beast,” the “little horn,” the Anti-Christ, is to be a world dictator and as such shall “speak great words against the Most High,” and shall “wear out the saints of the Most High” for “a time and times and the dividing of time,” yet it is also true that his reign of terror is limited to this designated period, after which his power shall be taken from him and he himself shall be judged. This particular period which Daniel designates as “a time and times and the dividing of time” represents the last half of the “one week” of Daniel 9:27. The Holy Spirit speaks of the same period as “forty and two months” in Revelation 11:2, and as “a thousand two hundred and three-score days” in the third verse of the same chapter. The same period is referred to in Revelation 12:6 and 12:14.

The “Little Horn” of the He Goat

We suggest that our readers make a thorough study of Daniel,

chapter 8, remembering the words of the messenger to Daniel in the 17th verse, "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision." He said again in the 19th verse, "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." He spoke along this line a third time in verse 26, "Wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days." These verses seem to suggest that the purpose of the entire vision was to acquaint Daniel and the readers of his prophecy with that which shall take place "at the time of the end."

The "ram which had two horns," verses 3 to 7, represents "the kings of Media and Persia" (verse 20). The "he goat" which "came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground," and which had "a notable horn between his eyes," and which was "moved with choler" against the ram, and "brake his two horns" and "cast him down to the ground" represents the "king of Grecia" (verse 5-7 with 21).

It is important to note that the "great horn" between the eyes of the he goat was "broken," and that "for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven" (verses 8-9). However, the thing that concerns us most just now is the fact that out of one of these four notable horns "came forth a little horn" (verse 9). "And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered" (Daniel 8:9-12).

This little horn of verse 9 seems to be the king of verses 23 to 25. "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up

against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.”

Even though most of our outstanding Bible teachers of today hold that the “little horn” of chapter 8 represents Antiochus Epiphanes, who lived some 175 years B.C. and profaned the Jewish temple and persecuted the Jews, I cannot reconcile such an interpretation with the time element brought out in verse 23. It seems to me that this verse refers back to the “four kingdoms” which shall stand up out of the nation over which Alexander the great reigned, “but not in his power” (verse 22). We cannot get away from the clear statement “in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences shall stand up” (verse 23).

As I understand the Scripture, the “little horn” of chapter 8 is the same person referred to as the “little horn” in chapter 7. They both represent the coming world dictator, whose power shall be felt throughout the earth immediately preceding the return of the King from glory.

The Beast Out of the Sea

John “was in the spirit on the Lord’s day.” Physically speaking he was on the Isle of Patmos, but spiritually he was wafted by the Holy Spirit into a yet future period spoken of in the Word as “the day of the Lord.” His experience was something like that of the prophet Ezekiel. We quote Ezekiel 3:12-14, “Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.”

One of the clear visions which God gave to John concerning the day of the Lord is recorded in Revelation, chapter 13. It has to do with “a beast” which John saw “rise up out of the sea.” We quote the first eight verses of this chapter—

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

The “sea” of the above quotation has reference to the masses of humanity. The expression is used by Daniel in chapter 7, verse 2, where the prophet said, “I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heavens strove upon the great sea.” In Revelation 17:1 John speaks of the great whore that sitteth upon “many waters,” and in the 15th verse he interprets the “waters” which he saw as “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.”

We conclude, therefore, that the beast of Revelation 13:1 came up out of the multitudes or masses of the people. His “seven heads” and his “ten horns” definitely link him with the “great red dragon” of Revelation 12:3. His likeness unto “a leopard,” and “a bear,” and “a lion” indicates that he has the characteristics of the beasts of Daniel, chapter 7. The fact that he shall receive “his

power, and his seat, and great authority” from the dragon seems to identify him with the “king of fierce countenance” who shall operate “not by his own power” (Daniel 9:23-26). The healing of his “deadly wound” will get multitudes of worshippers for the beast. Just as Christ was wounded unto death and raised from the dead so the Anti-Christ will receive the deadly wound and be healed.

