

WHAT IS COMING?

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www.MaranathaMedia.com.au

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SIGNS PUBLISHING COMPANY

Warburton, Victoria, Australia

1937

PREFACE

IN these remarkable times, when the whole world seems out of joint, the question may well be asked, "What is coming?" The nations of the earth have just passed through the fires of the greatest war of all history, and yet these fires have not had, upon men's hearts, the cleansing and purifying effect that it was at first hoped they would have. Materialism is still the shrine at which the great majority worship. The old feuds and hatreds still exist in the hearts of the nations, and the sowing of these seeds of hate and strife must inevitably bring forth a harvest after their kind. Although the Washington Treaty has curtailed, for the time being, the construction of battleships, yet it has by no means destroyed rivalry in armaments or removed international suspicions or the fear of war. Curtailing their construction of battleships, the nations are now concentrating on 10,000-ton cruisers, swift and powerful destroyers, and large submarines.

In the East, and among the dark-skinned races of the earth, there are many signs that are producing disquietude. In the space of about seventy years, Japan has grown from a medieval kingdom into a mighty, modern nation. The centre of naval gravity, which once lay in the North Sea, has now swung to the Pacific Ocean. Elsewhere the East is awakening. The brown man is now demanding racial equality with the white; and the black man is also beginning to put forth similar claims. This awakening is not alone confined to heathen nations, but every one competent to judge declares that a new life has come into Islam, which is now dreaming dreams of conquest and greatness that do not bid fair for the peace of the world.

The awakening of the nations of the East is a prelude to the Armageddon of which the Scriptures speak. In more civilized lands the spirit of intolerance is abroad. There is a wrongful and increasing clamor for religious laws, and this is especially marked in the New World. This is a puissant and an insidious menace to liberty, and all should be warned of the danger. It is of the very greatest importance that all should be aware of the clear and emphatic warnings that Bible prophecy gives in the matter, and all should understand the principles involved.

These and other matters of the greatest moment are considered in the following pages by the author, Mr. Carlyle B. Haynes. Mr. Haynes is a well-known author and successful preacher and evangelist, and he brings the light of the Word of God to bear upon his subject. He points out what is coming, and what the outcome of things will be. He clearly demonstrates the truthfulness of the prophetic Word. He points out the wonderful accuracy with which the sure Word of prophecy has been fulfilled in the past, and the conclusion is inescapable that the prophetic Word must likewise prove true in the future. The Word of the infinite God cannot fail. In these days of stress and tumult, of darkness and perplexity, when men's hearts are "failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth," the words of the Apostle Peter should never be lost sight of: "We have also a more sure Word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1: 19.

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1. A New Order of Things

WE are in the grip of stupendous events. Since the beginning of the Great War in Europe the world has been staggering through the blackest and most terrible age of all its long history since the Deluge. The old order of things has passed away, and we have entered a new era in the history of the human race. A new page has been turned, a page which never will be turned back. We can never return to the conditions which prevailed before the war.

Today we are facing a new order of things. And we do not yet know what it will be. There are possibilities in each new day that are appalling. Tremendous movements are now taking place overnight which heretofore have been stretched over generations. A new world is in the making.

Nothing is sure or certain as far as human wisdom can discern. Nothing is substantial. That upon which we have built our civilization may be swept away overnight. We may expect anything and be certain of nothing.

Beneath the shifting shadows forecast by events to come, many an anxious watcher stands, peering into the gloom-curtained future, seeking to penetrate its mists.

A vague impression has taken hold of men everywhere that some great event lies just in the future, whether for good or ill they do not know. And all the anticipations of men are gilded or clouded by this impression of coming good or ill. We hear voices on every side each proclaiming its own views of the future in tones poetic, oracular, prophetic, sublime, or ridiculous.

VARIOUS EXPECTATIONS

AN unparalleled era of feverish preparation for war is expected by many, resulting in a cataclysm far surpassing all wars which have ever been known before. Many others, however, are proclaiming that the end of war for all time has been reached, and that an era of permanent peace is beginning.

And among those who are hoping for lasting peace, there is great difference of opinion as to how this peace is to be secured and maintained. Some look for the doom of monarchies and the end of kings, and for a rebirth of nations in socialistic swaddling clothes.

Still others are looking for an age of law and arbitration to succeed the days of strife, and for the establishment of a great international supreme court. A disbanding of armies and dismantling of navies is coming, in the opinion of many, as a result of worldwide acceptance of the principles of the gospel of Christ.

There are others who believe with William Jennings Bryan that a time is coming when "the nations will place their trust in love, the weapon for which there is no shield; in love, that suffers long and is kind; in love, that is not easily provoked, that bears all things, believeth all things, endures all things; in love, which, though despised as weakness by the worshippers of Mars, abides when all else fails."

Others look for an age of federation, and above all for the great Federation of the World, with its police force consisting of the federated armies and navies of the world.

A CHART OF THE FUTURE

AMID this tumultuous babble of ten thousand foretelling tongues, it is well for us to go to an Authority which can make known the end from the beginning. While the immediate future may look dark and forbidding, it is known to God. "He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him!"

"And He reveals the deep and secret things." The God of truth has spoken, and spoken on this very subject of the future. By inspiration of the mighty God His servants have been given knowledge and understanding. The veil of the future has been drawn aside and its secrets revealed by men who have spoken as "they were moved by the Holy Ghost!"

To the Christian pilgrims who are journeying through this world to reach the kingdom of God it is comforting to know that God has charted the future, and that by the study of this divine chart they may become acquainted with all the great world movements which are yet to come to pass. God has not left His faithful servants in darkness with regard to those things which are coming upon the earth, nor of those things which are even now taking place in heaven. In the prophecies of the Bible He has outlined the rise and fall, not only of the nations of the past, but also of the nations of the present, and has plainly foretold their ultimate destiny.

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At the same time God has made it plain in the prophecies of His Word that just as in this present generation we are witnessing on earth some of the mightiest movements of all history, so in heaven there is taking place today the most important events in all the history of God's dealings with the human family.

And these great events in heaven are preparatory to the "kingdoms of this world" becoming "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

What then is coming? The restless tumult which today is shaking the world is only the climax of the ceaseless din of war, commotion, and strife, out of which for centuries past nations have risen, lingered out a more or less brief existence, and passed away only to give place to others.

HUMAN HOPES HAVE FAILED

THROUGH all time ship after ship of state has gone forth, freighted with human hopes, only to be eaten by worms, stranded on sandbars, foundered in gales, broken on reefs, or sunk in collisions, until the shore of time is strewn with their shattered hulks.

Much as men have desired peace and prosperity, their desires have not been fulfilled. Human projects have failed, human hopes have proved phantoms, human promises have turned out falsehoods. All that wisdom, genius, education, civilization, and philanthropy have accomplished still leaves the whole head faint and the whole heart sick. And the ten thousand panaceas of men have brought no relief.

Again, what is coming? Are we to go on, and on, and on, in this ceaseless course of human failure and woe? Is the sound of war and strife to be perpetual? Will the discord never end? Shall earth never find rest? What is the destiny of the world and of the human race?

A REVOLT AGAINST DIVINE GOVERNMENT

How big these questions are with importance! Compressed within them is the world-wide anxiety of six thousand years. Why all this long-continued struggle? Why this never-ceasing tumult and confusion?

The answer is brief, simple, and truthful, and is found in the statement: "The Lord has a controversy with the nations." Jeremiah 25:31.

And we are not left to vague conjecture and speculation regarding the reason for this controversy. It is a controversy between right and wrong. The prophet Hosea thus states it:-

"Hear the word of the Lord, you children, of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touches blood." Hosea 4: 1, 2.

Sin, then, is the cause of the controversy between God and man. The transgression which first interrupted the harmony which existed between the Creator and His creatures brought a curse upon this revolted province of the divine dominions, and a curse upon the rebellious race. And that curse has continued, and has been the cause of all the woe, the unrest, and the death, both of nations and men.

From the beginning until now, as a result of sin, men have sat in darkness; not because it was necessary, but because they willed it so. Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light.

True, men have advanced, but not toward God. They have progressed, but not in righteousness. They have become wise, but in their own conceits.

Not only individuals, but nations, have been rebellious. And as a result of sin, there is "distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

2. Prophetic Symbols

DURING recent years the educational world has discovered that one of the very best methods of imparting information and giving instruction is that of teaching by object lessons, and this method has now been adopted very widely in the public school system in various countries. Thousands of years ago God knew the value and benefits of this method and used it largely in the writing of the Bible, especially its prophetic parts.

It is this method which is employed by the Lord in the prophecy which follows.

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“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.” Daniel 7: 1-4.

It is just such prophecies as this which bring perplexity to the heart of many Bible students. As they read, they say to themselves: “What a strange dream; what can it possibly mean?” And they decide that the Bible is one of the most peculiar and most difficult books in the world. Many, coming face to face with such a prophecy for the first time, and not finding an explanation at once, give up trying to understand its meaning. Many conclude it has no meaning, and was never intended to be understood. And when they read through the Bible again they avoid going over these prophecies which are so rich in instruction and wisdom for the people of God today. Undoubtedly the two most neglected books in the Bible are those of Daniel and the Revelation, the books which are filled with prophetic symbols of beasts, horns, wings, many headed monsters and their strange doings.

THE USE OF SYMBOLS

BUT when the same persons pick up the daily paper and see similar things portrayed there in the form of cartoons, they have no difficulty in understanding the meaning. We are accustomed to seeing in the daily press a method of representation similar to that which we find in the above verses, so accustomed indeed that we grasp the meaning by a mere glance.

A modern cartoon in which a lion is portrayed in a certain relation to an eagle would be understood at once by all who saw it. They would understand that the lion represents Great Britain and the eagle represents the United States. A bear in the cartoons of the day would be understood to represent Russia; a great yellow dragon would be recognized as the symbol of China; a donkey (in America), as the symbol of the Democratic Party, and an elephant of the Republican Party; and so on through a long list of symbols. Very few would have any difficulty in grasping the meaning of this symbolism. Its use is widespread throughout the world today.

OF GREAT VALUE

AND consider the value of this method. The writer can remember the cartoons of the war between Russia and Japan. Russia was represented by a great shaggy bear, and often-times Japan was represented by a little bull-dog. And the little bull-dog led the bear a stern and wearing chase through those cartoons. Very often one could get a better idea of the actual situation in the war between these two Powers by a mere glance at the front-page cartoon, than he could by reading columns of the details of battles. Thus this method conveys in an instant what other methods would take a much longer time to convey.

This is evidently the reason why the Lord employs this method in the prophecies. By it He can impart to men a great amount of truth in a very small compass. If, all who study the Bible could get this thought clearly in their minds it would make plain many things which they have considered unaccountable in these prophecies, and they would find the prophetic parts of the Bible rich and fruitful fields of study in which they would take the keenest delight.

In the chapter from which we have quoted-the seventh chapter of Daniel-God has told the whole history of the world from the time of Daniel to the end of time, in eight verses. In these verses He has covered the history of the four great empires of the world, history which human historians take whole libraries to tell, and God has told it so well in the pictures that He has left out no important thing.

HISTORY IN ADVANCE

AND, it must be remembered, this is history in advance. God described, in these prophecies, the course of these empires before some of them existed. Here is outlined the origin, the work, and the fall of the world’s great empires before these empires existed. Surely, if this is done correctly, all must confess that only the One who knows the end from the beginning could possibly have caused these prophecies to be written. Jehovah, the God of heaven, to whose glance all the future is as open as the past, caused these

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things to pass before the mind of Daniel in holy vision, and they were written for our comfort and learning who, in this age of the world, are to see their complete fulfillment.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN BEST COMMENTATOR

THAT which is hidden and mysterious in one part of the Bible is sure to be explain,-d in another part. Let us notice the meaning of the symbols used in the passage which has been quoted, and notice also how completely the Bible is its own best commentator, how fully it explains itself.

In the above passage we have five symbols: the wind the sea, the beasts, the lion, and the wings.

Wind in symbolic prophecy represents war, strife, commotion, bloodshed. This could be gathered from the following verse:-

“Thus said the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth.” Jeremiah 25:32, 33.

Here bloodshed and death are said to be caused by “a great whirlwind,” or a great war, for the thirty first verse of the chapter says that those who are thus slain are given “to the sword.” That wind represents wars is again evident from the fact that in this chapter - the seventh of Daniel-four great kingdoms arise as the result of winds beating upon the sea; and those who have read history know that it is as a consequence of war that most of the nations of the earth have arisen. Wind, then, in prophecy, is a symbol of war.

The sea, or water, is a symbol of the people, nations, and multitudes of the earth. This is clearly stated in the Bible as follows:

“And he said unto me, The waters which thou saw, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17: 15.

FOUR GREAT KINGDOMS

THE four great beasts which Daniel saw in the vision represent four, nations or kingdoms, which were to come into existence in the world. It is thus stated by the angel who explains the vision to the prophet:

“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [or kingdoms, see verse 23], which shall arise out of the earth.” Daniel 7: 17.

Thus it is plain that this prophecy which is given in figurative language can be stated literally as follows:

“I saw in my vision by night, and behold, as a result of great wars among the people and nations of the earth, four great kingdoms arose, different one from another.”

BABYLON THE LION

THE first of these kingdoms is represented by, the symbol of a lion. By a study of other passages which mention this same symbol we shall arrive at its meaning. Thus we read in Jeremiah:

“The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.” Jeremiah 4: 7.

Here the lion is called “the destroyer of the Gentiles.” The land of the kingdom of Judah was to be made desolate by this destroyer, and its cities laid waste, and their inhabitants removed. Jeremiah says:

For thus said the Lord; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab. Jeremiah 48: 40.

This lion, then, which is to destroy the cities of Judah, is to fly as an eagle, or have eagle’s wings. Obviously this is the very lion which Daniel saw in vision. And now Jeremiah, speaking again of his flying as an eagle, gives us the name of this lion:-

Behold, he shall come up and fly as an eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah. Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall smite. Jeremiah 49: 22, 28.

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From these passages it is plain that the lion is a symbol of Babylon, especially under Nebuchadnezzar. This is the power which was the destroyer of the Gentiles, which made desolate the land of Judah, and laid waste its cities, including Jerusalem, and took the Jews into captivity. In fact Daniel was one of these captives at the very time he was given this prophecy. The eagles wings represent the rapidity with which Babylon conquered its enemies, the nations which fought against it. It spread its wings over them all until all the kingdoms of the ancient world were brought under subjection to Babylon.

In the vision Daniel saw a change come over the lion. Its wings were plucked. That is, the time came in its history when it no longer flew over the nations in conquest. It was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand on its feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar the kingdom became decadent. Its lion-heartedness disappeared and it was given the timid and fearful heart of a man. In the story of Belshazzar's feast we see an indication of the luxury and vice that presaged the overthrow of the nation.

MEDO-PERSIA THE BEAR

AND behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. Daniel 7: 5.

Babylon fell in 538 BC and it was succeeded by its conqueror. The bear represents this empire, the empire of Medo-Persia. The two elements of this kingdom—the Medes and the Persians—are represented by the bear raising itself up on one side, showing that one element was higher than the other. This was true, the Persian element predominating. The three ribs in its mouth undoubtedly refer to the three kingdoms of Babylon, Lydia and Egypt, which were the principal conquests of the Persian monarchs.

GREECE THE LEOPARD

AFTER this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; and the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. Verse 6.

Medo-Persia was overthrown in three great battles by Alexander the Great. The battles of Granicus in 334 BC, the battle of Issus in 333 BC and the battle of Arbela in 331 BC. The leopard represents Greece. The wings on its back represent the unparalleled rapidity with which Greece made its conquests under Alexander, who marched his armies fifty-one hundred miles in eight years, and brought all the kingdoms of the ancient world under his sway. In 323 BC, not long after his conquest of the great empire of Media-Persia, Alexander died in Babylon in a drunken debauch. His kingdom maintained its unity but a short time after his death, and by 301 BC it was divided among his four leading generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. These divisions are represented by the four heads of the leopard beast. Cassander ruled over the kingdom of the west, comprising Greece and Macedon. Lysimachus over the kingdom of the north, comprising Thrace and some provinces in Asia Minor. Seleucus over the kingdom of the east, comprising Syria and the provinces to the east of Palestine. Ptolemy over the kingdom of the south, comprising of Egypt, Libya, Arabia, and Palestine.

ROME THE TERRIBLE BEAST

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. Verse 7.

The divisions of Greece, noted above, were all overthrown and absorbed by Rome. The terrible ten horned beast fitly represents Rome, for this empire above all others, was dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong.

THE TEN KINGDOMS

THE ten horns of this beast are said by the angel in verse twenty-four to represent ten kingdoms. Ten kingdoms were to come out of Rome. This was fulfilled in the establishment on the territory of Western Rome between the years AD 351 and AD 476, of the kingdoms of the Allemanni, the Franks, the

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Suevi, the Burgundians, the Vandals, the Anglo-Saxons, the Visigoths, the Ostrogoths, the Heruli and the Lombards. And from that until now this tenfold division has persistently dominated the history of the territory once occupied by Western Rome. Changes, it is true, there have been, resulting from war and from the more or less temporary alliances which have been formed through the centuries; but through all the changes of the past this tenfold division has persisted, even to the outcome of the recent war.

ANOTHER 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. Verse 8.

Another Power was to arise in the territory of Rome, causing the fall of three of the ten kingdoms. By the angel this is explained as follows:-

And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Verses 24-26.

Nearly all Protestant commentators are agreed that this little horn symbol can refer only to the development in Rome of the great ecclesiastical power of the Papacy, or Roman Catholic Church, if it be true, and can be shown, that all the specifications of this passage of Scripture are met only in the growth and work of the papal power, no other conclusion is tenable.

In the church of Rome, as in all churches, there are to be found many noble, God-fearing, sincere Christians, to the best of their knowledge and ability walking in all the light they have received. Their love for truth will, we trust, lead them with us to careful and prayerful consideration of the facts here set forth.