The time allotted to the beast after his deadly wound is healed will be “forty and two months.” This corresponds to the last half of Daniel’s seventieth week (Daniel 9:27). This will be the period spoken of by Daniel as the “abomination of desolation,” and by Jeremiah as “the time of Jacob’s trouble,” and by our Lord as “the great tribulation.” Paul refers to this period as a time of “falling away” when “that man of sin” shall be revealed. He declares him to be “the son of perdition” and one who will oppose and exalt himself “above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God” shall sit in the temple of God, “shewing himself that he is God.” He emphasizes the fact that the coming of this man of sin will be “after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-10).

The Mark of the Beast

shall be worn by multitudes in the closing days of the great tribulation. Revelation 13:16-18 gives us some idea as to the pressure that shall be brought to bear upon the multitudes concerning this thing. We quote, “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Multitudes will receive the mark and bow down to the beast, or Anti-Christ, but an elect number will choose death rather than beast worship. The souls of these are referred to in Revelation 6:9-11. We quote, “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of

God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” This number of martyrs will be raised and glorified and shall reign with Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6).

The Number of the Beast

shall be “six hundred three score and six,” or 666. God declares that this is the “number of a man.” He further states, “here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast” (Revelation 13:18). The one who has understanding from above will know better than to bow down to man. Just as Christ, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,” so the believers in Christ, during the tribulation period, will endure suffering and death for the joy that is set before them, even the joy of reigning with Him.

Tribulation saints are not the only ones who should count the number of the beast. In the present day of our “Body Dispensation” we see the number of man indelibly stamped upon places of worship and programs of worship. The cost which true worshippers of Christ must pay for the privilege of bearing their testimony is becoming greater and greater. The leaders of man-made denominations have led their organizations under the dominion of the Federal Council of Churches, and this Council is dominated by modernists. They are gradually getting control of all religious effort, even to the extent of making it impossible, in some cities, for a preacher to secure a lot or building permit for church work without their approval, and on many radio stations it is impossible to secure time for religious broadcasts without the O.K. of the Federal Council of Churches. Individual Christians are being ostracized by their so-called Christian associates because they are not linked with some man-made organization. It is becoming more and more difficult for the individual Christian, or for a

group of believers to stand for Christ and Christ alone in their public worship.

The False Prophet

is spoken of in the Word as “another beast.” He is definitely linked with the beast which is called the Anti-Christ, yet his is a separate and distinct personality. The Anti-Christ is one member of the Satanic trinity and the false prophet is another member of the same. The Anti-Christ will be the political head and the false prophet will be the religious head. The following quotation from Revelation 13:11-17 has to do with the person and work of the beast which is spoken of elsewhere as the false prophet.

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

In the brief quotation of the above paragraph, the “first beast” (Revelation 13:1) is referred to eight times. We are told that the beast which is the false prophet will exercise “all the

power of the first beast,” and that he will cause “the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast.” All of his “great wonders” and deceivable works by means of miracles will be performed “in the sight of the beast” which will come before him. This proves to us that the false prophet in his future ministry will be an imitation of the present work of the Holy Spirit. Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Christ said, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, ... he shall not speak of himself, ... he shall glorify me.” When the Holy Spirit came He took up His ministry of magnifying the work of Christ and glorifying the person of Christ. When the false prophet appears, during the tribulation period, he will serve to magnify and glorify the person and work of the Anti-Christ. Just as the first beast will be the Anti-Christ; so the “another beast” or false prophet will be the Anti-Spirit.

The business of the Holy Spirit today is to seek worshippers for the true and living Christ. The business of the false prophet will be to seek worshippers for the false Christ. The Holy Spirit accomplishes His work by guiding believers “into all truth” (John 16:13). The false prophet will accomplish his purpose through “the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thess. 2:9-10). Thus we see that those who will not receive the truth as offered by the Holy Spirit in the closing days of this age of grace will be deceived by the false message of the false prophet. However, the sinner who believes the testimony of God concerning His Son will be saved regardless of how many times he has heard before and rejected. The door of salvation will be open up to the very closing moment of the tribulation period, but those who reject the truth will accept the lie of Satan and be damned (2 Thess. 2:12).