God has here in His prophetic Word presented a picture of a great power, opposing His people and His truth. He has told us when and where it would appear, how long it would continue, and has given us many other details of the work it would do. Not with bitterness, but only in the spirit of candor, do we here compare this forecast with the indisputable facts of history regarding the papal power.

THE TIME OF APPEARANCE

“THE ten horns,” as we have seen, are “ten kings that shall arise.” The power represented by the little horns is to arise “after them,” and the overthrow of these kingdoms is to follow. We must therefore look for the events that mark the mature manifestation of this world power.

In AD 483 the celebrated Justinian became the emperor of Eastern Rome. He endeavored to bring the entire empire, both east and west, under his own dominion, and in executing this purpose he sent his armies against the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths. The Heruli fell in 493, the Vandals in 534, and the Ostrogoths were compelled to withdraw in defeat from Rome in 538, and were later entirely overwhelmed.

In connection with Justinian’s attempt to unite the whole empire under himself, he also declared it to be his purpose to unite all men in one common faith, and subject them to the bishop of Rome. This purpose he set forth in a flattering letter to the pope in 533, which was clothed with all the authority of an official decree, in which the pope was styled, “head of all the holy churches.” Out of this decree, and a former decree which had preceded it by thirty years, developed all the power which in later years was wielded with such terrible effect by the Papacy.

This former decree was passed by an ecclesiastical council in 503, and this claimed for the bishop of Rome the office, title, and power of “vicar of God,” declaring that as such he could not be judged by a human tribunal. This decree received apparent confirmation in the military victory of Clovis, with his hosts of Franks, in 508. At this point begins the 1290-year prophecy referred to in Daniel 12: 11, which ended at the same time as the 1260-year prophecy of Daniel 7: 25.

In the same manner the decree of Justinian of 533, which went beyond the decree of 503, inasmuch as this really involved a recognition on the part of the state of the claim which had been advanced by the church, was given apparent confirmation in the victory of the armies of the empire in 538 when the Ostrogoths were compelled to withdraw defeated from Rome. And from this point begins the 1260-year

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period during which the power of the Papacy, growing out of these two decrees, was to increase until it became supreme, and then diminish until an apparent death stroke was administered to it in 1798.

Having thus gained the support of the empire to its pretensions and claims, the stage was fully set, and we behold the Papacy riding forth in triumph to the place ascribed to her in the prophecy.

Thus history shows the authority of the Papacy to have become established as a result of the ecclesiastical decree of 503 and the governmental decree of 533, both of which were followed by military victory, the first in 508, the second in 538, from which latter date we are warranted in dating the 1260-year period of papal supremacy.

LOCATION OF THE HORN

THE "little horn" came out of the fourth beast, and among the ten horns. So its prototype must be an outgrowth of Rome, and arise among the ten kingdoms. The very name by which the Papacy is known to the world today—the Roman Catholic Church, is her own testimony to the fact that her power is a perpetuation of the power of the old Roman Empire. The seat of the government of Rome is her capital. The language of Rome is the official language of her ritual. The very title of the pope, Pontifex Maximus, is a perpetuation of the title of the old Roman emperors, who combined in their person supreme authority in matters both civil and ecclesiastic. The Papacy, and no other power than that of the Papacy, is left of the once vast power wielded by Rome, symbolized by the fourth beast.

"DIVERSE FROM THE FIRST"

THE Papacy was diverse from the first ten kingdoms, in that it was a religious power claiming dominion over both temporal and spiritual affairs of all kingdoms. It was a union of church and state with the state supreme.

"GREAT WORDS AGAINST THE MOST HIGH"

THE very essence of the papal claim is that the pope is the vicar of Christ on earth, His representative, vested with the same power and authority that Christ Himself would manifest were He here in person, and that the priesthood of that church have the very power of Christ. This claim is clearly and repeatedly made by Catholics. One writer thus declares:-

As bishops and priests are as certain interpreters and heralds of God, who in His name teach men the divine law and the precepts of life, and are the representatives on earth of God Himself, it is clear that their function is such that none greater can be conceived; wherefore they are justly called not only "angels" (Malachi 2: 7), but also "gods" (Psalm 82: 6), holding as they do amongst us the power and authority of the immortal God. But although they at all times held a most exalted dignity, yet the priests of the new testament far excel all the others in honor; for the power of consecrating and offering the body and blood of our Lord, and of remitting sins, which has been conferred on them, transcends human reason and intelligence: still less can there be found on earth anything equal and like to it. — "Catechism of the Council of Trent," Dublin, page 275.

By the papal system mortal men are placed as mediators in the place of Christ, who is declared by Scripture to be the only mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5); the divine prerogative of forgiving sins is assumed by men, themselves sinful and needing forgiveness; the claim to infallibility in matters of conscience and doctrine is claimed by erring men.

Now it is evident that either these alleged powers must be truly, as all devout Catholics believe, by divine appointment, or else these words and claims, instead of being voiced by Jehovah, are falsely put forth by men, and thereby constitute "great words against the Most High." This alternative is thus stated by the great writer, John Henry Newman, who declares that if these claims are unwarranted.

Here is an association which professes to take His (Christ's) place without warrant. It comes forward instead of Christ and for Him, it speaks for Him, it develops His words, it suspends His appointments; it grants dispensation in matters of positive duty; it professes to minister grace; it absolves from sin; and all this of its own authority. Is it not henceforth according to the very force of the word "Antichrist"? He who speaks for Christ must either be His true ambassador or Antichrist. . . . There is no

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medium between a Vice-Christ and Antichrist, From "The Protestant Idea of Antichrist," an article in the British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review, October, 1840, pages 430-432.

The fact that the popes of Rome have assumed titles and prerogatives of Deity, is easily verified by reading their own statements. Innocent III (in a passage which forms part of the Roman Canon law) says:-

"The pope represents not a mere man, but a true God on earth." [1]

And Cardinal Bellarmine the great Catholic theologian declares.

"All the names which are attributed to Christ in Scripture, implying His supremacy over the church are also attributed to the pope." [2]

Such bold assumptions, made by none other than the Papacy, again point to that power as the fulfillment of the little horn "that spoke very great things!" Daniel 7: 20

[1] Jurus Decretal. D. Gregor. Pap. IX lib. i. de tranal. Epise. tit. 7. c 3. Corp. Canon. ed. Lugd. 1624, tom. ii. Decretal. col. 217.

[2] De Council, auct. ii 17. Op. ed. Colossians Agripp. 1619, tom. ii, column 95

"SHALL WEAR OUT THE SAINTS"

THAT the Papacy has opposed and persecuted even unto death those whom she termed heretics, is a fact so well known that it needs hardly more than passing mention. In doing thus, this alleged representative has departed far from her great Exemplar who said: "My kingdom is not of this world," and who declared of His mission to earth: "If any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not." John 18:36; 12:47.

In its attempt to rise to power, the Papacy made war against every opposing agency, whether political or ecclesiastical. In the period of its supremacy tens of thousands of the followers of Christ were put to death, often for no greater crime than the reading of the blessed Bible. One writer thus describes these persecutions:-

"Under these bloody maxims, those persecutions were on, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries almost to the present day, which stand out on the page of history. After the signal of open martyrdom had been given in the canons of Orleans, there followed the extirpation of the Albigenses under the form of a crusade, the establishment of the Inquisition, the cruel attempts to extinguish the Waldenses, the martyrdoms, of the Lollards, the cruel wars to exterminate the Bohemians, the burning of Huss and Jerome, and multitudes of other confessors, before the Reformation; and afterwards, the ferocious cruelties practiced in the Netherlands, the martyrdoms of Queen Mary's reign, the extinction by fire and sword of the Reformation in Spain and Italy, by fraud and open persecution in Poland, the massacre of Bartholomew, the persecution of the Huguenots by the League, the extirpation of the Vaudois, and all the cruelties and prejudices connected with the revocation of the edict of Nantes. These are the more open and conspicuous facts which explain the prophecy, besides the slow and secret murders of the holy tribunal of the Inquisition." "The First Two Visions of Daniel," by T. R. Birks, M.A., London, 1845, pages 248, 249.

It is sometimes urged in defense of the Catholic Church that she should not be held responsible for these persecutions, as it was the spirit of those unenlightened times, and that others, when they had it in their power, persecuted the Catholics in their turn. There is, indeed, some truth to this. Other religious bodies have persecuted, but with this vital difference, that these churches, today disavow, condemn, and detest their former action; while the Papacy alone makes the persecution of heretics a part of her doctrine. In an editorial in one of the leading Catholic journals in the United States, occur the following plain admissions:

The church has persecuted. Only a tyro in church history will deny that. . . . One hundred and fifty years after Constantine the Donatists were persecuted, and sometimes put to death. . . . Protestants were persecuted in France and Spain with the full approval of the church authorities. We have always defended the persecution of the Huguenots, and the Spanish Inquisition. Wherever and whenever there is honest Catholicity there will be a clear distinction drawn between truth and error, and Catholicity and all forms of error. When she thinks it good to use physical force, she will use it-The Western Watchman (Roman Catholic), St. Louis, December 24, 1908.

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ATTEMPTED TO CHANGE THE LAW

THE Papacy has attempted “to change times and laws.” This points directly to the attempted change of the Sabbath. The testimony to prove this, and the confession of the Roman Church, will be found presented in detail in the author’s work, “The Christian Sabbath; Is It Saturday or Sunday? The change which this Roman power was to attempt in the law of God was with reference to time. The prophecy is that he will “think to change times and laws,” or the time in the law. There is but one reference to time in the law of God, and that is contained in the fourth commandment, the Sabbath commandment. Here, then, is a definite prediction that the Roman Church would seek to change the Sabbath commandment.

And just this has been attempted by the Roman Church. Notice again the statement of the prophecy, “And think to change times and laws.” The Papacy was to make the attempt to change the Sabbath, “think” to change it; but the change has not actually been made. The Sabbath has not really been changed. The seventh day is just as much the Sabbath today as it ever was. What has been changed is the observance of the people who have turned away from the Sabbath of Jehovah to the Sabbath of the Papacy.

It was the Roman Church which substituted the observance of Sunday for the observance of the Sabbath of the Lord, which is the seventh day. The first day has now taken the place of the seventh day in the minds of the majority of Christians, but the only authority for the observance of the first day is the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. It has no sanction at all in the Bible. God never commanded the first day to be kept, Christ never commanded it, inspired men never commanded it. Jesus never observed the first day, and His apostles never observed it. They observed the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week. The change was brought about by the Roman Church and has been handed down through the centuries, and therefore the Sunday institution has no connection with Christianity, but was originated in that system which is dealt with in the prophecy we are now studying. This substitution for the true Sabbath, Sunday observance, should be discarded today by every follower of the Lord Jesus; and the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week, observed instead.

THE 1260 YEARS

THE time during which the Papacy would have power to work its will with the saints, the times, and the law of God is next pointed out in the prophecies “And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” In other prophecies regarding the Papacy this period of time is spoken of in the following ways -

“A time, and times, and half a time.” Revelation 12: 14.

“Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.” Revelation 13:5.

See also Revelation 11: 2.

“A thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Revelation 12: 6.

A “time” in prophecy is the same as a year. (See Daniel 11:13, margin, and Revised Version.) “Time and times and the dividing of time” would be three years and a half. Three years and a half would be forty-two months, the same period mentioned in Revelation 13: 5. In prophetic reckoning the old calendar year, the ecclesiastic year of the Jews, or twelve months of thirty days each, is used. Forty-two months of thirty days each is 1260 days, and three and one-half years of 360 days each is 1260 days. As each day represents a year (Ezekiel 4:6), this long period, the end of which was to mark the limit of the time of the supremacy of the Papacy over the saints, the times, and the law of God would therefore be 1260 years.

The beginning of this time is marked by a series of events, beginning with the decree of 503, including the decree of 533, by which the pope was recognized as “head of all the holy churches,” and closing with the defeat of the Ostrogoths in 538. From this year the long period of papal supremacy, reaching to the end of 1260 years, begins. Adding 1260 years to this date, 538, we are brought to 1798 as the terminal period of papal supremacy, and the end of the 1260 years.

The close of this period is marked by events stretching from 1793, when France renounced the Roman Church, and turned its back on religion, and culminating in 1798, when a French army, under Berthier, entered Rome, a Roman republic was proclaimed, the pope was made a prisoner and exiled into France, where he died the following year. Just as the power of the Papacy grew out of the events of 503 to 508, and 533 to 538, so the diminishing of the Papacy beginning with the Protestant Reformation, was given great impetus by the establishment of the American republic, and culminated in the events of the

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French Revolution in 1798, which resulted in the overthrow of the pope in that year. Thus the prophecy has been exactly fulfilled.

It would be natural to expect, if the Papacy was to have power over the laws of God until 1798, that after that time the law of God, and especially the Sabbath, against which the Papacy has chiefly worked, would again be set before the world in their true light. And this is true. There is a special message being presented to the world at this time, one of the prominent features of which is obedience to God in the matter of Sabbath reform.

Before long the dominion of the Papacy will be completely taken away from it.

The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Daniel 7: 26.

And then the dominion of the earth will be given to the people of God, and the everlasting kingdom of Christ will be set up.

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. Daniel 7: 27.

Thus the prophecy ends with the assurance that Christ's kingdom is near at hand. It points forward to that time when God's people, so long without a kingdom of their own, will at last enter into the kingdom prepared for them, holding it in everlasting possession. Let the reader turn his eyes to that same period, and through the grace of Christ, by obedience, bring his life into harmony with the law of God, that he "may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14.

3. The Ram, the Goat, and the Little Horn

IN the eighth and ninth chapter of Daniel is found a line of prophecy, once more outlining in symbols the history of the world, and bringing out further details of the great universal kingdoms, especially of Rome. In the light of what we have learned of the interpretation of the beasts of the seventh chapter, an understanding of this next line of prophecy, in which the same kingdoms are foretold, is not difficult.

This eighth chapter opens with a description of-

"A ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great." Verses 3, 4.

The student of the prophecies is not left to theorize regarding the identity of the power represented by this symbol. The angel Gabriel clearly gives this information to Daniel, and it is as follows:

"The ram which thou saw having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." Verse 20.

The ram represents the empire of Medo-Persia. The two horns represent the two elements in the empire, the Medes and the Persians. The Persians became the stronger element in the later history of the empire, and this fact is represented by the statement that "the higher came up last." The directions in which the prophet saw the ram pushing represent the directions of its conquests, and he pushed these conquests until there was no power that could stand before him.

THE EMPIRE OF GREECE

THEN another empire is represented to Daniel:-

"And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven." Verses 5-8.

This, too, was explained by the angel Gabriel:

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“And the rough goat is the king of Greece: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.” Verses 21, 22.

The goat is a symbol of the empire of Greece. The great horn represented Alexander the Great, the first king of united Greece. Its struggle with the ram represents the war between Greece and Medo-Persia by which the latter was completely overthrown. The four horns represent the four divisions into which the empire of Greece was divided after the death of Alexander. These four divisions were the kingdom of the west, ruled by Cassander; the kingdom of the north, ruled by Lysimachus; the kingdom of the east, ruled by Seleucus; and the kingdom of the south, ruled by Ptolemy.

ROME PAGAN AND PAPAL

AND still another empire is shown to the prophet:

“And out of one of them [the four horns] came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. 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 practiced and prospered.” Verses 9-12.

And of this power which was to succeed Greece, and become “exceeding great,” the angel gives this explanation:

“And in the latter time of their kingdom [that of the four horns], 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 practice, 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.” Verses 23-25.

This power, immediately following as it does the kingdom of Greece, can be none other than Rome. And inasmuch as the little horn is brought to view as a great power in opposition to God and His people and His truth, it must include also papal Rome, which we have seen brought to view in the preceding prophecy coming out of and following the Roman Empire. This is further shown by the statement that the little horn symbol carries on its awful work until it is “broken without hands” - at the coming of Christ.

The marked characteristic of this power, like that of the horn on the fourth beast of Daniel seven, is its daring assumption of divine prerogatives. Not content with having “waxed great, even to the host of heaven” - the people of God; and of having cast down to the ground and stamped upon “some of the host, and of the stars” - leaders of God’s people; it dares to magnify itself, “even to the Prince of the host” Christ Himself.

This the empire of Rome did in its persecution of the followers of Jesus, and, through Pilate, crucifying the Son of God. And this the Roman Church did through their persecution of the Christians, and by putting forward the claim that the pope of Rome is the vicar of Christ, His representative in the earth, and endowed with all the power of Jesus Himself.

The height of daring, however, is foretold in the expression that this power would take away from Christ the “daily sacrifice,” and that it would cast down “the place of His sanctuary.”

The special work of Jesus, in His relation to “sacrifice” and to the “sanctuary” is in behalf of fallen men, as their great High Priest, ministering pardon and grace to the sinner. It is the privilege of every man to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy.”

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4: 15.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1: 9.

The privilege of a personal and intimate relationship to Christ is the most precious heritage of His followers.

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1: 3.

What greater affront could be offered to the Son of God than to hide from men this great privilege of access to Christ, and lead them to look for pardon and grace to their fellow-men? Yet this is what has

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been done by that system which directs its followers to confess their sins to a fellow mortal, and to receive from a priest through the confessional the words, "Ego te absolvo." Is not this taking away from Christ His mediation in behalf of man?

The sanctuary in which Christ ministers in behalf of men is in heaven. Hebrews 4: 14; 8: 1. But the ministry to which men are taught to look for salvation is altogether on earth. It is taught that-

The real presence of our divine Lord in the blessed Eucharist, makes every Catholic church a tabernacle [a sanctuary] of the Most High. The True Voice (Roman Catholic), Omaha, Nebraska, April 18, 1913.

Is not this a "casting down" to the earth of the place of Christ's sanctuary?

UNDER THE PRETENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

BUT we should not expect that Rome would openly Oppose Christ and His truth. "Through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand." Her opposition to the truth would be done under the pretence of Christianity. Professedly Christian, she would yet oppose true Christianity. Under the cloak of teaching and defending the truth of the gospel, she would cast that truth down to the ground. Under the claim of being the true church of Christ, she would attack and persecute God's people to the death. God calls the name of this system "Mystery," something that has a false appearance, which does not manifest its true self to the world, which pretends to be what it is not, and hides its true character under an outward appearance of great sanctity.

The Roman Church meets these expectations in every particular. During the growth of this power, the pure unadulterated truth of God nearly disappeared from the earth, and in its place there appeared, claiming to be the very gospel itself, this false and spurious system. Instead of being the gospel, this was but a perpetuation, with Christian nomenclature, of the essence of the paganism of the ancient Roman Empire, which in turn received the system from Babylon. In substantiation of this statement, we again give the words of the noted Catholic writer, John Henry Newman:

"We are told in various ways by Eusebius, that Constantine in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen, transferred into it the outward ornaments to which they had been accustomed in their own. . . . The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; votive offerings on recovery from illness; holy water, asylums; holy days and seasons, use of calendars, processions, blessings on the fields; sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure, the ring in marriage, turning to the east, images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant, and the Kyrie eleison, are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the church." An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine," pages 372, 373.

And paganism from which all these practices were received into the church, was but Satan's counterfeit of the worship of Jehovah-for the true faith a substitution that would satisfy the normal demand of men for worship, without changing their hearts. So in his warfare upon the church of Christ, Satan has worked through a great system which, professing to be the representative of Christ, has perpetuated this pagan counterfeit of the true gospel, adapting it to the gospel dispensation. As one writer says:

"Romanism is the same perversion of Christianity that paganism was of patriarchal truth, and its false Christ is morally identical with the false Christ of paganism." - "The False Christ," by J. Garnier, London, 1900, page 104.

And let it be noticed that in the doing of all this work against Christ and against His people and against His truth and His sanctuary, this power will "prosper." "His power shall be mighty, . . . and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and holy people!" Verse 24.

Now in order for such a system to prosper in the accomplishment of its purposes, it would of necessity be compelled to appear to men as in every essential feature like that of which it is a counterfeit. A counterfeit in order to "Prosper" must be a good counterfeit. Therefore this counterfeit of the gospel must, at least in outward appearance, possess all the features of the gospel.

So in forming our conclusion that this little horn power refers to the Roman Church, we shall not be surprised that her opposition to Christ and His truth is not open, but is covered by the claim that she is the only Christian church. Her casting down the truth to the ground will be accomplished under the cloak of teaching and defending the truth of the gospel. It is in her claim to be the church of Christ that she defends her action in persecuting Christ's people to the death.

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4. The Twenty-three Hundred Years

AFTER the prophet Daniel had been shown the symbols of the vision which is recorded in the eighth chapter of Daniel—the ram, which he was told represented Medo-Persia; the goat, which he was told represented Greece; and the little horn, which we have seen represented Rome, he was then given a prophecy relating to time.

Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spoke, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred says; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Daniel 8: 13, 14.

A DIVINE RULE OF RECKONING

WHENEVER time is used in connection with symbolic prophecy the time itself is also symbolic. In prophecies of this kind we are given a divine rule for reckoning such time as is here mentioned. This rule will be found in connection with a symbolic prophecy in the Book of Ezekiel:

“I have appointed thee each day for a year.” Ezekiel 4: 6, last clause.

Hence every day mentioned in the long time prophecy above is a symbol of a year, twenty-three hundred days standing for twenty-three hundred years.

According to this prophecy, then, some work, called the cleansing of the sanctuary, is to be done at the end of a long period of time, at the end of twenty-three hundred years. But in connection with the giving of the prophecy nothing is said as to the time when this long period begins or ends.

GABRIEL INSTRUCTS DANIEL

AFTER Daniel had heard the statement of the prophecy, he says:-

“And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.” Daniel 8: 15, 16.

In response to this command the angel Gabriel immediately began to instruct Daniel in the meaning of the vision. He told him first the meaning of the ram (verse 20), then of the goat with its great horn (verse 21), then of the four horns (verse 22), then of the little horn, or Rome (verses 23-25), and then he referred to the twenty-three hundred days, but did not explain them or make Daniel understand them.

And the vision of the evening and the morning [the twenty three hundred evenings and mornings; see margin of fourteenth verse] which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. Daniel 8: 26.

And then this chapter closes with an explanation which throws some light on the reason why the angel did not at that time make the full explanation of the vision, especially of the twenty-three hundred years, to Daniel. Daniel says:

“And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision but none understood it.” Daniel 8: 27.

THE 2300 YEARS NOT UNDERSTOOD

WHAT was it Daniel did not understand? He certainly understood the meaning of the ram, for he had been plainly told that it was Medo-Persia; he understood the meaning of the goat and its great horn, for the angel told him these things represented Greece and its first king; he understood the horn, or Rome, for the angel had fully explained it. What, then, did he not understand? Plainly it was the prophecy of the twenty-three hundred years. Because Daniel had fainted, the angel could not make the meaning of this long period clear to the prophet, and therefore Daniel did not understand it.

From Daniel’s statement that he did not understand, it is clear that the commission the angel had been given to make him understand was not yet completely fulfilled, and we shall certainly expect the angel to return and accomplish this unfulfilled commission. In obedience to God’s command he will surely make Daniel know the meaning of this long period of time.

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DANIEL SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND

IN the first four verses of the ninth chapter of Daniel we find the prophet, by study and prayer, seeking to pierce the veil of this mystery. At this very time Jerusalem was in ruins, and the temple of God in ashes. He had been given a prophecy that in twenty-three hundred days the “sanctuary” would be cleansed. Naturally he connected this prophecy with the temple in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed, and he seemed inclined to believe that he had been given a promise regarding the time when this temple would again be built, and the services of God carried on in it. He made a careful study of the writings of Jeremiah, who before the captivity had declared:

“That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.” Jeremiah 29: 10.

Still the matter was not clear to him, and he set himself to pray for light, thus setting a good example for all the people of God who may be puzzled by the meaning of these great prophecies. And in response to his prayer the angel Gabriel, who had been commanded to make him understand the vision, returned to him to carry out his instructions.

GABRIEL RETURNS TO INSTRUCT DANIEL

DANIEL says: “And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Daniel 9: 20-23.

From these words it is plain that Gabriel now came to explain that part of the vision of the eighth chapter which Daniel did not understand. “I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.” Understanding in what? Very clearly it is understanding in the twenty-three hundred years, which Daniel did not understand. Notice again: “I am come to show thee; . . . therefore understand the matter.” It is obvious that there was something which Daniel did not understand, and Gabriel had come to show him. Therefore, said the angel, “Consider the vision.” Recall the vision, bring it back to your mind. That, then, which Daniel did not understand was in the vision.

And now, in obedience to the command of the angel, Daniel recalled the vision. Again in his mind’s eye he saw the ram, which he understood was Medo-Persia; the goat, which he understood was Greece; the great horn between its eyes, which he understood was its first king, or Alexander the Great; the four horns, which he understood to represent the four divisions of Greece after the death of its first king; and then the little horn, which he understood was a great persecuting power which would attempt to destroy God’s truth, God’s people, and God’s sanctuary. All of this was clear to him. He understood it. But there was a part of the vision which he did not understand. He now recalled the twenty-three hundred days, at the end of which the sanctuary was to be cleansed. And as he thought of it, Gabriel began right there to explain it. The angel did not again go over the meaning of the entire vision. This he had once explained to Daniel, and he does not repeat it. He begins his explanation at the exact point where he had left off, with the time, the twenty-three hundred days, and of this great period he says:

THE 2300 DAYS DIVIDED

SEVENTY weeks [of this twenty-three hundred day period] are determined [or cut off] upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Daniel 9: 24.

This explanation divides the twenty-three-hundred day period into two parts, and describes what will transpire during the first part, but does not give us a beginning for it.

The two parts into which the period is thus divided are the first part of seventy weeks, or 490 days; and the second part, or the remainder, which would be 1810 days. As these days stand for years, we now have two periods, one of 490 years, the other of 1810 years, or 2300 years in all.

WHAT IS COMING?

WHEN THE 2300 YEARS BEGIN

THE next verse of the chapter gives us the starting point of the entire period, and at the same time divides the first period of 490 years into three smaller periods. It reads:

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” Daniel 9: 25.

Here we have the starting point of the 490 years, and consequently of the 2300 years. It is to begin with some decree, or commandment, to restore Jerusalem. From the time that decree is given it will be just 2300 years to the time when the sanctuary will be cleansed.

Here also the first period of 490 years is divided into three smaller periods, of seven weeks, or 49 years; of 62 weeks, or 434 years; and one week, or seven years. The city of Jerusalem was to be rebuilt in the first period of 49 years, the Messiah was to come at the end of the second period of, 434 years, and the full end of the 490 years given to the Jewish people was to be reached at the end of the third period of seven years. After this there would still remain 1810 years of the full period of 2300, and at the end of this last period “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

Now before we can find the end of any of these periods we must obtain the date when the whole period of 2300 years begins. And this, in the words of the angel, is at “the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem.” The question now arises, Can the date of this commandment be ascertained? The understanding of the entire prophecy depends upon this.

THE DECREE OF ARTAXERXES

PROVIDENTIALLY, not only the date of this commandment, but the very commandment itself, has been preserved to us. It will be found in the seventh chapter of the Book of Ezra, and the date given in the margin of the Bible at this place, a date which has been conferred and verified by exhaustive research, is 457 BC. The decree itself begins in the twelfth verse of the chapter, as follows:

Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

And the decree continues, conferring full authority on Ezra to do anything that may be found needful for the temple and the city of Jerusalem.

With this date, 457 BC, we have found the starting point of the 2300 years, the 490 years, the 483 years, and the 49 years of the prophecy. Forty-nine years from 457 BC, Jerusalem was to be completely rebuilt and restored; four hundred and eighty-three years, or “seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks,” from 457 BC, will reach to the appearance of the “Messiah the Prince” to His people; four hundred and ninety years from 457 BC, will reach to the end of the time allotted to the Jewish people; and twenty-three hundred years from 457 BC will reach to the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary.

THE 483 YEARS

LET us begin with the period of the 483 years reaching to the appearance of the Messiah. The words of the angel are: “From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.” This would be in all 69 weeks. In 69 weeks there are 483 days. Each day represents a year of actual time, and thus we get 483 years. It can then be stated this way: 483 years after 457 BC, and the Messiah will appear to His people, the Jews. To what year would this bring us? This period, 483 years, would reach from the first day of 457 BC, to the last day of AD 26. Thus:-

First day of 457 BC to the Last day of AD 26 = 483 years

Now it is plain that if the decree did not go forth on the first day of 457 BC, but some time later, then the 483 years will reach over into the year AD 27. The decree did take effect in the autumn of 457 BC, and we are, therefore, brought over to the autumn of AD 27, as the ending point of the 483 years. Thus:

WHAT IS COMING?

Autumn of 457 BC to the Autumn of AD 27 = 483 years

Thus the prophecy points directly to the year AD 27, as the year for the appearance of the Messiah to His people. But was not Christ born before that year? Yes, but notice carefully the wording of the prophecy, "Unto the Messiah the Prince." What is the meaning of the word "Messiah"? It is the same in the Hebrew language as "Christ" in the Greek. "Messiah" means "the anointed One"; and "Christ" means "the anointed One!" John 1: 41, margin. Hence we must locate the date of the anointing of Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism. This is the record:

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comes Thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3: 13-17.

And the date of this anointing is given in the margin of the Bible at this place as AD. 27. See also Bliss's "Sacred Chronology"; "The New International Encyclopedia," article "Jesus Christ"; and Weiseler's "Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels," page 183.

"THE TIME IS FULFILLED"

IMMEDIATELY after His baptism Jesus was in the wilderness of temptation for forty days. And then we read that "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel!" Mark 1: 14, 15.

Let the reader notice the significance of this expression of Christ, "The time is fulfilled." At this point the 69 weeks, or 483 years, of the prophecy of Daniel ended. At this point the Messiah, the anointed One, was to appear to His people. And at this very point the Messiah did appear, being anointed at His baptism, and then coming and preaching, "The time is fulfilled." He called their attention to the very prophecy we are now studying, the very prophecy which proved His Messiah ship.

THE FINAL WEEK

CONTINUING our study of the prophecy, we find there is one more week of the seventy which were given to the Jewish people. Sixty-nine weeks have brought us to AD. 27. There is now another week of years, and, adding this to the sixty-nine weeks, which ended in AD. 27, we are thus brought to the year AD. 34, as the ending point of the seventy weeks.

Now in the middle of this last week something takes place which is especially noted in the prophecy.

And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. Daniel 9: 27.

In the "midst" of the final week given to the Jewish people "the sacrifice and the oblation" were to cease. And during the entire week, from AD. 27 to 34, the covenant was to be confirmed with many, evidently of the Jewish people, for this period was given especially to them.

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE "midst" of the week would be just three and one-half years from the baptism of Christ. What took place then? At that precise time Christ was crucified, thus causing the whole system of "sacrifice and oblations" to come to an end. This sacrificial system was all typical of Christ, the great sacrifice, and when Christ died on the cross type met antitype, and the typical system thus closed. This was shown by the veil of the temple being rent in twain at the time of the death of Christ. Matthew 27:51.

The full period of the seventy weeks, or 490 years, given to the Jews as the peculiar people of God expired in AD. 34. At this point we find the prophecy being fulfilled by the official rejection of the gospel of Christ by the ruling body of the nation, the Sanhedrin, in their persecution of the disciples and the martyrdom of Stephen, and from this date onward we find the apostles turning to the Gentiles. At this time, too, the great apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, was converted.

WHAT IS COMING?

We have now completed our consideration of the first division of the 2300 years, that period given to the Jewish people, which was 490 years long. We have found this ending in AD 34. To this must now be added the 1810 years of the 2300 which still remain. And when this is added to AD 34, we are thus brought clearly to the year AD. 1844, as the grand terminal point of the entire period of the 2300-year prophecy. And the accuracy of this date cannot be successfully disputed, for it is based upon the central facts of the gospel of Christ, His baptism, His ministry, and His crucifixion.

According to the prophecy, when, the sanctuary was to be cleansed in 1844. With the facts of this chapter clearly before us we pass on to the consideration of what the sanctuary is, and what is meant by its cleansing.

5. The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

THE ancient sanctuary was the dwelling place of God in the camp of the Israelites. Moses received destruction to build it on the occasion when he spent forty days with God on Mount Sinai. While there communing with God, the Lord said to him:-

And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25: 8.

And then the Lord said "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it. Exodus 25: 9.

From this it is plain that Moses not only received instruction to build the sanctuary, but he was shown on the mountain a pattern which he was to take as its model. And he saw more than the pattern of the sanctuary as a whole, he was shown a pattern of every article of furniture to be placed in the sanctuary. This is evident from the following verse, which occurs after a detailed description of these articles of furniture given by the Lord:

And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount. Exodus 25: 40.

In obedience to this instruction Moses had the children of Israel build the sanctuary. It was built in every detail just as the Lord commanded, and after the pattern which Moses had seen in the mount. The chapters of Exodus from the twenty-fifth to the fortieth describe fully this sanctuary and its erection.

THE SANCTUARY

THE sanctuary was built in a court which was always erected in the centre of the encampment of the Israelites. Three tribes pitched their tents to the north of it, three to the south of it, three to the east of it, and three to the west of it. The court of the sanctuary was oblong in shape, was composed of hangings of fine twisted linen hung on pillars, and had but one opening, which was always towards the east. In this court there were but two articles of furniture, the brazen altar and the brazen laver. The altar was just inside the gate of the court, and on it were offered all the sacrifices of the people of Israel. The laver stood between the altar and the door to the tabernacle proper. In this the priests cleansed themselves before entering upon any of the services of the sanctuary.

The sanctuary itself was composed of two rooms, or apartments. The first apartment was called the holy place, and contained three articles of furniture, the table of showbread, the seven golden candlesticks, and the altar of incense. A veil, embroidered in gold thread with the figures of angels, separated the holy place from the most holy place. The most holy place, or inner apartment of the sanctuary, contained but one article of furniture, and that was the ark of the covenant. This was a hollow chest, in which was contained the two tables of stone upon which were written the ten commandment law. The cover of the ark was called the mercy seat, and was composed of a solid piece of gold, on each end of which was the figure of an angel, or cherubim. These angels stood with uplifted wings as if in worship of that which they beheld between them. Between them there was a supernatural bright light, and this was the Shekinah, the manifest presence of God among His people.

THE SACRIFICE FOR SINS

IN this building the worship of the Israelites was carried on for a long period of time. The services which were here performed daily are described in much detail in the Book of Leviticus. We must now give them some attention.

WHAT IS COMING?

When any person in the great encampment committed sin he broke the law which was in the most holy place, for "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3: 4. And the Bible very clearly points out which law it is that reveals sin, and to transgress which is sin. We read:-

I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet. Romans 7: 7.

Thus it is plain that the law which reveals sin, and to transgress which is sin, is the law which declares, "Thou shall not covet." And this is the law of Ten Commandments, which was in the most holy place. When this law, then, was broken, it condemned the sinner to die. It demanded his life. It sentenced him to death, for "the wages of sin is death." Romans 6: 23. And, "without shedding of blood is no remission." Hebrews 9: 22.

The law, therefore, demanded blood before the sin could be remitted. Hence the man who had sinned brought to the gate of the court an animal such as had been selected for a sin offering. The sinner then confessed his transgression upon the head of the animal, and, in type, his sin passed from himself to the animal.

It was now the animal which the law condemned; it was the lamb whose blood it demanded. Then with his own hand the man drew a sharp knife across the throat of the lamb, and the blood, as it gushed forth was caught in a basin, and then taken into the holy place by the priest and sprinkled before the law. This was done to show that the demands of the law had been met, and that blood had been shed for the remission of the sin which had been committed.