The Image With Life

is described in Revelation 13:14-16. This image will be made by the people that dwell on the earth, under the leadership of the false prophet, during the last half of the seventieth week of Daniel. The false prophet will have power to “give life unto the

image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” This Satanic power will be even more deceiving than that which was manifested by the wise men and sorcerers of Egypt in the days of Moses. We quote Exodus 7:10-12, “And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.” We call your attention to the fact that these rods were still called rods by the Holy Spirit even after they had been changed to serpents (verse 12). This makes it plain that the rods were still rods, even though they were moving around on the ground as serpents. The power of God caused Aaron’s rod to become a serpent and the power of Satan caused the magicians’ rods to become serpents. It is consoling to note that the power of God swallowed up the power of Satan. This was true in the days of Moses and it is true in our present day experiences, and it will be true in the days of the false prophet and the Anti-Christ. Christ will overcome them when He returns in power and great glory.

The Great Red Dragon

is mentioned as one of the wonders in heaven (Revelation 12:3). We have the beast which is the Anti-Christ, the false prophet which is the Anti-Spirit, and here we find the dragon, the Anti-God. When he is cast down to the earth during the tribulation period he will give power to the beast in all of his tribulation program. He will center his attack upon Israel and with the remnant of her seed, because at that time this remnant will be keeping “the commandments of God,” and will “have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Just as Satan centers his attack upon Paul’s message concerning the body of Christ in this age, so he will center his attack upon the kingdom message which will be given by faithful Israelites during the tribulation period.

Overthrow of the Satanic Trinity

The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet will send out of their mouths “unclean spirits like frogs” to call forth “the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:13-14). This battle will be fought in a place “called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16). Satan has instigated all the wars and bloodshed from the days of Cain to the present time. He will bring on wars and rumors of wars on down to the tribulation period, but this last battle at Armageddon will bring about his downfall and the human race will be delivered from war and strife for the full thousand years of Christ’s reign.

The battle line of Armageddon will cover a space of “a thousand and six hundred furlongs,” and the blood will flow to the horse bridles. Christ Himself will wield the sword which shall proceed out of His own mouth as He tramples the battle line from one end to the other. Kings, captains, mighty men, horses and their riders, both free men and bondmen will fall in this terrible battle. The fowls or vultures of the air will be gathered to feast upon the flesh of the slain and it will be called “the supper of the great God” (Revelation 14:19-20; 19:15-18). The beast and the false prophet shall be “cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone,” and the “dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan” shall be bound for “a thousand years, and cast into the bottomless pit” (Revelation 19:20; 20:3).

This destruction of the Satanic trinity will be the end of the coming world dictator, in whom shall dwell, for a season, all the power of the unholy trinity. This will make room for the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords who shall govern the earth with righteousness and judge with equity for the meek of the earth.

THE COMING KING OF KINGS

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen” (Revelation 1:7).

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:29-30).

This one who is coming with clouds and with power and great glory, immediately after the tribulation, has made the following declarations concerning His coming—

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (Revelation 3:11).

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (Revelation 22:7).

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:12).

“He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly” (Revelation 22:20).

As the age draws to a close, and as the tribulation settles down upon the earth, judgment after judgment will fall with increasing rapidity. The temporary peace ushered in by the white horse rider of Revelation, chapter 6, will be taken from the earth by the red horse rider, who will be followed immediately by one

riding upon a black horse, representing famine, and then will come the pale horse and his rider with death and hell following. The great earthquake, which shall shake both earth and heaven, will be followed by blackness and darkness when the sun shall become as sackcloth, the moon as blood, the stars fall, and the heavens depart as a scroll when it is rolled together. These terrible judgments following each other in rapid succession will cause the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, to hide themselves in the dens of the rocks and the mountains and cry for the mountains and rocks to fall upon them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne. In this hour of the terrible wrath of the Lamb it will be necessary for deliverance to come quickly or else all flesh will be destroyed.