Thus the man went free and the lamb suffered in his place. All of this, of course, was typical of the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ. And it was all meant to impart faith in the coming of "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world."

THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

BECAUSE of the sins of the people blood was flowing constantly at the gate of the sanctuary. Throughout the year this service of the sacrifice for sin kept the priests constantly busy offering blood before the broken law. Thus the sins of the entire encampment accumulated day by day in the sanctuary.

On the day of atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month, a change was made in the services of the sanctuary. On this day the high priest himself had charge of the services. A description of this service will be found in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. In the morning of the day of atonement two goats were brought before the high priest at the gate of the sanctuary. Lots were cast upon them, and one was selected as the Lord's goat. The other was the scapegoat.

Now the goat which had been selected by lot to be the Lord's goat was to die for all the sins of the people which had accumulated in the sanctuary for the entire year. He was to bear all these sins in death, and his blood was to make an atonement for them "once for all." The Lord's goat was killed by the high priest and his blood taken into the most holy place, before the law itself, and there sprinkled for the remission of all the sins which had been confessed and brought into the sanctuary during the year. Then, bearing the sins of the people upon his own body, having made an atonement for them, the high priest came out of the most holy place, passed through the holy place and the court, and brought these sins to the scapegoat which stood at the gate of the court. He then confessed all these sins upon the head of the scapegoat.

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. Leviticus 16: 21, 22.

In this way the sins of the people were for ever separated from them. And the service by which this was done was called "the cleansing of the sanctuary." This was done once every year. And this was the only time that any person was ever permitted to enter into the most holy place, and no other person except the high priest could enter there even on this occasion.

WHAT IS COMING?

THE NEW COVENANT HAS A SANCTUARY

ALL these sacrifices, offerings, and services were typical of the work of Christ. The new covenant has a sanctuary as well as the old. The new covenant has a priesthood as well as the old. The new covenant has a sacrifice for sin as well as the old. And the new covenant has a service for the cleansing of the sanctuary as well as the old. And more: the new covenant has a scapegoat as well as the old.

Paul says:-

We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Hebrews 8: 1, 2.

And he says again:-

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the holy [margin]. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Hebrews 9: 1-5.

Of the services which were conducted in this worldly sanctuary, Paul says:-

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. Hebrews 9: 6, 7.

And what all this signified is thus stated by Paul:

"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Hebrews 9: 8-12.

IN HEAVEN

FROM these passages it is plain that there is a sanctuary in the heavens in which, as our High priest, Christ offers His blood now for the remission of the sins which are confessed to Him. Notice the expressions, "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man," "a figure for the time then present," "by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands," and "is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." They show conclusively that there is a heavenly sanctuary, the services of which are being carried on by Christ.

It is also plain that when Christ ascended to heaven forty days after His resurrection, He entered upon His priestly work in the "holy place" of the heavenly sanctuary. Hebrews 9: 12. Here He has been ministering for us since His ascension in AD 31. As sins have been confessed to Him He has presented His own blood before the broken law for their remission. And His sacrifice in our behalf has been accepted, thus enabling Him to forgive men their trespasses.

THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY CLEANSED

THUS the sins of God's people for nineteen centuries have been accumulating in the heavenly sanctuary above. And now the time comes when those sins must be for ever blotted out by the final service of Christ's ministry. The time for the beginning of that great service is very clearly pointed out in the prophecy which we have been studying:

Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Daniel 8: 14.

We have seen that the twenty-three hundred years ended in 1844. In 1844 there was but one sanctuary, and that was the heavenly sanctuary. The earthly sanctuary, which had merged into the great temple at Jerusalem, had been destroyed for nearly eighteen centuries when the year 1844 began. This

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prophecy, therefore, has reference to the heavenly sanctuary. It gives us the exact year for the beginning of the closing work of the gospel, the blotting out of sins once for all.

BEGAN IN 1844

IN 1844, then, Christ transferred His service in heaven from the holy place to the most holy place of the sanctuary above. In that year He began the work called in the prophecy “the cleansing of the sanctuary.” Listen again to Paul:

Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens [the earthly sanctuary] should be purified with these [the blood of animals]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Hebrews 9: 22-26.

The cleansing of the earthly sanctuary with the blood of animals was typical of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary with the blood of Christ. But, Paul says, Christ does not engage in the work of cleansing the heavenly sanctuary as often as the earthly sanctuary was cleansed, once every year. The heavenly sanctuary is cleansed but once. And the time for the beginning of its cleansing is fixed in the Scriptures by the prophecy of the eighth chapter of Daniel. That cleansing began in 1844.

It is undoubtedly this time to which Peter refers when he says:

Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Acts 3: 19.

The time for the beginning of the work which will end with the final blotting out of sin, then, has actually been reached. It began in 1844, and has been going on ever since. This is the most solemn period in the history of God’s dealings with men.

But much more than the cleansing of the sanctuary is involved in this closing work of the gospel. In the next chapter we shall study the important work which is being carried forward in heaven at this very time.

6. The Judgment of the Church

THE prophecy of the twenty-three hundred years demonstrates that Christ, as our High Priest, is now serving in the most holy place of the sanctuary in heaven. He is there engaged in the last solemn work of the gospel, the work of cleansing the sanctuary, the work of blotting out, finally and completely, the sins of His people.

But in order to finally and completely blot out these sins, it is evident that He must first enter into a very close examination of the characters of His people in order to determine who of them are worthy of having their sins blotted out. This means that in 1844 He began a work of judgment, not of executive judgment, but of investigative judgment, a work which is clearly necessary before sin can finally be disposed of. This is the final work of the gospel, for when it is completed, which it will be in the near future, then the day of salvation will be closed, the work of the gospel in saving men will be finished, and Jesus will come forth from His priestly work to place the sins of His people upon the antitypical scapegoat, to receive His people unto Himself, and to establish the kingdom of God in this earth.

We must now consider the special work which Christ is doing in heaven in connection with this great judgment of the people of God. But before doing so let us notice the teaching of the Bible that such a work of judgment will precede the second coming of Christ.

BOTH RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED JUDGED

THE Bible clearly teaches that there will be a judgment both of the righteous and the wicked.

“I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and every work. Ecclesiastes 3: 17.

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And the Scriptures just as clearly teach that the time for the beginning of the judgment has already been appointed.

TIME HAS BEEN APPOINTED

BECAUSE He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead. Acts 17:31.

From this it is plain that some definite time has been appointed by God for the judgment to begin. This, without question, points directly to the prophecy of the 2300 years. It is at the end of this long period of time that the judgment was appointed to begin. And, as we have seen, 1844 is the date at which the 2300 years end. This date, then, is the time appointed for the beginning of the judgment.

RIGHTEOUS JUDGED FIRST

THAT God will judge His own people first is also made plain in the Bible.

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” 1 Peter 4: 17.

It is necessary that this judgment of the people of God should take place before the second coming of Christ for at that coming He brings rewards to His people, and raises the sleeping saints from their graves. Before this can be done it is obvious that some investigation must have taken place in order to determine who among the professed people of God are worthy of participating in the resurrection, and just what reward they deserve. In this connection it must be remembered that the reward which the people of God receive at that time will be based on their work and life in this world. We read:

And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22: 12.

It is therefore evident that, if the reward is based upon what a man's work is, there must be an investigation into the record which each man has made before the reward can be properly decided upon. And in as much as the reward has already been determined upon by the time Christ comes, and is actually brought by Christ, this investigation must take place some time before the second coming of Christ.

RESURRECTION AT THE SECOND COMING

AT the second coming of Christ all the righteous dead are raised from their graves. This is taught in the following passage:

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. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

AN INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

THE privilege of having a part in the first resurrection is a great reward in itself. “Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection!” Revelation 20: 6. Before Christ comes it must be decided who is worthy to have a part in this resurrection. There is not time to decide this after He comes, for the sleeping saints are raised just as soon as He comes. This momentous decision must already have been made even before His coming. But in order to make such a decision the entire record of each child of God must be examined in order to decide whether he is worthy or not of having part in the first resurrection. Some are to be accounted worthy; some will be accounted not worthy. This seems to be taught clearly in the following passage:

But they that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage. Luke 20: 35.

Notice here the expression “accounted worthy.” There is to be an “accounting” regarding the worthiness of the people of God before the resurrection, that is, before the second coming of Christ, which is the time of the resurrection of the righteous. This “accounting” is the work of the investigative judgment which began in 1844. This judgment is to decide the eternal destiny of every soul with which it deals. And that solemn work is going forward in heaven today! Such a truth is calculated to impress upon every serious

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heart a feeling of solemn responsibility, and to act as a great incentive to walk carefully before God.

JUDGED OUT OF BOOKS

DURING the time of the judgment, which began in 1844, both the righteous and the wicked dead are still in their graves. But on the books of heaven is the record of each life, and it is by that record that their characters and their deeds will be judged. This judgment is to be based upon that which is found written in the books. Notice the following verse:

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. Revelation 20:12.

Upon the pages of the book of life the names of the candidates for eternal life are written.

And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers, whose names are in the book of life. Philippians 4: 3.

AN ACCORATE AND IMPARTIAL RECORD

EVERY act which has ever been committed is recorded on the pages of this book of life. Every secret thing which we have ever done is there written down. In this judgment these things will pass in review before God.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12: 14.

But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shall be justified, and by thy words thou shall be condemned. Matthew 12: 36, 37.

Certainly if these verses mean anything they mean that an accurate and impartial record is kept of the life of every man. The judgment which is now going on in the courts of heaven will not be based upon some specific charge against a man. It will cover the entire life of every individual. The hidden things will be brought to light and they will be open to the eye of the Judge of all the earth. Every deceitful thing, every act of injustice, every evil deed, everything dishonest in the life, will come before God. They are all written in the records of the book of life. But there will also be the record there of all unselfish, loving deeds, all lofty thoughts, all worthy efforts. And above all there will be recorded whether the evil things have been confessed and forgiven, whether the sinful life has been surrendered to Christ, and His grace accepted to cover it.

A BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

LET it not be considered untrue that there should be kept a record of men's lives in heaven. One of the books of heaven which is especially mentioned in the Bible is "a book of remembrance!"

Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. Malachi 3: 16.

A VIEW OF THE JUDGMENT

DANIEL was given a view of the time when, in 1844, the books of heaven were opened before the great Judge, and the investigative judgment commenced.

I beheld till the thrones were cast down [or placed], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was like a fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him: and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened, Daniel 7: 9, 10.

God Himself presides over the judgment. He is assisted by His angels, of whom there are ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. The Son of man, Christ Jesus, appears before the

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judgment seat of God to plead in behalf of His people. He is their Advocate, and He offers His blood to cover the sins of all who have sincerely repented and confessed those sins to Him.

BEGINS WITH THE DEAD

PUTTING all these passages together, we get a very clear view of what took place when the judgment began in 1844. The judgment began with those who are dead. When the book of life was opened at that time the name of Abel, the first man who ever died, appeared. And then the case of Abel was tried at the bar of God. The record of his life was carefully examined, every act and word and thought being investigated. It was noted, too, whether his sins had been all confessed and forgiven. The record of his acceptance of the Savior was also there. And when this had all been gone over a decision was reached regarding the nature of the reward to be brought to Abel when Christ should return to this earth.

And with this case decided, the page was turned, and there came up before God another case, that of the, next man who died. And it was weighed and examined and decided. And again the page was turned. And thus through the years since 1844 the work has been going on, and before its close the cases of the millions of God's people, all who have ever had their names written on the pages of the book of life, will be eternally settled and decided.

In settling these cases which are recorded in the book of life two decisions are possible. Either the name of the person will be blotted out of the book of life or his sins will be blotted out. If the person has accepted the sacrifice of Christ in his behalf, and has brought his life into harmony with the will of God by the grace of Christ, his sins will be blotted out. But if this has not been done, his name will be blotted out, and that person will not come up in the first resurrection. He will be eternally lost.

NAMES MAY BE BLOTTED OUT

THAT the names of those who are candidates for eternal life may be blotted out of the book of life is clearly taught in this verse:

He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. Revelation 3: 5.

Those who will have their names blotted out are those who continue in sin:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever has sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. Exodus 32: 33.

But when the righteous turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he has sinned, in them shall he die. Ezekiel 18: 24.

FROM THE DEAD TO THE LIVING

Now the time must come in this judgment when the case of the last person who is dead will be decided. And when it has been decided and the page is turned, there will appear the name of a person who is still alive on the earth. Thus the judgment will pass from the dead to the living. And no man knows today when his own name may come up in review before God in the judgment work above. And when your name does appear, when the page is turned which contains your name, what will be the record that is written there? If Felix trembled before Paul when he thought of "judgment to come," ought not we who live in the very time of the judgment feel upon our hearts constantly the fearful responsibility of this present hour? Very soon, perhaps even today, our cases will come up before God for decision. We may doubt it, dispute it, deny it now; but we must meet it then.

ARE YOU SAFE?

CAN you meet it with composure? Shall we, like Felix, drive the thought from us? Let us beware how we hide it from our eyes. We must stand before the Judge. Are we ready for that day? How is it with you, reader? Have you obeyed the Word of God? Have you repented of all your sins, and confessed them to Christ? Have you cast yourself on His mercy, and received His pardon and peace? Have you publicly

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confessed your faith, and been “buried with Christ by baptism into death”? If not, let me entreat you to seek the Lord while He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near. Soon the Master comes with rewards. What reward will He bring to you?

And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 1 John 2: 28.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. 1 John 4: 17.

THE FINAL DECREE

By the investigative judgment the subjects of the coming kingdom of Christ are to be determined. When this is accomplished, and every case has been decided for life or death, Christ will lay aside His priestly garments, and this decree will go forth from the court of heaven:

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Revelation 22: 11.

THE ANTITYPICAL SCAPEGOAT

WITH this decree the destiny of every human Soul is fixed for eternity. As Christ comes from His work of ministry in the heavenly sanctuary the plagues of God’s wrath begin to fall and Christ prepares to lay the sins which have been cleansed from the heavenly sanctuary upon the antitypical scapegoat. This is Satan, who, having caused the people of God to commit these sins, now bears them himself, and their punishment, while he is led away “unto a land not inhabited” (Leviticus 16: 22), where he bears them for the thousand years of the millennium. The land “not inhabited” is the desolate earth during the millennium.

CHRIST RECEIVED His KINGDOM

AT the close of the judgment, when the subjects of the kingdom have been determined, Christ will receive His kingdom from the Father.

And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him. Daniel 7: 14.

And then Christ will come to receive the subjects of His kingdom and take them to Himself, to live and reign with Him in heaven for the thousand years of the millennium.

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24: 31.

Those who have been accounted worthy in the judgment to attain unto the resurrection from the dead will then be raised. 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. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

Then all, both dead and living saints, will be changed into the likeness of Christ, and given immortal bodies.

Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 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. 1 Corinthians 15: 51-54.

Having been changed, the righteous will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4: 17.

At that time they will all be taken with Christ to heaven, to be given those mansions which Christ has gone to prepare.

In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:2-3.

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The wicked dead are not raised at this time (Revelation 20: 5), and the wicked living are put to death by the coming of Christ. The resurrection of the wicked takes place at the close of the millennium.

RIGHTEOUS JUDGE THE WORLD

DURING the thousand years while the righteous are in heaven they will enter into the work of judgment themselves. This will be the judgment of the wicked; not the actual executing of punishment upon the wicked, but the investigation into their records to determine what their punishment shall be. The wicked, too, are to be judged according to their works. This work the righteous will do during the millennium. This we are taught in the following verse:

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. Daniel 7: 21, 22.

They will continue this work for one thousand years, or during the millennium.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Revelation 20: 4.

At this time not only the cases of the wicked will come up in review before the righteous, but also the cases of the fallen angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God.

Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know you not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? 1 Corinthians 6: 2, 3.

When this work of judgment is completed, at the end of the thousand years, the wicked dead are called forth to receive their doom. The work of executing the judgment is given into the hands of Christ.

And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Revelation 19: 15.

MOST SOLEMN OF ALL TIMES

LET the reader be admonished by the truths of this chapter. The time in which we live is the most solemn of all times of which we have any record. The work of the gospel is being closed. The cases of all are being decided for eternity. Our every action and thought and word are being recorded on the books of heaven, there to be examined by the Lord, Himself.

Behind the curtain which separates this world from the invisible world, there is a pen which writes down in God's book of remembrance all our acts, our words, and our thoughts. Oh, let this thought ever flash in upon our worldliness, our pleasure, and our sin. For all these things God will bring us into judgment.

7. The Standard of the Judgment

MORE important than any other question connected with the judgment, is this: By what standard of righteousness will God judge His people? What is the divine rule which will be applied to every life in the judgment in heaven, and by which we will stand or fall? Are our lives to be weighed and measured by some fixed standard, or is each soul to decide for himself what is right and wrong?

It is evident that God will not judge His people in heaven by some rule which is unknown on earth. This would be unjust, and God is a God of justice. No, God will first acquaint His people with His rule of righteousness, and earnestly encourage them to heed and obey it.

GOD'S LAW THE STANDARD

WHAT, then, is the great standard of the judgment? Note well the answer: It is the law of Ten Commandments, the law of God.

This was the standard of righteousness in the typical service of the earthly sanctuary, and in the typical day of atonement when the sanctuary was cleansed; and it is the standard now in the antitypical

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service of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, in the antitypical day of atonement while the sanctuary above is being cleansed.

This truth will be made plain by reading the following passages:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. James 2: 10-12.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12: 13, 14.

Very clearly do these verses show that the law will be the standard of the judgment. The latter verse declares that because God will bring every work into judgment it is plainly our duty to fear God and keep His commandments. There would be no propriety in such a connection as this unless it were true that our lives would be judged by the law. The first verse not only declares that we shall be judged by the law, but makes it very clear that the law which will be the standard of the judgment is the law which declares, "Thou shall not commit adultery," and "Thou shall not kill." This is the law of Ten Commandments.