This, the darkest hour of the world's history, will come just before the sudden return of the Lord of glory to usher in the millennium of peace, righteousness, and prosperity such as the world has never known. He will come quickly. It will be necessary that He come quickly. The tribulation saint who will have to hold fast to obtain his crown could never hold out until the crowning day unless He did come quickly.

The church members of Revelation 2:25 and 3:11 are admonished to hold fast. In these verses the angel says, "That which ye have already hold fast till I come." The rewards which they are to hold out for will be given when He comes quickly bringing His rewards with Him according to Revelation 22:12.

The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." This is the imperative declaration of our Lord concerning the yet future day of His earthly glory. The prophet Isaiah saw this day and said, "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth" (Isaiah 11:4). This prophecy will be fulfilled along with the sayings of the angels on the day of His birth—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

These prophecies were made almost two thousand years ago,

yet there has never been peace on earth, and good will toward men, and the meek have not yet inherited the earth. God doesn't say that these things will be experienced during this age of Grace. We need not look for them until the return of the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Lion Shall Eat Straw Like the Ox

Often times we meet sincere brethren in Christ who are striving to bring in the kingdom. They understand that the work of the church is to make the world a better place in which to live and improve the conditions on the earth until it is good enough for Christ to come back and claim. They hope to eventually rid the world of war. Their program calls for such social reform as will eventually rid the human heart of greed, malice, hatred, and unholy ambitions and desires.

These dear brethren may be thoroughly sincere, but they are sincerely wrong. Either their objective is wrong or else the Word of God is wrong, and the Word of God cannot be wrong.

For argument sake, suppose the human race should be developed and made ready for the second coming of the Lord; we would still have the problem of changing the appetite of the lion. Prophecy declares a complete change of the nature of the wild beast, the poisonous asp, and the venomous cockatrice. We quote Isaiah 11:6-8, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den."

The Desert Shall Bloom as the Rose

All creation is waiting for redemption from the curse of sin. The thorn, the brier, and the barren desert remind us that the curse is still evident. Prophecy says that the time will come when "the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing,

and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off” (Isaiah 55:12-13).

Isaiah speaks again along the same line in chapter 35, verses 1 and 2. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.”

Handmaidens Shall Prophecy

A part of God’s judgment pronounced upon the woman for her behaviour in the garden of Eden is found in the words of Genesis 3:16, “And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” Undoubtedly she is numbered with the rest of creation which “groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” under the rule of fallen man (Romans 8:22). In unchristianized lands she must take her place as a servant and burden bearer for the man. Along with the removal of the thorns and the briars her load will be lifted. This time cannot come throughout the world until Christ returns to lift the curse of sin.

Paul speaks to the church of our present dispensation through his message to Timothy, “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Timothy 2:11-12). After the church which is Christ’s body has been completed and glorified, after the tribulation period has been endured, and when the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh at the opening of the millennium, then Acts 2:18 and Joel 2:28 will be fulfilled. We quote Acts 2:17-18, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.” The dark days of the tribu-

lation will precede this “great and notable day of the Lord” (Acts 2:20), but during that millennial day “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). The curse will be lifted and creation will be delivered when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords returns.

The Millennium (1000 Years)

Satan shall be bound a thousand years—“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.”

Satan shall be sealed in the pit till the thousand years are fulfilled—And He “cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

The tribulation saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years—“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

The wicked dead shall not be raised until the thousand years are finished—“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

Those of the first resurrection shall reign with Christ a thousand years—“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.”

Satan shall be loosed when the thousand years are expired—“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came

down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”

The above quotations are taken from Revelation, chapter 20, verses 1 to 9. A careful study of this passage of Scripture reveals the fact that Christ is going to reign on this earth for a thousand years. Six times over in these nine verses we have the expression, “A thousand years.” It means a literal thousand years and cannot be scripturally interpreted otherwise. In 2 Peter 3:8 we are told “that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” The Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. There is no past and no future with him. He lives in the eternal present. A day is as a thousand years with Him; and a thousand years with Him is but as a day. Time is measured by days and years, but eternity cannot be measured. Let us remember that these verses quoted from Revelation, chapter 20, have to do with the earth and the people of the earth. They deal with things in the realm of time and not in the realm of eternity.

He Shall Be King Over All the Earth

“And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one” (Zechariah 14:9). This prophecy is in perfect keeping with the words of the Holy Spirit through John as recorded in Revelation 11:15-17. “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. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.”

The Sword and the Plowshares

When the Lord returns to set up His kingdom on the earth, He will find the world in convulsions. Immediately before His coming the proclamation will go out to the Gentiles of the entire world, “Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your

pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great” (Joel 3:9, 10, 12, 13).

In this terrible day of trouble, which is surely coming upon the earth, Michael will stand up for the people of Israel and they shall be delivered, every one that is found written in the Book (Daniel 12:1). The deliverer, in that day, will be the Lord who, “shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel” (Joel 3:16). At that time, He will establish His government above all the governments of the world, “And all nations shall flow unto it.” And, “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:1-4).

In the closing days of the age, just before the coming of the Lord, the people will have no need of plowshares and pruninghooks so they shall beat them into swords and spears. Immediately after His coming and the setting up of His kingdom, they will have no need for swords and spears so they shall beat them into plowshares and pruninghooks. Such will be the change among world governments and world leaders when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords returns.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

In Revelation we find the four alleluias of the glorified saints. These alleluias are centered in the salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God. The heavenly voices tell forth the story of His righteous judgments upon the wicked and of His power to reign. Notice the last alleluia as recorded in verse 6, “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia: For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

Immediately after this fourth alleluia, the heavenly voices continue, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Revelation 19:7-9).

The context of these verses clearly reveal a kingdom setting. This reminds us of a portion of our Lord’s discourse given on Mount Olivet. “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom” (Matthew 25:1). In the 10th verse of this chapter we are told that “the Bridegroom came and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage.” In the 13th verse we have the admonition, “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” It seems that the Lord designed this lesson to illustrate and enforce His teaching as to watchfulness. He must have had in view the immediate coming of the Lord, providing Israel would repent in response to the message of Peter and the eleven given in the opening chapters of the book of Acts. A careful study of Acts 3:19-26 and 5:30-32 reveals a bona fide offer of the kingdom to Israel; and if she had repented the King would have returned. Her rejection postponed the second coming of the Lord until after the calling out of the body of Christ, which is now in the making. The book of Revelation is a prophecy concerning a yet future time when the kingdom shall be set up through the zeal of the Lord of Hosts.

The Son of man will return at the close of the tribulation period as the Bridegroom. He will take unto Himself the bride and reign over the whole earth. The bride will reign with Him.

Before He comes as Bridegroom and as King, He will come for His body which is the church. Our rapture will precede the tribulation period, when He comes not as the Son of man but as the Lord from glory to change our vile body into the likeness of His glorious body (Philippians 3:20-21).

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2). Two groups of resurrected people are referred to in this verse. They are those who shall awake to “everlasting life” and those who shall come forth to “shame and everlasting contempt.” Verse 1 of this same chapter refers to the great tribulation period and to a certain number of Daniel’s people who “shall be delivered,” because their names are found “written in the book.”

We need to remember that Daniel refers to two separate resurrections. One is the resurrection of the saved to everlasting life, and the other the resurrection of the unsaved to shame and everlasting contempt. Let us also keep in mind that some whose names shall be found written in the book will be delivered without dying. The Holy Spirit speaks through Hosea along this same line. We quote chapter 13, verse 14, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from thine eyes.” In this verse we find those who shall be ransomed “from the power of the grave,” and we find those who shall be redeemed “from death.” The former group shall never go to the grave, the latter group shall be raised from the grave.

Now let us go to the conversation between Martha and Jesus, as recorded in John 11:21-26. “Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” It is plain that Martha and Jesus were talking about the resurrection which shall take place “at the last day.” This is the resurrection of prophecy. Daniel spoke of it and Hosea spoke of it in the above quotations. It is also evident that our Lord spoke, not only of a resurrection, but also of some who “shall never die.” In other words, at the last day those who have died be-

believing in Jesus Christ shall live again, and those who are living at that time, and believe in Him, shall never die. The former group shall be raised, and the latter group shall be changed. Those who are raised and those who are changed shall be glorified together.