Certainly if the Ten Commandment law is to be the judge of our lives in the great judgment in heaven, now taking place, it is well that we give earnest study to it. We must not enter into the judgment ignorant of the very standard by which our lives will be measured and weighed. What does this law require? How does it instruct us to live? And, above all, are we now living in accordance with its precepts?

IS ABOVE INSPIRATION

THE law of Ten Commandments is the only part of the Bible which is above inspiration. God did not commit it to man to write. God Himself came down to earth and spoke it in the hearing of millions of people, and then inscribed it with His own finger on two tables of stone. This reveals the high importance which God attached to the principles which this law contains. Of great importance are all the teachings of the Bible given by Inspiration, but of larger and even more vital importance are the commandments of this law, given by God Himself on Mount Sinai.

A code of laws partakes very largely of the character of its author, and in the estimation of men is held to be of greater or less importance according to the standing of its author. There are several systems of law in this world which stand out above all others. There is the Napoleonic code, which is great because of the greatness of its author. There is the code of Justinian, the ancient Roman law, which is clothed with dignity not only because of the greatness of its author but also because of the greatness of the empire governed by that law. There is that great document, the British Magna Charta, so vital to the liberties of mankind. There is, too, that great statement of fundamental principles known as the American Declaration of Independence. But looming far above all that have been or can be mentioned is that wonderful code of law which God spoke with His own voice amid the thunders of Sinai. This law, spoken in the hearing of men more than thirty centuries ago, and preserved through all the changes of passing ages, has worked its way among the inhabitants of the earth, and influenced humanity as no other law has ever done. A great jurist, while referring to those who talk of the dignity of human nature considered in itself without the aid of divine revelation, said of this law:

INCULCATES ALL VIRTUES; PROHIBITS ALL VICIES

WHEN these giants in human intellect can tell me whence Moses derived his science in legislation, without admitting the supernatural and divine authority of the Ten Commandments, I shall listen with more reverence to the teachers of human perfectibility. In that short and comprehensive code, we find given us a perfect rule of action, covering the whole ground of man's existence; a rule not only prescribing our duty to God and man in our external behavior but reaching to the secret thoughts and feelings of hearts in every possible condition of life, and in all our relations to our Maker and our fellow-beings. The wisdom of the ages, the learning and philosophy of the schools, have never discovered a single defect in that code. Not a virtue which is not there inculcated. Not a vice in its most doubtful and shadowy form, which is not there prohibited. Where, then, I ask, did the great Jewish lawgiver derive his spirit of legislation? If that code was written by the finger of the Almighty, let us bow to it with reverence, and seek

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no better rule of life, nor any wiser principle of action. But if they emanated only from the capacious mind and were dictated by the wisdom of Moses-then Moses was a wiser, a more learned man than any of our new teachers; and I had rather be under his jurisdiction and keep his commandments, than learn new rules of civil polity and social intercourse from the most learned and wise of the present day.” Chief Justice Horn blower of New Jersey. Charge to the Grand Jury of Essex County. January 7, 1843.

It is not easy to produce a complete and perfect law. The work of the very wisest lawgivers, from Lyeurgus, Draco, Solon, and Numa, down to Justinian and Napoleon, exhibit many defects. But in the Ten Commandments we have a code of law which forbids all sin and inculcates all virtue, and a law, too, which has outlived the laws of all ancient emperors and conquerors, and has entered into the jurisprudence of the world and exercises even today a greater influence on the morals and manners of mankind than any other law that was ever made.

HAS OUTLIVED ALL OTHER LAWS

THE authority of all other ancient codes has died away. The worship of all other gods who were served in that time when Jehovah spoke this law has passed out of mind and is forgotten. Travel through all the ancient lands of the Bible today and we would not find one instance of the idolatrous worship which in Moses’ time overspread the Old World. True, there is still the worship of false gods, but they are not the same gods as were worshipped when Moses received from God’s hands the Ten Commandment law. There is not a living man who today worships the ancient deities. There remains of them only ugly sculptures, embalmed carcasses, indefinite traditions, and indecent monuments. Their temples are in ruins, and their authority has passed beyond recall. But rolling down through thrice one thousand years there comes a voice, reaching over the wreck of ruined temples and fallen images and idols which have been cast to the moles and bats, and sounding forth not only throughout the civilized world, but even to those nations which still sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and that voice still proclaims with an authority which has never lessened: “I am the Lord thy God. . . . You shall have no other gods before Me!”

HELD IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE

AND that word is heard and obeyed. Dumb are the ancient oracles; forsaken are the images of Egypt; lost in eternal oblivion are the idols and idolatries which in those days were followed by the cultured, the learned, the rich, and the mighty. But held in everlasting remembrance are the words of God which were spoken from the sacred mount in the hearing of Israel. That law has been published to all lands, printed in more tongues than any other law which has ever existed. And today, wherever one may find righteousness and truth, purity, intellect, intelligence, science, art, invention, discovery, education, order, morality, and good government, he will find that this law had preceded these things as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, that men may learn of Him the way of life and peace.

GOD SPOKE AND WROTE THE LAW

LET the testimony of the Scriptures be noticed with regard to the Author of this law:

And the Lord spoke unto you out of the midst of the fire: you heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only you heard a voice. And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone. Deuteronomy 4: 12, 13.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to Me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou may teach them. Exodus 24:12.

And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God. Exodus 31: 13.

PERFECT-ETERNAL-UNCHANGABLE

THIS law, being given by a perfect God, is itself perfect.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Psalm 19: 7.

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The claim is made today that this law was given only for a limited time, that it was intended to be superseded by the gospel at the time of the death of Christ. But this claim is utterly denied by the teaching of the Bible. This law is eternal and unchangeable. All of its commandments are to continue in force throughout all ages.

The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. Psalm 111: 7, 8.

This is the teaching of the New Testament as well as of the Old, for we find Christ Himself teaching that He did not come to abolish or change the law, but to fulfill it, or do it.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5: 17-19.

ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUTH

THIS law is the summing up of the righteousness and the truth of God. It is the foundation of all truth and righteousness. So say the Scriptures:

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth. Psalm 119: 142.
My tongue shall speak of Thy Word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness. Psalm 119: 172.

FAITH IN CHRIST ESTABLISHES IT

FAITH in Christ does not make this law void to the believer, but rather establishes it.
Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Romans 3: 31.
Those who profess to serve God, to be His faithful children, and who refuse to keep His commandments, are utterly mistaken as to what true worship is. God says of them:
He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 John 2: 4.

And those who find the preaching of the law so distasteful that they refuse to hear it, even their prayers are said to be an abomination to the Lord:

He that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. Proverbs 28: 9.

THE LOVE OF GOD

AND in the law is summed up the love of God, as well as His truth and His righteousness, for we read:

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5: 3.

This law, then, being the standard by which God will judge our lives, it becomes our duty, especially at this time, in view of the judgment above, to closely examine our lives in the light streaming from the law. Are we obeying it? Do we keep the Ten Commandments? Do we keep every one of them? We must not make any mistake about this, for a mistake here may be fatal to our salvation. Examine every commandment of the Law very closely and see if your life is in harmony with these divine precepts.

8. The Seven Seals

THE most interesting of all the books of the Bible to the student of prophecy is the Book of Revelation. It contains prophecies regarding the last days of surpassing glory and power, and yet it is perhaps the least studied of all the books of the Bible. In the very days when its wonderful predictions are receiving their fulfillment, it is given but scant attention.

Undoubtedly this is due to the idea which prevails that it is a hidden and mysterious book; a book of problems which cannot be solved; of mysteries unfathomable; of visions the hidden meaning of which

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cannot be unlocked. There are many who seem to think this book was never designed to be studied or understood.

A REVELATION

BUT this idea is utterly swept away by the opening sentences of the book. Read them:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand. Revelation 1:1-3.

Instead of being a mystery, this book is a "Revelation"; indeed, it is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ." Its sole design is to reveal "unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass." It is not intended to conceal these things. And a blessing is pronounced on the study of this book which is not placed on the study of any other book of the Bible. It is a blessed thing to study any book of the Bible. There is blessing in all Bible study, but there is a special blessing in studying the Book of Revelation. May that blessing be experienced by the reader as he reads and studies this book. And above all let the reader notice that there is a special blessing upon those who "keep those things which are written therein." The study of this book will bring new light to the student, and hence it will bring new duties to be performed.

The Book of Revelation contains a number of prophecies, such as the seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven last plagues, and a prophecy regarding Satan's warfare against the church, in which last-named prophecy the United States is concerned. The prophecy of the seven churches is the history of the church of Christ foretold for the entire Christian era. This era, from the first coming of Christ to the second coming of Christ, is divided into seven periods of time, and the condition and history of the church in each of these periods is foretold under the name of one of the seven churches of Asia. The prophecy of the seven trumpets is a prophecy of war, of political events, the chief political events during the Christian era, especially connected with the breaking up of the Roman Empire, both east and west. Again the Christian era is divided into seven periods of time in this prophecy as in the prophecy of the seven churches.

THE FIRST SEAL

IT is the prophecy of the seven seals which we shall consider in this chapter. This prophecy deals with the religious history of the world from the beginning of the Christian era to the end of the world, and, with the other prophecies, divides this era into seven periods of time.

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. Revelation 6: 1, 2.

This is a symbol of the triumphs of the Christian church during the first century of the Christian era, during the days of the apostles of Christ. The color of the horse represents the purity of the church in that period. It was pure, both in life and doctrine. What it believed was the truth, and this truth was manifested in the outward, lives of those who believed.

With the truth of the gospel in its purity, and with pure lives, the first Christians went forth "conquering and to conquer." They advanced against the very strongholds of the pagan religions of their time, and because of the purity of their faith and life they achieved remarkable victories, such great victories, indeed, that it could be said of them that they preached the gospel to the entire world. Colossians 1: 5, 23.

And it can be said with assurance that when the church of today returns to that purity of faith and life which was manifested in the days of the apostles, the same victories for the truth of God will be seen at this time. The message of God for today will be taken to all the world in one generation.

The time covered by the first seal is from the time of Christ to about the year AD 100.

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THE SECOND SEAL

AND when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. Revelation 6: 3, 4.

After the days of the apostles divisions crept into the church. The things which Paul had foretold began to come to pass. Paul had said to the elders of the church at Ephesus:

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20: 29, 30.

Paul also spoke of the falling away in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and declared that even in his time “the mystery of iniquity” was already at work. 2 Thessalonians 2: 7.

Shortly after the death of the last of the apostles these things began to be rapidly fulfilled. Men arose speaking perverse things. False doctrines began to be taught. The truth of God was perverted, changed into a lie. By these false doctrines the faith of Christians was corrupted, and a corresponding change came into their lives. Satan instilled unholy ambitions in the minds of the leaders of the church, and they began to seek for positions of power and influence. The glory of the pure principles of the gospel became dimmed. Falsehood took the place of truth. False shepherds assumed command of the church, and the light of the gospel was well-nigh obscured.

ORGANISATION OF THE EARLY CHURCH

WHEN the churches in the large cities of the empire were first organized by the apostles, the officers were selected by the members of the church, and entered upon their duties as servants of the church—not as “lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock!” 1 Peter 5: 3. They were not to dictate the faith and conduct of the people, and they were not to be rulers.

The officers were few in number. The chief officer of the church was called an “elder” or “bishop.” These titles were used interchangeably to designate the same office, that of leader of a local congregation. An instance of this is found in Titus 1: 5-7:

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God.

The Apostle Peter, mistakenly believed by many to have been the first pope of Rome, claimed no higher place than that of elder. He says:

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder. . . . Feed the flock of God which is among you. 1 Peter 5: 1, 2.

It was the duty of the elder, or bishop, to look after the church and feed the flock of God with spiritual food. The business and temporal affairs of the church were cared for by officers called deacons, who were also elected by the church. These could be as numerous as the size of the church might require. The records and money of the church were doubtless kept and cared for by a clerk and a treasurer elected for that purpose.

EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH

SUCH churches as this were organized in many of the large cities of the Roman Empire where the apostles preached. Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and many other cities had such organizations. And after the apostles went on to preach in other places, these churches took up the work of preaching the gospel in their localities. And their work was prospered and their membership greatly increased.

As the gospel spread out into the suburbs of a city and into the surrounding country, and believers multiplied, it became necessary to organize smaller churches in various sections surrounding the mother church from which they had grown. A little company would thus be organized into a small church, and as it was zealous in missionary work it soon grew larger and stronger. And so the gospel grew and believers multiplied in great numbers. Small churches grew up around the larger ones, and these, in turn, became, surrounded with other churches, and the gospel began to lighten the world with its glory.

WHAT IS COMING?

GROWTH OF THE EPISCOPACY

ON special occasions it became necessary for the churches to counsel together concerning the general work of the church. When such great union meetings, or conferences, became necessary, the natural place to hold them was at the mother church in the heart of the great city.

And when all the representatives of the various companies and churches had gathered together and the conference was about to begin, it was only an act of courtesy for the elders of the smaller churches to request the elder, or bishop, of the larger church, to preside over the meeting.

In time, this privilege of presiding over, and directing the affairs of the church in a province, which had been granted as a courtesy, came to be demanded as a right. Yielding to the temptations of Satan, who had himself fallen through self-exaltation, the bishops of the larger churches began to seek their own glory rather than the glory of Christ. They claimed it as their right, by virtue of their office to exercise a controlling influence over the affairs of all the churches in their territory, to select their officers and ministers for them, and to be recognized as the ranking officer in that territory. This was a development of the spirit already manifested in the time of the apostles, exemplified by "Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence." 3 John 1:9.

It is the beginning of this great apostasy from the gospel which is covered by the second seal. The perversions which came into the church during this time, and the ambitions which were characteristic of the leaders, caused strife, dissension, turmoil, and even bloodshed in the church. Factions arose behind each ambitious bishop and fought out his claims. Thus the horse seen under this seal is red, and a great sword is given to its rider.

The time of this seal is from AD 100 to about AD 323, at the professed conversion of Constantine, the emperor of Rome.

THE THIRD SEAL

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. Revelation 6: 5, 6.

A black horse! Just the opposite of the white horse. During the period covered by the third seal there was a complete perversion of the truth of the gospel. This seal contains God's photograph of the church of this period. It is just the opposite of the gospel. The church was completely corrupted.

It was during the period succeeding the professed conversion of Constantine that the claims of the bishop of Rome to universal authority were finally yielded.

He demanded the right to appoint the archbishops and the bishops, and to exalt certain of these archbishops and bishops to be cardinals to compose a great council for his extensive kingdom. Gradually these demands were yielded, though not without much strife and bloodshed, and thus grew the Roman Catholic Church, until all its power had been gathered in the hands of its leaders, whose sole purpose was to gain supreme power for themselves.

Then, having secured all the power of the church to themselves, they reached out for the power of the state in order to enforce their will upon all the people of the earth. They succeeded far beyond their own expectations, and, growing thus gradually through the centuries, the time came when Catholicism became supreme over the bodies, minds, and souls of men.

PERVERSION OF THE TRUTH

WHILE all this perversion of the simplicity of the gospel in the matter of organization was taking place, there was also a fearful perversion going on in doctrine. Superstition was taking the place of faith. The customs of the heathen were being transformed into ceremonies of the church. An elaborate ritualism was taking the place of the simplicity of the gospel, and the people were being drawn far away from Christ and His truth.

Pilgrimages were made to Jerusalem and other places in Palestine, and the dust of the streets in these cities was swept up, carried to Rome and other places in Europe, and sold at immense prices. Alleged bones of the apostles began to make their appearance and were worshipped as relics. Pieces of the manger in which Christ was laid at His birth were discovered, at least so it was claimed, and were sold in Rome and

WHAT IS COMING?

adored. Pieces of the true cross, enough to make many crosses, were found and sold at prices which tax our credulity. The very nails which pierced the hands and feet of Christ were found and sold by the hundred. They found two skulls of St. Peter and worshipped them at special shrines.

Good men were made into saints after their death, and prayers were said to them. The first day of the week, the great festival day of the sun-worshippers, Sunday, was exalted to take the place of the Sabbath of Jehovah, the seventh day. Magnificent temples began to be built, and in them not the worship of God, but the worship of a little wafer god was carried forward. This wafer was said to be the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, and was sacrificed by the priest in the bloodless sacrifice of the mass, a purely idolatrous service. Images of the saints began to make their appearance, and they were worshipped just as the heathen worship their idols. The bishop of Rome began to exalt himself until finally he usurped God's place on earth. The priests claimed the power to forgive sins. Priestly celibacy was gradually introduced, resulting in great immorality and scandal. A place of departed spirits was found, and called purgatory, and it was discovered in the same connection that the souls of the departed might be gotten out of this place of punishment by the payment of money to the priests for saying masses.

COMMERCIALISM IN THE CHURCH

THE Revelator says he heard a voice saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." A spirit of commercialism came into the church. The good things of the church were sold. Everything had its price. When a child was born the priest had to be paid. When the child was sprinkled the priest was paid. When the child went to catechism the priest was paid. When the child was confirmed the priest was paid. When the child went to confession the priest was paid. When the child grew up and was married the priest was paid. When his children were born the priest was paid. When he died and extreme unction was given the priest was paid. And even after death the priest was paid to get him out of purgatory. So living or dead, it was all the same, money flowed into the hands of the priests.

And in addition to this the offices of the church were sold. A priest could be made a bishop if he had the price. A bishop could buy the office of archbishop, and archbishop the office of cardinal, and even the office of pope was sometimes bartered.

Thus the sunlight of the gospel of Christ was blotted out by the thick pall of the blackness of heathenism. It is not to be wondered at that the horse which represented all this under the third seal was black. And all this came about so gradually that only a few saw its real character. The vast multitude was deceived into believing that this was still the true church.