The apostle Paul picks up this Old Testament prophecy concerning the resurrection of dead saints and the changing of living saints in his letters to the Corinthians and to those of Thessalonica. We quote 1 Corinthians 15:51-55, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

Dr. C.I. Scofield has pointed out, in the marginal reference of the Scofield Bible, that Paul’s statement “death is swallowed up in victory” is quoted from Isaiah 25:8, and “O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory?” is quoted from Hosea 13:14. If this be true, and we believe it is, then this event wherein some will be raised and some will be changed is a prophesied event and cannot be limited to the body of Christ. While we believe that the body of Christ will be raptured, by the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, and the changing of those saints who are alive on the earth when He comes for His body, we do not believe that the above quotation from 1 Corinthians 15, is to be limited to the rapture of the body. Since it is so definitely linked with the prophecies quoted above from Daniel and Hosea, and since these prophecies point so specifically to the last day, we believe that Paul’s message to the Corinthian believers concerning those that shall be raised and those that shall be changed has to do with the same event that Jesus spoke of when He said, “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Paul said, “For the Lord himself

shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Here we have the dead in Christ raised and the living saints caught up. This is in keeping with the testimony of the prophets, the teachings of Jesus and the words of Paul to the Corinthians.

The First Resurrection

In Revelation, chapter 20, verse 5, we have the words, “This is the first resurrection.” A careful examination of the context of this verse proves that the Holy Spirit is speaking of the resurrection of tribulation saints, who “shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” We believe this company of saints includes those whom John saw “under the altar” crying “with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Revelation 6:9-11) These are those who must die for their testimony during the tribulation period. However, tribulation saints are not the only saints who shall be raised at the first resurrection. Since it is clear that Daniel 12:1-2 points to a resurrection of saved people at the close of the tribulation, and since Revelation 20:4-6 points to the same resurrection, we must conclude that the first resurrection spoken of here includes both old and new testament saints. This resurrection will also include Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their heirs who “died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:8-13). These dead ones shall be raised and shall “come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better

things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:22-24).

We need to remember that this “first resurrection” is unto “Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.” Those who are to be raised in this resurrection shall be raised unto the things promised on a basis of the “new covenant” which was promised according to Jeremiah 31:31-34. It is called the “first resurrection” because it shall come before the resurrection of the unsaved. It will include all the saved dead from Adam to the close of the tribulation period, except those who are members of the church which is Christ’s body. These body saints shall not be raised and changed according to prophecy, but according to that deposit of truth given through Paul and not made known to men of other ages (Colossians 1:24-27). As members of the body of Christ we look forward to the coming of our Saviour who shall raise the sleeping saints and change the living saints after the same fashion that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, but not at the same time of the first resurrection spoken of in Revelation 20:5. Our rapture may take place any moment and it will certainly take place before the tribulation period falls on the earth. The 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24 are determined upon Daniel’s people, Israel, and upon the holy city, Jerusalem, but no part of these 70 weeks are determined upon the body of Christ. Therefore, the 70th week which is yet future is determined upon Israel and the holy city, but not upon us.

The Last Resurrection

A period of one thousand years shall stand between the first resurrection and the last resurrection. The saved shall be raised immediately before the beginning of the millennium and the unsaved shall be raised after the thousand years are finished. We quote Revelation 20:5-6, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

This last resurrection, which is a resurrection of the unsaved unto “shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2), even a res-

urrection unto “damnation” (John 5:28), is vividly described in Revelation 20:11-15, “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY COME

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Revelation 22:17-21).

Here we have the last divine invitation to the thirsty souls of men to come and “take the water of life freely.” The invitation is given through the Holy Spirit and the bride, not the Holy Spirit and the body. All who are willing to hear the invitation and accept the water of life will be privileged to join with the Spirit and the bride in saying, “Come.”