The time covered by this seal is from AD 323 to 538, at the establishment of the papal supremacy, as pointed out in chapter two.

THE FOURTH SEAL

AND when He had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell [or the grave] followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. Revelation 6: 7, 8.

The color pale does not indicate that the church is now returning to its first condition, or color, of white. This color is that sickly, deathly, blighted color of a sickly and dying plant. It is worse than black.

Under this seal the people of God were persecuted and put to death. When the Papacy became fully established, it began to persecute those who had remained faithful to the truth of the gospel. They were driven out from among men to find a home in the rocks and caves of the mountains. They were hunted like wild beasts and were put to death wherever they were found. For more than a thousand years the apostate church did its utmost to blot out true Christianity from the earth. Tens of thousands of the people of God through these long weary ages suffered martyrdom for their faith. Their blood flowed like water.

But still the blood of the saints was the seed of the church, and as they died others were won by their constancy and took their places and carried forward the torch of truth. In the mountain regions of Europe a remnant was preserved of the people of God. They kept the light of truth brightly burning through the awful years, and handed on to posterity that liberty of conscience for which they contended, and which is the great boon of Christianity to the world today.

WHAT IS COMING?

This seal covers the time known as the Dark Ages, the time of great tribulation for the church of Christ. It was the very height of the power and glory of the Papacy, but it was the darkest period of the earth's history. The time of the seal is from 538 to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the opening of the Protestant Reformation.

THE FIFTH SEAL

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 fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Revelation 6: 9-11.

This seal, like all the others, covers a period of time, the time of the Protestant Reformation. It must not be understood that John saw the disembodied spirits of the dead. What John saw was that the death of the martyrs under the preceding seal demanded retribution, and just as Abel's blood is said to have cried from the ground, so the death of the martyrs demanded vengeance. They were seen under the altar, that is, under the place where they were sacrificed, the earth, in their graves. Their death was not to go unpunished.

It is said that "white robes were given unto everyone of them." This means that under the Protestant Reformation their characters were cleared. When they had been put to death they were considered worse than the vilest criminals, unfit to live, as the very worst people of the earth. But when the light of the Reformation began to blaze across the sky, and the world began to be lightened with its glory, it was seen that the martyrs were not at all what they had been charged with being, but were, on the contrary, the true, loyal people of God. Old truths, long hidden under papal error, were rediscovered by the Reformers. The blessed Bible, which the Roman Church had done its utmost to destroy and keep from the people, was printed in the language of the people, and it shed its glorious light wherever it was read. Thousands and tens of thousands shook off the intolerable yoke of Rome, gave up its degrading idolatry, and became Protestants. The night of error was passing away, and the day of truth and liberty was about to break over the world. And in the light of this new day the martyrs were seen in their true light. Thus white robes were given unto every one of them.

The fifth seal covers the period of the Protestant Reformation from the beginning of the sixteenth century to about the middle of the eighteenth century.

THE SIXTH SEAL

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 sits 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.

The event which opens the sixth seal is a great earthquake. Undoubtedly this was the great earthquake of Lisbon, which took place on November 1, 1755. In Sear's "Wonders of the World," pages 50, 58, 381, we are told that this earthquake extended over at least 4,000,000 square miles, and destroyed considerably over 100,000 lives. This was the greatest earthquake in the history of the world.

"And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." This is the second sign under the sixth seal, and it was fulfilled on May 19, 1780, in the remarkable Dark Day of that date. About ten o'clock on the morning of that day a darkness began to shut out the light of the sun. The chickens began to go to roost as if it were night, and the cows came in from the pastures. It was necessary to light the candles in the homes in order to see common print. All felt that this was a sign of the approaching end of the world.

WHAT IS COMING?

“And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth.” This is the third sign of the sixth seal. It was fulfilled in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833. On that day the most wonderful falling of stars the world has ever witnessed took place. An eye-witness of this scene, a Mr. Clarkson, the agricultural editor of the Iowa State Register, after reading a statement that modern fireworks surpass even the glory of falling stars, wrote in his paper the following:

The writer of that sentence did not witness the glorious meteoric shower of November, 1833, when the display was so much superior to any artistic display of fireworks that neither language nor any element in nature can furnish comparisons. The comparison of the sheet-iron thunder of the theatres to the electric display of Providence when the heavens are all on fire, and the earth trembles, would be tolerable. But the awful grandeur of the display on the night of the thirteenth of November, 1833, which made the stoutest heart stand in awe, and the most defiant infidel quake with fear, is never to be compared with the most brilliant fireworks. Those who witnessed the meteoric shower named saw the greatest display that men ever will see until the day that Peter speaks of when the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The agricultural editor of the Register was out alone with a team and load of lumber all night on that never-to-be-forgotten night. And he cannot now consent to hear of human fireworks being superior to that most grand and sublime spectacle ever before or since beheld by man. Patent fireworks are no nearer this wonderful phenomenon than a lightning-bug is equal to the sun.-Iowa State Register, July 12, 1889.

“And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together.” This event takes us into the future. It has not yet taken place, and will not until the breaking up of the earth in connection with the coming of Christ. This seal closes with the lost of the earth realizing and acknowledging that the great day of the wrath of God has come. And this, the sixth seal, brings us to the coming of Christ but does not include that coming.

Let the reader note well that at the present time we are living between the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the sixth chapter of Revelation. The great earthquake of Lisbon is past; the Dark Day of 1780 is past; the falling of the stars in 1833 is past. We are now facing the next event in this line of prophecy, the departing of the heaven as a scroll. We are facing the end of all things. Are we ready for that day, and prepared to meet the Lord in peace? or will we stand among that throng who call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him whom they have rejected?

THE SEVENTH SEAL

AND when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. Revelation 8: 1.

Under the seventh seal there is “silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” As this is prophetic time, in which a day represents a year, and as half an hour is a forty-eighth part of a day, the actual time represented here would be a forty-eighth part of a three-hundred-and-sixty-day year, or seven and a half days.

Silence in heaven for seven and a half days! What is the fulfillment of this? Consider this: About the only way silence can be secured in heaven is to empty heaven of all its inhabitants. But is there ever a time when the angels of heaven leave there? Yes, just this occurs when Christ comes the second time. We read:

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. Matthew 25: 31.

Hence at the second coming of Christ there will be silence in heaven, for all the angels will come with Him. They come with Christ to gather His people together (Matthew 24: 31), and then they all return to heaven together to spend the thousand years of the millennium. Evidently from the time when Christ leaves heaven with His angels to come the second time to the earth, to the time when He returns with His people, a period of seven and a half days elapses.

WHAT IS COMING?

9. The Great Seal of Jehovah

IN the seventh chapter of Revelation there is a prophecy which contains additional events to happen in connection with the sixth seal. The sixth seal closes with the sixth chapter of Revelation and the seventh seal is not opened until we reach the eighth chapter of Revelation. Thus the seventh chapter comes in between the sixth and seventh seals, and this is so, obviously, because of the fact that it is a prediction of other events of the sixth seal, and before the second coming of Christ, which takes place under the seventh seal. What these additional events are we must now study.

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. Revelation 7: 1-3.

The symbol of winds in prophecy represents wars, strife, and commotion. Jeremiah 25: 32. Here the wars of the earth are represented as held in check until the earth is lightened with the glory of some great message which was to arise from the east, or as the sunrises, weak at first, but ultimately the most prominent object in the heavens. This work was of such vast importance in the estimation of God that everything which might take the attention of the world from it was to be held in check until it should accomplish a great part of its work, and even then all the wars and commotions of the world were not to stop its progress.

THE SEALING WORK

THIS work of such tremendous importance is described as that of sealing “the servants of our God in their foreheads” with “the seal of the living God!” And this was to be accomplished just as the sun arises, which is the significance of the expression, “from the east.” That is, this work was to commence in weakness, move onward with ever accumulating force, and close in strength and power, just as the sun arises in the morning, weak and without much power, and sweeps on with ever increasing power to the zenith.

The time when this most important work is to be accomplished is made very clear. It is to take place before the opening of the seventh seal, or before the second coming of Christ, and after the falling of the stars in 1833. In other words, this prophecy foretells the appearance of a message of truth, a great movement which will seal the servants of God with His seal in the very days in which we are now living, between 1833 and the end of the world.

It is obvious that before we can understand what this sealing work is we must learn what is meant by the expression, “the seal of the living God.” This seal is to be placed in the foreheads of “the servants of our God.” Now what is the seal of God? and what is it to be sealed with that seal?

WHAT THE SEAL IS

IN speaking of the rite of circumcision in Genesis 17: 11 the word “token” is used. In speaking of the same rite in Romans 4: 11 it is referred to both as a “sign” and a “seal.” Thus it is plain that these words, “token sign,” and “seal,” are, in these passages, used as words having a similar meaning. The seal of God is not some literal mark which is put in the foreheads of the people of God today, but rather some observance having special reference to God, which will serve as a mark of distinction between the people of God and those who are not in truth His servants though they may profess to serve Him. It is a mark which will distinguish between the true and the false servants of God.

Today a seal is usually found in connection with legal documents, especially in connection with some law which demands obedience. A law must contain a seal. We therefore search for the seal of God in connection with the law of God.

THE SEAL A PART OF THE LAW

IN the Book of Isaiah we read:

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord, that hides His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him. Isaiah 8: 16, 17.

WHAT IS COMING?

From this passage it is plain that the law of God has a seal. It is plain, too, that this seal has been removed from the law of God, and thus removed from the attention, the mind, of God's people, and this verse calls for the seal to be restored to the law of God and its claims revived in the minds of the servants of God. And this is to be done at the time when God's people are looking for the coming of Christ. The accomplishment of this work is called in the verse the sealing of the law of God among His disciples, or putting back the seal into the law, from which it had been taken.

A legal seal contains three features, three parts. First, it has the name of the one making the law; second, it contains his authority for making such a law, and this authority is expressed in his official title; third, it specifies the territory over which such a law is to prevail, the extent of the dominion of the lawmaker. To illustrate: GEORGE V, KING, OF GREAT BRITAIN AND OF THE BRITISH DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEA. Here is the name, the title or authority, and the extent of the dominion. The seal of God must contain these distinguishing features in order to constitute a genuine seal. As it is found in connection with His law, it must be that part of the law which contains His descriptive title, showing who He is, His official position or right to rule, and the extent of His dominion.

THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT CONTAINS THE SEAL

THE only part of the law of God which does this is the fourth commandment, the Sabbath commandment. This commandment gives validity to the entire law. This is that part of the law which distinguishes the true God from all false gods. It is that part of the law which points out the true God. It is that part of the law which informs us who the Lawgiver is.

There is nothing in the first commandment that reveals who it is that gives the law. It declares that "thou shall have no other gods before Me"; but it does not say who it is that speaks. The worshipper of Buddha or any other god might claim that this was the law of his god, and from this commandment alone he could not be gainsaid. The second commandment uses the expression, "the Lord thy God," but does not say who this God is, and as there are "gods many, and lords many" (1 Corinthians 8: 5), it would still be impossible to tell from this who the true God is. The third commandment uses the same expression but does not enlighten us as to the identity of the true God. The fifth commandment is equally silent in this respect. And the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments do not even contain the name of God. If the Ten Commandments were without the fourth, the law of God would contain no signature, no seal.

But in the fourth commandment the true God is pointed out as the One who "in six days" "made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it!" Exodus 20: 11. Here the true God, the God who gave the Ten Commandments, is pointed out as the God who created the world and all that is in it. The Creator is the true God, and it is His power to create which distinguishes Him from all false gods. Therefore, in order that His people may ever worship Him, He gives them a perpetual reminder of His power to create by establishing the seventh-day Sabbath, which is a memorial of His work of Creation. The Sabbath was ever to stand before the people of the earth as a memorial, or monument, of creative power and thus lead the minds of the inhabitants of the earth every seventh day to the Creator Himself.

The Sabbath commandment is, then, the very heart of the law of God. It is the one commandment in the law which distinguishes the true God from all false gods. Thus with the fourth commandment in its rightful place, this remarkable law, the Decalogue, the only writing among men which God ever wrote with His own finger, has a signature; it has a signature which renders it intelligible and authentic; it has a seal. But without the fourth commandment it lacks all these essentials.

The Sabbath commandment, therefore, contains the seal of the living God. His name is "the Lord Jehovah." His title of authority is "Creator." The extent of His dominion is "heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." Here are all the parts of a true seal - JEHOVAH, CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE. The Sabbath is the seal of God. And this we are not left to surmise or reason out for ourselves. We are plainly told in the Bible that the Sabbath is God's seal or sign:

Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Exodus 31: 13.

Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. Ezekiel 20: 12.

And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God. Ezekiel 20:20.

WHAT IS COMING?

Thus the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is taken by the Lord as a sign between Him and His people of all ages; the people, by observing that commandment, signifying that they are worshippers of the true God; and God, by the same commandment, making Himself known as their rightful Ruler, inasmuch as He is their Creator.

A MESSAGE OF SABBATH REFORM

WE have now found the seal of God. It is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The prophecy, then, of the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads with the seal of the living God, foretells the coming, in this present generation, of a world-wide message of reform with reference to the Sabbath of the Lord. The distinguishing feature of this message will be the seal of God, which we have found to be the Sabbath.

We now inquire if it is true that the observance of the Sabbath puts on the one observing it a mark or sign of distinction? The best answer that can be obtained to that question is for the reader himself to try it. Let him keep the seventh-day Sabbath in his community, and he will discover immediately that such a practice sets him apart both from professed Christians and the people of the world. It is a striking comment on the Christianity of the day that a person frequently can arouse the bitterest opposition in a professedly Christian community by simple obedience to all the commandments of God. Let a person once begin the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath and he is from that time a marked and peculiar person. Most assuredly the Sabbath is a mark which distinguishes between those who obey God and those who merely profess to obey Him.

BEING PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD TODAY

THE most striking feature of this prophecy is that it is actually being fulfilled at the present time. There is a message of reform on the Sabbath question being preached in all the world today. It began in weakness, as the rising sun, but it is rapidly becoming one of the most prominent religious issues in the world. This message has now encircled the earth with its truth. It attracts attention everywhere it is preached. It calls the people of God back to the observance of His true Sabbath. It restores that Sabbath which has been taken away by the Roman Church and for which a false Sabbath has been substituted. Thousands are being troubled regarding this message of truth, and are discussing it earnestly. Thousands are being convinced of its truth and are bringing their lives into harmony with it. It is God's final message. And now that it has come to you, do not, I beseech you, turn away from it, for its purpose is that of preparing you to meet the Lord in peace.

In this wonderful message there is salvation from the destruction which is soon to come upon the world, and in it also is an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city!" Revelation 22: 14. Those who accept the last message of God to the earth, the sealing message, the message of obedience to the commandments of God, and bring their lives, through the grace of Christ into harmony with His will as expressed in these commandments, will enter into the city of God.

10. The Beast, His Image, and His Mark

THE struggle for liberty has been a long and varied one. Through the centuries of the Christian era thousands of noble men and women have laid their lives on the altar of the sacred cause of liberty. And through their fortitude and their courage, and because they gave the last full measure of devotion in their struggle for freedom, liberty has at last triumphed gloriously. The hopes and aspirations of the human heart for freedom were met more fully in the establishment of the government of the United States than they ever had been since history began.

The establishment of the government of that country was an advance over all systems of government of which history affords any record. The principles of liberty found their fairest fruitage there in those great constitutional provisions which form the fundamental law of the land, freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. That fair land as a consequence became a haven of refuge for the oppressed of the world.

WHAT IS COMING?

The Declaration of Independence, the document which gave birth to that nation, occupies the same relation to the state as the Bible does to the church, the guide book of truth. This Declaration sets forth two great new principles as the basis of governmental existence, principles which are right and true in every respect. The American statesman Charles Sumner states them in this way:-

The words that "governments derive their just power from the consent of the government are sacred words, full of life giving energy. Not simply national independence was here proclaimed, but also the primal rights of all mankind. Then and there appeared the angel of human liberation, speaking and acting at once with heaven-born strength, breaking bolts, unloosing bonds, and opening prison doors; always ranging on its mighty errand, wherever there are any, no matter of what country or race, who struggle for rights denied; . . . especially visiting all who are down-trodden, whispering that there is none so poor as to be without rights which every man is bound to respect; none so degraded as to be beneath its beneficent reach; none so lofty as to be above its restraining power; while before it despotism and oligarchy fall on their faces, like the image of Dagon, and the people everywhere begin to govern themselves.

The Declaration of Independence is the twofold promise; first, that all are equal in rights, and secondly, that just government stands on the consent of the governed, being the two great political commandments on which hang all laws and political constitutions. Keep these truly and you will keep all. Write them in your statutes; write them in your hearts. This is the great and only final settlement of all existing questions. To this sublime consecration of the republic let us aspire.

In addition to this principle that the power of the state is derived from the people governed by the state, there is another principle set forth in the Declaration which it is important for us to consider. Anciently, and in some modern instances as well, the principle upon which nations were governed was the principle that "might makes right." No matter how tyrannical or despotic or criminal the thing was which the nation did, if it had sufficient arbitrary power and physical force to do it, the possession of this power always proved the rightfulness of the thing done.

It was also held by some in olden times, and is held by some today as well, that if the majority of the people approved of a thing, it must be right. "Vox Populi Vox Dei" – "The voice of the people is the voice of God!"

The Declaration of Independence discards and repudiates both these theories. Its last paragraph declares that the United Colonies as free and independent states "have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do."

Here a new doctrine is set forth. Before this sovereignty had been held to be unlimited and illimitable. Now right is set forth as superior to all earthly power. As Sumner, in his "Works," again puts it:

But the great Declaration, not content with announcing certain rights as unalienable, and therefore beyond the control of any government, still further restrains the sovereignty, which it asserts by simply declaring that the United States have "full power to do all acts and things which independent states may of right do." Here is a well-defined limitation upon the popular sovereignty. . . . Mark, now, the difference: All existing governments at that time, even the local governments of the colonies, stood on power without limitation. Here was a new government, which, taking its place among the nations, announced that it stood only on right, and claimed no sovereignty inconsistent with right.