Just as the Holy Spirit is now speaking through the body of Christ, which is the church, He will later speak through the bride of Christ, which will also be His church. The word “church” means an assembly or a company of called-out ones. God’s church is always a company of called-out believers. Man’s church may consist of either believers or unbelievers.

The Holy Spirit refers to God’s church in Acts 7:38 where He speaks of “the church in the wilderness.” He speaks again of God’s church in Matthew 16:18 where He quotes the Lord Jesus, who said, “upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Again we find Him referring to God’s church in Acts 20:28, where He admonishes the elders to “feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.” It is also God’s church which Paul speaks of, through divine inspiration, in Ephesians 1:22-23, where he declares Christ

to be “the head over all things to the church, which is his body.”

After the completion and calling on high of the “church, which is his body,” God will turn His attention to the “churches” or assemblies referred to in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. These seven churches are definitely linked with the kingdom program and with Jesus as the “root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” We quote Revelation 2:26-28, “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.” This helps us to understand the meaning of the Lord Jesus in Revelation 22:16, “I, Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” These references do not fit in with Paul’s message concerning the ministry of the church which is the body of Christ. We are not to overcome and keep a set of works “unto the end.” Our hope of glory guarantees to us the joy of the rapture even before the beginning of the end. That is, we are to be glorified before the beginning of the tribulation which shall mark the end of this age. However, the above verses fit perfectly with the ministry of “the Spirit and the bride” during the tribulation period and up to the very end of the age and the coming of the Lord to set up His kingdom.

As I understand the Word, all who are saved through the ministry of the Spirit and the body during this dispensation are added to the body of Christ, of which He, Himself, is the Head. All who are saved through the ministry of the Spirit and the bride during the tribulation period will be added to the bride of Christ, of which He is the Bridegroom. He will come to take His completed body unto Himself immediately before the beginning of the tribulation, and He will come with His glorified body to take unto Himself His bride at the very close of the tribulation. Both body saints and members of the bride will be glorified and joined to Christ before His crowning day as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Both the body and the bride will reign with Him for a thousand years and will be associated with Him in their respective spheres throughout eternity.

The Bride of Genesis and of Revelation

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:18-24).

The above quotation proves that from the very beginning, the wife has been the same flesh and bone as that of her husband. Adam declared his wife to be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. That is, she was his body; and, in the light of 1 Corinthians 11:3, he was her head.

Since the husband is the head and the wife is the body, it is the scriptural privilege of the husband to love his wife “even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.” Since the wife is the body and the husband is the head, it is the privilege of the wife to look up to her husband and submit herself to him even “as unto the Lord.”

It is the scriptural duty of the husband to nourish and cherish his wife as he does his own flesh, and the wife is scripturally duty-bound to reverence her husband. This truth is clearly brought out in the following quotation from Ephesians 5:21-33—

“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is

the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

The truth set forth in the above quotation from Ephesians 5:21-33 does not state that the church is the wife and that Christ is the husband. The truth is that Christ loved His body (the Church) and that a husband ought to love his body (his wife). The Holy Spirit is here emphasizing the fact that Christ has a church which is just as definitely His body as the wife is the body of her husband.

The bride in Genesis 2:18-24 led the man into the sin that expelled him from the Garden of Eden, but in Revelation chapter 22, the bride is giving forth the invitation to “every man” that will hear to enter the Garden of Paradise.

In Genesis 2:18, God said, “I will make him an help meet for him,” and in Revelation 21:9, He said, “I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” In these, the first and the last, “I wills” of the Bible, God sets forth the tender relationship that exists between those that He joins together.

Only those who are willing to sit where Mary sat (Luke 10:39) will ever know and enjoy the full meaning of God’s great

lessons concerning Christ and His body and Christ and His bride. These two companies of saints have similar, yet distinctly different hopes and callings. The body is called to testify to the glorious gospel of the grace of God, and the bride will witness to the kingdom gospel of the grace of God. The body waits for His glorious appearing before the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel (Philippians 3:20-21), and the bride will be looking for His glorious appearing when the last trump shall sound at the close of the 70th week of Daniel (Revelation 11:15-19).

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