And John Quincy Adams, a president of the United States, speaking on this principle in a Fourth of July oration at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1837, said:

The Declaration acknowledged the rule of right paramount to all power of independent states itself, and virtually disclaimed any power to do wrong. This was a novelty in the moral philosophy of nations, and it is the essential point of difference between the system of government announced in the Declaration of Independence and those systems which had until then prevailed among men. . . . It was an experiment upon the heart of man. All the legislators of the human race until that day had laid the foundations of all government among men in power; and hence it was that in the maxims of theory, as well as in the practice of nations, sovereignty was held to be unlimited and illimitable. The Declaration of Independence proclaimed another law. . . . a law of right, binding upon nations as well as upon individuals, upon sovereigns as well as upon subjects. . . . In assuming the attributes of sovereign power, the colonists appealed to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of their intentions, and neither claimed nor conferred authority to do anything but right.

And certainly "the Supreme Judge of the world" led in the establishment of such a system of government. The hand of Providence has been signally displayed in the development of these principles in the United States. Here is carried out more fully than anywhere else in the world the great Bible principles

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of separation of church and state, and freedom of conscience and religion. Here it is supremely true, that “the powers that be are ordained of God.” Romans 13: 1, 2. And here, above all, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.”

It is to be expected, as in the case of all past history, that the great antagonist of the principles of soul freedom, the devil, will do his utmost to overthrow these principles as they are exemplified in America, raising up his own agencies for this purpose. Every Christian, as well as every citizen of that country, should be on his guard against such attempts and do all in his power to defeat them. The principles of freedom for which the United States stands are worthy of the utmost loyalty on the part of all its citizens.

It should be a source of gratitude that God has pointed out in the prophecies of the Bible just what the character of these attempts will be which will be aimed at the liberties of the citizens of America, for, knowing in advance what to look for, we shall be better able to guard against them. There is a prophecy which indicates that great religious combinations will seek the power of the government to enact their will into law.

The fact that the United States government finds a place in the prophecies of the Word of God comes as a surprise to many. But as God has mentioned such empires as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, as well as the kingdoms of modern Europe, there is no reason why the United States should not be mentioned, and very much reason why it should be. That nation has risen to a great eminence, and, as a result of the recent war, wielded more influence in the affairs of the human race than any other nation. God’s hand has been most strikingly manifested in its history and growth.

THE GOSPEL CHURCH

THE prophecy dealing with the United States begins as follows:

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child, cried travailing in birth; and pained to be delivered. Revelation 12: 1, 2.

In the prophecies of the Bible a woman represents a church. “I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman.” Jeremiah 6: 2. The woman in this verse is a symbol of the Christian church. The sun with which she is clothed is a symbol of the light and glory of the gospel. The moon under her feet represents the Mosaic dispensation of types and shadows. The crown of twelve stars represents the twelve apostles of Christ.

The church is seen by the prophet at the time she is expecting the birth of a man child. This child was Christ, for it is true only of Him (verse 5), that He was caught up to God and to His throne, and is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Psalm 2: 7-9; Ephesians 1: 20, 21; Hebrews 8: 1; Revelation 3: 21.

PAGAN ROME

THE second symbol of this prophecy is described in verses three to five. It is a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns. This dragon stood before the woman ready to devour her child as soon as it was born. This dragon represents pagan Rome, who through Herod attempted to destroy Christ as soon as He was born, in causing all male children in Bethlehem to be put to the sword. And back of Rome stood Satan. Primarily, therefore, the dragon is a symbol of Satan. But as Satan manifests his malice and hatred of Christ and the people of God through human organizations, here the dragon is used as a symbol of pagan Rome.

When the dragon found that the head of the church had escaped his malice by being “caught up unto God,” he turned his attention to the church and persecuted it. Verses 13 to 17 deal with the time of the church’s persecution, the time when she was driven into the wilderness by Rome. The flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth to sweep away the church, was a flood of persecution. The time of the supremacy of Rome over the nations is the same as that spoken of in Daniel 7: 25, “a time, and times, and half a time!”

This represents 1260 years. (See chapter on “Prophetic Symbols.”) This time began in 538 and continued to AD. 1798, at which latter time Rome lost its supremacy.

By the earth helping the woman, opening its mouth and swallowing up the flood of persecution, is meant the help which was given the church as a result of the Protestant Reformation. A number of

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European countries accepted the Reformation, and thus were able to shield the church from the wrath of Rome.

THE REMNANT CHURCH

IN the last verse of the chapter the prophet is shown the special wrath of the dragon against the remnant church. And this church is described as possessing two special characteristics. It keeps the commandments of God and has the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus is explained in Revelation 19: 10 as being the “spirit of prophecy!” The last church, then, will be a commandment-keeping church, and it will have, in addition to all the other gifts of the Spirit, the gift of prophecy. Clearly this last church will be a church which keeps the Sabbath of the fourth commandment as well as all the other commandments; for a church which keeps only nine of the Ten Commandments could never properly be called a commandment keeping church.

PAPAL ROME

THE third symbol in this line of prophecy is described in Revelation 13: 1-10. This leopard beast represents the same power as did the dragon. It represents Rome. This is shown by the fact that it also has the seven heads and the ten horns of the dragon. It is Rome, but with a change. Pagan Rome has given place to papal Rome. The dragon gave his seat, his capital city, the city of Rome, to papal Rome, when Constantine removed the seat of the empire from Rome to Constantinople in AD. 330, which left the pope as the chief figure in the ancient capital, and this also endowed him with power and great authority.

THE 1260 YEARS

As has been shown in a previous chapter, it is from the date AD. 538, that the supremacy of the Papacy should be dated. As “power was given unto him to continue forty and two months,” and as each Jewish month contained thirty days, we have here just 1260 days, which, with each day representing a year (Ezekiel 4: 6), would bring the end of papal supremacy just 1260 years from 538. This brings us again to the year 1798, at which time the pope was taken prisoner by Berthier, a French general, a decree of religious liberty was proclaimed in Rome, a Roman republic proclaimed, and the pope was exiled into France, where shortly after he died.

These circumstances constituted the “deadly wound” seen by the prophet. These are the circumstances referred to in the expression, “He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity!” Rome, which for so many centuries had led tens of thousands of God’s children into captivity, and killed them with the sword, was in 1798 given a stroke of the sword itself and led into captivity. Let it be noticed, however, that the deadly wound made in 1798 is to be healed.

THE UNITED STATES

AT the time when John saw the papal beast going into captivity and being struck with the sword, or in 1798, he turned and saw another symbol coming, the fourth symbol of this prophecy.

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. Revelation 13: 11.

All the features and specifications of this symbol make it necessary to apply it to the United States. Notice these specifications.

The time when this symbol appeared was in 1798. John saw it coming as he saw the Papacy going. He did not say, “I saw another beast that had come,” or “I saw that another beast would come,” but “I saw another beast coming.” It was coming in 1798, at the time when the Papacy was going into captivity. Therefore the government which this symbol represents must be arising about the year 1798.

John saw this symbol coming up “out of the earth!” The preceding beast, the leopard, came “up out of the sea.” Revelation 12: 1. So also did the beasts of Daniel 7. Water, in symbolic prophecy, represents “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues!” Revelation 17:15. Hence “the earth,” out of which the two-horned symbol came up, would represent just the opposite of the sea, or a place where there had been no multitudes or nations, a land where there had been no great organized systems of government.

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Hence the two-horned symbol represents a government which arises in new territory, territory never before occupied by great systems of government.

Upon the heads of the dragon of the twelfth chapter, and on the horns of the leopard beast of the thirteenth chapter, there were crowns. This indicates that these governments were of the monarchical form. They were kingdoms. On the head of this two-horned symbol there is no crown, neither are there crowns on his horns. From this it is plain that the nation represents a government which is not a monarchy, but a republic, a government of the people.

Again, this symbol has two horns like a lamb. The lamb is the symbol of Christ. These two horns, then, represent two principles of civil government which are Christ-like in character. These two principles are without question those referred to by Christ in Matthew 22:21, the principles of civil and religious liberty, or an entire separation of the church and state.

Summing up the specifications of this prophecy, we find it predicts the rise of a new government in the affairs of men, a government which would be making its appearance in 1798, arising in new territory, coming up as a republic, and having in its fundamental law the two great principles of civil and religious liberty.

All these specifications clearly point to the United States. This government was coming up in 1798. It was coming up in new territory, in the western hemisphere. It was coming up as a republic. And it had in its fundamental law the two principles of civil and religious liberty. These specifications have been met in no other country on earth, but the United States fulfils them all.

During the remaining verses of the chapter the prophecy indicates that there will be attempts on the part of the enemies of liberty, of religious organizations in America, to violate the great fundamental principles of American liberty. Verses 12 to 17. These misguided organizations are spoken of as attempting to set up what the prophecy calls "an image of the beast," to enforce upon all what is termed "the mark of the beast!" Let us inquire what these may be.

The "beast" referred to is the leopard beast, a symbol, as we have seen, of the Papacy. An image of the beast would be something like the beast. But what would this mean?

What is the Papacy, an image of which some desire to see established? The Papacy is a union of church and state. There are those who will attempt to establish something like that, another union of church and state in the United States. Certainly every one who is loyal to American principles of government should guard against such an attempt to overthrow the fundamental principles of the nation.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

THEN these same enemies of liberty will attempt to enforce upon all what is called "the mark of the beast." What is this "mark"? Notice that it belongs to the beast. It must, then, be some institution of the beast by which the one receiving it is marked as a worshipper of the beast. The beast is a symbol of the Papacy. Therefore "the mark of the beast" must be some act or observance by which the authority of the Papacy is recognized.

In a previous chapter of this book we have already directed attention to the fact that in the counterfeit system of religion called the Papacy, Satan has attempted to substitute for gospel truths spurious and false teachings. For the true law of God a false and counterfeit law has been substituted. This is the law of the church, similar in some respects to God's law, but with the authority of the church behind it. And this law, by the interpretation of the church, substitutes the first day of the week for the Sabbath of God.

Before the world, then, there are two laws, one the true law of God, the other the papal law, enforced and interpreted by the church. It is evident, therefore, that by the relation which Christians sustain to these two laws they are marked as servants of one power or the other, according as they show themselves obedient to the law of God or obedient to the law of the antichrist; obedient to the true gospel or its counterfeit. If they keep the law as given by God, they will observe the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, the seventh day. If they serve the counterfeit system they will observe the changed law, and keep the first day, the counterfeit Sabbath. The true Sabbath is the seal, or mark, of God; the counterfeit Sabbath is the mark of the Papacy.

From this it is plain that the change which the Papacy has made in the law of God, the substitution of the counterfeit Sabbath for the true Sabbath, constitutes "the mark of the beast." There are religious leaders in the United States today who want it enforced upon all the people.

WHAT IS COMING?

THE COUNTERFEIT SABBATH

THAT the observance of the counterfeit Sabbath, the first day of the week, Sunday-is an acknowledgment of the power of the Papacy, will be evident from a few quotations from Catholic sources. On this subject a Catholic catechism says:

Question What does God ordain by this commandment?

Answer. He ordains that we sanctify, in a special manner, this day on which He rested from the labor of Creation.

Question. What is-this day of rest?

Answer. The seventh day of the week, or Saturday; for He employed six days in Creation, and rested on the seventh.

Question. Is it, then, Saturday we should sanctify in order to obey the ordinance of God?

Answer. During the old law, Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church, instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day.” – “Catechism of the Christian Religion,” by Reverend Stephen Keenan, page 206.

And bearing on the thought that this change of the Sabbath by the Papacy is a mark of the power and authority of that church, they have this to say:-

Question. Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

Answer. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her-she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.” – “Doctrinal Catechism,” page 174.

Upon the same point there is this further testimony:-

Question. How prove you that the church has power to command feasts and holy days?

Answer. By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.

Question. How prove you that?

Answer. Because by keeping Sunday they acknowledge the church’s power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.” – “Abridgment of Christian Doctrine,” page 58.

And in another Catholic work is this statement:-

It was the Catholic Church, which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the church.” – “Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today,” page 213.

The prophecy, then, indicates that the great final attempt of Satan to destroy the truth of God from the earth is to be made on the law of God and the Sabbath of Jehovah.

THE FEDERATED CHURCHES

IN order for this prophecy to be fulfilled, some degree of church federation must be effected between the various religious bodies of that country. Only in this way could an “image of the beast” be formed. When such federation is fully developed it will devote much of its attention to securing Sunday legislation and Sunday law enforcement.

And before our very eyes just such a movement as is here predicted is taking place. There is even now a federation of the churches in that country, known as the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. This includes more than thirty of the great Protestant denominations. And, in unconscious fulfillment of the prophecy, this great organization is making itself very active in securing the passage of Sunday laws. Thus the image of the beast is being formed, and is beginning to speak and cause the enforcement of the mark of the beast, the counterfeit Sabbath, the Sunday institution.

Thus the churches and denominations which have failed to follow in the path of light and truth as the truth has advanced, will become identified again with Rome, and will follow in her footsteps, persecuting God’s people and opposing God’s truth. The enemy of truth has again succeeded in corrupting the churches. As they are unwilling to give up all of Rome’s errors. Satan succeeds in drawing them on the backward path to Rome.

WHAT IS COMING?

This is the last attempt of Satan to destroy the church. The remnant church, which, in opposition to the whole counterfeit system of substitutes, both in the Roman and in the Protestant churches, is proclaiming the whole truth of the gospel, the genuine instead of the false, the true Sabbath along with the other truths of the gospel which have been perverted during the ages of the past, will be the special object of Satan's hatred and active warfare. He will attempt to get rid of the people of God, and thus attempt to destroy the truth of God which they preach. To do this he causes his followers in the churches which have combined to enforce their false doctrines to go to the length of passing a decree of death upon all those who will not consent to accept the counterfeit system in place of the true, and the counterfeit Sabbath, the mark of the beast, in the place of the true Sabbath, the seal of God.

These are the issues which this prophecy leads us to expect. This Sabbath question, big with importance as it already is, will become of even greater importance, and will be pressed with ever-increasing urgency upon the attention of the people of the world—on the one hand the eternal law of Jehovah proclaiming: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," on the other hand a human law enforcing the observance of the first day, a rival institution of the Roman Church and observed by most of the nominal Christian churches, then there can be no neutral position. Every one must decide which law he will obey. And that decision will array that individual on one side or the other in the last great conflict between Christ and Satan. His allegiance to Christ or to Satan will be manifested by his decision to keep Christ's Sabbath, the seventh day; or the false Sabbath, the first day. The first is the sign of God's power, the second is the mark of the beast power.

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

THE thirteenth chapter of Revelation closes with this verse:

Here is wisdom. Let him that bath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six. Revelation 13: 18.

Here, in order that the student of prophecy may verify the accuracy of his interpretations, the papal beast is identified. Count his number, is the divine admonition. It is the number of some man, evidently connected with the beast. This points to some particular man, and at once the mind goes to that man who stands at the head of the papal system. The number of the beast is his number.

The head of the Roman Church, the Pope, "is crowned with a triple crown as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions." (See Ferraris' "Prompta Bibliotheca," article "Papa.") He claims to be the divinely appointed representative on earth of Jehovah, claiming the title "the vicar of God." This was stated by Gratian in his decrees as follows: "Beatus Petrus in terris Vicarius Filii Dei videtur esse constitutus." - Decretum Gratiani Prima Pars, distinctio XCVI.

Here the claim is made that Peter, and the Pope of Rome as his successor, is the "Vicarius Filii Dei," that is, "the vicegerent of the Son of God." That this title is accepted and used by the popes is well known.

Now let the reader, with this title, VICARIUS FILII DEI, before him, "count the number of the beast." Add together (with the fact in mind that U was formerly the same as V in Latin, the latter always being used instead of the former, which custom is still largely followed) all the Roman numerals in this title as is shown in the accompanying panel.

God does not leave His commandment-keeping people to be overwhelmed by the wrath of the dragon, nor does He leave the world unwarned regarding the truth of this great issue. At the time when the effort is being made to destroy both the truth and the people of God, the full message of the gospel is being carried to all the world by God's people, and the way is being prepared for the second coming of Christ to finish the work of salvation. This final message of the gospel will constitute a warning against the beast and his image and the reception of his mark. This message we must now study.

11. The Last Message

BEFORE the first coming of Christ, John the Baptist delivered to the Jewish nation the message of His coming. This message was based on the prophecies of the Bible, and was designed to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:17.

WHAT IS COMING?

Before the second coming of Christ another message will be delivered to all the world warning the people of the coming of Christ. This also will be based upon the prophecies of the Bible, and its acceptance will make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

In our discussion of the prophecy of Revelation 13 in the preceding chapter, we have studied two particular symbols. These are called “the beast,” and “the image of the beast!” We have found the beast to be a symbol of the Papacy, and the image of the beast to be a symbol of apostate Protestantism, a combination of Protestant churches seeking for the power of the government for the purpose of enforcing certain religious customs and institutions, such especially as the Sunday institution. This is so clearly the very essence of Catholicism that it is called “the image of the beast,” that is, it is a likeness of Catholicism.

We have also found that this “image of the beast” attempts to enforce what is called “the mark of the beast.” This is compulsory Sunday observance. The seventh day is still the Sabbath enjoined by the fourth commandment. The observance of the first day of the week has no foundation in the Scriptures. But it has been brought in as a Christian institution and purposely put in the place of the Sabbath by that power which in the prophecy is spoken of as “the beast.” It has been placed in the Ten Commandment law as a badge and token of that church’s power to legislate for the people of God. It therefore inevitably becomes “the mark of the beast.”

A MESSAGE OF TRUTH

IN order that the world may not remain in ignorance of the real significance of these movements and conditions, God has sent into the world a message of truth which deals with these very things. This message exactly fits the conditions foretold by this prophecy, and it is sent by God to meet this very situation. This message is called “the threefold message,” and it will be found in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. . . . And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. Revelation 14: 9-14.

A There are five features of this message which are worthy of special attention. It warns against the beast, his image, and the reception of his mark; it leads to obedience to the commandments of God; it teaches the faith of Jesus; its acceptance, and the resulting persecution, develop patience; and it is the last message to be given the world before the second coming of Christ. This last truth may be seen from the fact that as soon as this message is given Jesus is seen coming in the clouds of heaven to reap the harvest of the earth, as stated in the fourteenth verse.

A MESSAGE FOR TODAY

THIS message, then, fits the present situation. It is a message given for this particular time and to meet the special conditions which now prevail in the earth. And it not only warns against the worship of the beast and his image, but it tells how to avoid that worship. It not only tells men what they ought not to do, but it tells them what to do. It not only calls men to fight against the beast and his image, but it tells them how to get the victory. It does this in the expression “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

This final message of the gospel of Christ will so fully prepare those who receive it to meet their Lord that they are said to be “without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14: 5. It is therefore evident that the third angel’s message will contain all the truth of God. It is “through the truth” (John 17: 17) that the people of God are sanctified, and if those who accept the threefold message become without fault before His throne it will be because they have the full and complete truth of the gospel.

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THE LAST CHURCH

THIS last church, which will be the full fruitage of the Reformation, will have revealed to it all the truths of the gospel, the truths which Satan has so successfully hidden under his great counterfeit system during the centuries of the Dark Ages. It will, therefore, preach not only the message that the Lord is soon to come, but it will also possess and teach the truth concerning the true God, the true Savior, the true sanctuary, the true priesthood, the true law, and the true Sabbath, and every other gospel truth which has been perverted.

The people, therefore, who deliver the final message of the gospel to the world, will believe in God the Father as the great King of the universe. They will also believe in His infinite love for all His creatures, and in His great plan for the salvation of sinners.

They will believe in and preach Christ as the only Savior from sin. They will present Him to the world as the great sin-bearer for the human race, and will show that whereas He was in the image of God, He emptied Himself and was made in the form of man, and then humbled Himself to die the death of the cross, being both divine and human.

They will believe and preach Christ as the only mediator between God and man, that all blessings which have ever come from the hand of God to the human race have come through Him, and that through His mediation the whole Creation was brought into existence. John 1: 1-3, 14; Colossians 1: 13-17.

They will believe and preach Christ as the only true advocate with the Father, offering His blood constantly in our behalf, our intercessor, who presents for us the merits of His own sacrifice for sins.

They will believe and teach that the Bible is the only true, full and complete revelation of the will of God to mankind, that it is the inspired and authoritative Word of the living God.

They will believe and teach that the Holy Spirit is the only true vicegerent of the Son of God on earth, and will accept no other.

They will believe and teach the true gift of prophecy; that the gift of prophecy has been given to the church of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-14); that it is the authoritative and infallible voice of God to His people, that this gift will be restored to God's remnant people (Revelation 12:17; Revelation 19: 10) to lead them in giving the last message of the gospel to the world.

They will believe and teach the truth regarding the sanctuary question, the true sanctuary which the Lord pitched and not man, the heavenly sanctuary, in which the Lord Jesus is our High Priest, which began to be cleansed at the end of the long prophetic period of twenty-three hundred years, or in 1844. Daniel 8: 14, See also the chapter on the 2300 days.

They will believe and teach the truth concerning the true sacrifice once offered on Calvary for the sins of the human race, and they will show that this one sacrifice for sins was sufficient for the salvation of the human race without the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass.

They will believe and teach the truth concerning the true priesthood of Christ, who was made a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, the priest who stands at the head of the new creation, who by offering Himself, interceding through His own blood in the heavenly sanctuary, is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

They will believe and teach the truth concerning the necessity of confessing our sins to the High Priest above, and not to any earthly priest.

They will believe and teach the truth concerning the fullness of the forgiveness of the sins which are confessed to this High Priest, and the completeness of His cleansing for the sinner from all unrighteousness.

They will believe and teach the truth of true baptism; that it is a burial and a resurrection; that it typifies the complete death of the "old man" of sin, "the body of sin," and its burial, and then a resurrection to "walk in newness of life."

They will believe and teach the truth concerning the true communion, the Lord's Supper.

They will believe and teach the truth regarding the true law of God, which existed in the very beginning, was given in thunder tones on Mount Sinai, and which is the perpetual standard of righteousness, the very foundation of the government of God.

They will believe and teach the truth regarding the true Sabbath which was made by the Creator in Eden, and given to the human race as a perpetual memorial of the exercise of the creative power of God. They will discard the false and counterfeit Sabbath, as they will also all the counterfeits of the false system, and observe only the true Sabbath of Jehovah, the seventh day. This they will present as the sign between Jehovah and His people. Ezekiel 20: 12, 20.

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They will teach the truth also of the nature of man, the state of the dead, the reward of the righteous, and the fate of the wicked, all of which have been perverted in the false system. Instead of preaching a purgatory or a conscious state of existence in death, they will teach the truth of the Bible, that the dead are unconscious (Psalm 146:3, 4); that “they know not anything” (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6); that man by nature is mortal and receives immortality only through Christ (1 Timothy 6:13-16; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54); and that the time of rewards and punishments will take place, not at death, or in death, but at the resurrection from the dead.

A GREAT WARNING AGAINST THE BEAST

THUS this people whom God chooses to deliver His final message of truth, will believe and teach the genuine of every truth which has been counterfeited in the Papacy, Satan’s counterfeit of Christianity. The message which they will present to the world will obviously be the exact opposite of the Papacy in every vital part, and, therefore, when it is preached it will constitute a great warning against “the beast and his image,” and against the reception of his mark. Therefore it is not to be wondered at that “the dragon” makes special war against this remnant which “keeps the commandments of God,” and delivers the last message of God to the world. Revelation 12:17.

That this movement which stirs the wrath of the dragon is the same as that which gives the warning message against the beast and his image, as recorded in Revelation 14:12, is evident from the fact that they are described in almost identical terms. Read both Revelation 12:17 and Revelation 14:12. Those who give God’s final message will be commandment-keepers, and therefore will observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD

THIS last message, containing the full truth of God, will not be preached in a corner to just a few people, but will be taken to all the earth. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24: 14. When it has been taken to all the earth, Jesus will come the second time, and the great controversy between Christ and Satan will come to an eternal end.

It will be a matter of profound interest to the reader to learn that just such a people has been raised up as is described in this chapter as the remnant church, and that they are now engaged in the very work called for in the prophecy, that of taking the final and complete message of truth to all the world. It will also be of interest to know just how far they have progressed in the work of preaching the last message of the gospel to all nations. We shall be able to gather some idea of how near the coming of Christ is by the extent of the preaching of this final message, for when it is preached in all the world the end is to come. If it has been taken to nearly all the world at this time, the end is very near at hand.

About 1845, in the New England States (U.S.A.), there came into existence a movement which developed into an organization which is now being used of God to give His last message to the world, the message of warning against the beast and his image. A few people at that time, in studying the question of the sanctuary, came to the conclusion that it was necessary to obey the commandments of God, the Sabbath commandment with the others. They began the observance of the Sabbath at once. At the same time they became profoundly impressed with the thought that God had commissioned them to bear the message of the second coming of Christ to the world. To this small people God restored the gift of prophecy, and this gift ever since has been a great blessing to them.

Being inspired with an earnest missionary zeal at the very beginning, they began to teach the truths which God had revealed to them. It was not long before some of their neighbors began the observance of the Sabbath. These told others of these truths, and these still others, until churches began to multiply and conferences were organized. The message spread to the western states, and other churches and conferences came into existence. Finally workers were sent to California, and in a few years there were hundreds of believers on the western coast. Today there is not a state in the United States where they are not carrying forward their work of presenting the final message of the gospel. And their work has grown at a remarkable rate; they have doubled their numbers every ten years since their origin.

In 1874 they sent out their first missionary to a foreign land. Since this first missionary was sent out more than fifty years ago, they have practically covered the earth with their missionary operations.

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They have organized conferences and churches throughout Europe. They have sent out hundreds of missionaries into heathen lands. They are working in China, India, Korea, Burma, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, the Philippines, the East Indies, the Pacific Islands, Persia, Turkey, Russia, Siberia, all of the nations of Europe, in Africa, and in South America. And their missionaries go out with the firm conviction that they are bearing the last message of God to a dying world. They are all working with but one purpose, to take to all the earth in a single generation the last, and the complete, message of the gospel of Christ, and they believe, with all their hearts, that when this work has been completed, the end of all things will come.

During the growth of their work they have established for the training of their young people and children more than fourscore colleges, academies, and intermediate schools, and more than 700 church, or primary, schools. In these educational institutions they are training about 30,000 children and young people in the principles of the great threefold message, and many of them are definitely preparing themselves for service in the proclamation of that message.

They have also established more than fifty publishing houses and branches in all parts of the earth. These plants are constantly engaged in turning out millions of pages of tracts, pamphlets, papers, magazines, and books, printing in a hundred and fourteen languages, and this literature is being distributed to the people of the world by hundreds of evangelistic colporteurs at the rate of more than half a million pounds' worth a year, all of it containing the message which they feel impelled to give to the world.

They have also established scores of sanitariums for the treatment of the sick, both in soul and body. These sanitariums are scattered over all the earth.

Because of the two characteristic features of the message they teach, the keeping of the commandments of God and the second coming of Christ, this body of people are called Seventh-day Adventists – Seventh day, because they keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, the true instead of the false Sabbath; and Adventists, because they proclaim the second advent, or coming, of Christ.

After studying this movement and its message for years, with the time of its arising, the fact that it followed the churches of the Reformation, and has gone beyond them in advanced light, observing that it is in very truth delivering to the world the message of the coming of Christ, that it meets all the specifications of various prophecies regarding the last movement of the gospel, that it teaches the observance of the Ten Commandments in fulfillment of these same prophecies, that it teaches Sabbath-keeping, that it is the very opposite of the Papacy in every part and detail, that it is preaching the warning message against the beast and his image, and that all the fundamental truths of the gospel of Christ are contained in its message, the writer has no hesitation in confessing his profound conviction that this movement is in very deed and truth what it purports to be—the final work of the gospel among men.

Having swept all the world into one deception or another, and turned the truth of God into a lie, and succeeded in getting men to believe that lie, Satan's last attempt against the church of Christ will be made with the intention of destroying from among men this remnant church of Christ, carrying, as it does, the banner of truth to the world. He will bend all the energies of his master mind to the work of bringing these servants of God to destruction and with them the truth which they bear to the world. He knows that he has but a short time in which to work. The controversy between himself and God which began in heaven is fast closing up, and he realizes that what he does he must do quickly. He is determined to destroy the truth of God from the earth, and also the people of God. Therefore, "the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ!" Revelation 12: 17.

But, thank God, victory is assured to all who remain loyal and true to Jehovah in this great conflict. As we enter the time of trial, the test of our faith and endurance, let us glean courage and hope by turning our eyes with the Revelator to Mount Zion, where stands a Lamb, "and with Him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." Revelation 14: 1. Let us, by faith, hear the glad songs of the triumphant company on that transcendent "sea of glass mingled with fire," where stand those who "have gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name," in whose hands are "the harps of God," as they "sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb!" Revelation 15: 2, 3.

Soon the long conflict of the ages will be for ever past. And, viewed from the glory of the better land, how trivial will seem earth's bitterest woe, earth's tests and trials.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8: 18.

He which testifies these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

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12. The Doom of Civilization

CIVILISATION is doomed, and that within this generation.

This is the carefully considered verdict of serious minded, thinking men, scores of whom hold exalted positions among the statesmen of many nations in the Old World and the New. Clear eyed, they look out upon a world shaken to its foundations by the death agony, and they do not hesitate to declare that the world cannot recover from its hurt unless by a miracle, which they are frank to say they do not expect.

They base their pronouncement on the fact that something far more devastating than an earthquake has jarred the world out of its course, and is breaking it in pieces.

Millions of able-bodied men were killed during the World War. Millions more were permanently crippled. All told, more than twenty million of the world's strongest and best were killed or mutilated in but little more than four years.

The enormous accumulations resulting from the industry of generations are scattered and destroyed. The wealth of nations has been sapped and dissipated. The destruction of property, of wealth, and of the accumulated fruits of industry, has been gigantic. It is a distracted world, a nerve-racked world, a panic-stricken world which we cannot look at without recalling those amazingly descriptive words of our Lord, nineteen centuries ago, when, pointing to our generation, He said:

There shall be signs, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Luke 21: 25, 26.

Or, as Fenton, in his translation, puts it:

Upon the earth, nations in despair, as when in terror of the roaring and raging sea; men expiring from fear, and apprehension of what is coming upon the world.

THE EARTH SHOCKED OUT OF ITS COURSE

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, the famous war premier of Great Britain, likens the war and its after-effects to the crashing shock of planets, which has sent the earth "rocking and reeling out of its course." In his farewell address to America, in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City, November 2, 1923, Mr. George exclaimed:

Look at Europe before the war, then study the map of Europe today, its geography, its frontiers, its currency, its condition, its people, its governments, study its pension lists. There were empires that were like the planets in the heavens that have been rolled down into utter, endless darkness. There were countries that were like the fixed stars in the firmament; and they have crashed into atoms. The earth quivers in Europe; and no one can tell how far it has been shocked out of its course.

There are whole nations today whose transportation systems are dislocated and broken, whose currency is worthless, whose entire populations have been, underfed for years, and who are suffering for want of food, fuel, and clothing. Thousands and thousands of young children and old people are dying day by day of starvation and from diseases which follow in the wake of hunger.

There are whole provinces, covering vast stretches of country, and containing millions of people, where there is no employment, no food, and no fuel in the houses. There are houses which have been stripped bare as piece after piece of furniture has been sold for something to sustain life. And there are many among these millions who, like dumb animals, stand emaciated, despairing, hopelessly awaiting the end.

DISCONTENT IN THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE

HERE are all the elements of a crisis, with possibilities too appalling to contemplate. Hunger and want are the very firebrands of revolution, of turmoil and upheaval. Discontent is seething in the hearts of millions, and unrestrained passions are about to be let loose on the world. It is not surprising that thinking men are looking for the overthrow of governments, for anarchy, for lawlessness, for dissolution, chaos, civil war, and the destruction of civilization. And in view of this situation, it is not to be wondered at that the nations are "in despair, as when in terror of the roaring and raging sea."

The waters are rising, and a storm cloud filled with terrible menace is hanging low over the earth. It will not be long before the flash of lightning will be seen, and the ominous roll of thunder be heard,

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presaging the break-up of civilization and its complete overthrow, followed, we believe, by an entirely new order of things and a universal system of government.

13. The Failure of the Great Peace

THE "Great Peace" which followed "the war to end war" has been a colossal failure.

On November 11, 1918, when the Armistice was signed, the hopes of mankind were high. The Great War was over. The Great Peace had come. And it was to endure.

We often heard it said that the war had been a war to end war. Never again would the nations rush to arms. A lesson had been given to all the world in the destructiveness of warfare, so appalling that men could nevermore be induced to go to war. Nations would now settle their differences by other and gentler means. There must be treaties, there must be disarmament, there must be international courts, and force must give way to justice and the orderly processes of law.

Everybody hated war, which had brought about the material ruin, the sorrow and suffering, the poverty and want, which had threatened the world with destruction. And now war was ended, and it must stay ended.

And the victory of the Allied cause was to end it for ever. The victory had killed war, and thus banished from the earth for ever the greatest scourge of the human race.

The great chance of the world had come. There never had been, during all history, such an opportunity to put an end to the ages-long martyrdom of man by war. The world's wounds were still unhealed, its hurt from the loss of millions of precious lives was still tearing at its breast; the blood that had been shed on its tremendous battlefield was still wet on its soldiers' swords, and the world was soul-sick of warfare. It cried out in the name of mercy for a peace that would endure.

We have all lived long enough to see how false that hope was. The difficulty that should have been foreseen was set forth then at the very start by one of the great statesmen of the nations. Immediately following the signing of the Armistice, General Smuts, of South Africa, said:

From Finland to Constantinople the map will be covered with small nations divided by profound antipathies, and most of them having minorities conducive to internal weakness. We may therefore expect more danger of wars in Europe than in the past.

More productive in evil passions than was the war itself, has been the after-war, which is called "The Peace." Never before has violence been so rampant nor regard for the sanctity of life so low. The poor are poorer, and the fight for life is more severe. The Great War did not end war. It terribly strengthened and inflamed the spirit of it.

In his book, "Where Are We Going?" David Lloyd George says:

Suspicious amongst nations exist just as ever, only more intense; hatreds between races and peoples, only fiercer; combinations forming everywhere for the next war; great armies drilling; conventions and compacts for joint action when the tocsin sounds; general staffs meeting to arrange whether they should march, where they should march, how they should march, and where they should strike; little nations only just hatched, just out of the shell, staggering under the burden of great armaments, and marching along toward unknown battlefields., new machinery of destruction and slaughter being devised and manufactured with feverish anxiety; every day science being brought under contribution to discover new methods to destroy human life-in fact, a deep-laid and powerfully concerted plot against civilization, openly organized in the light of the sun. And that after his experience of four or five years ago, man the builder, and man the breaker, working side by side in the same workshop, and apparently on the best of terms with each other, playing their part in the eternal round of creation and dissolution, with characteristic human energy. What a complex creature is man! It is little wonder that God gave him up repeatedly in despair. He is unteachable." Pages 28, 29.

MADNESS IS STILL ON THE WORLD

SIR HALL CAINE, the British author, in "A Letter to the Churches," cries out his disappointment:

What disappointments we have had! What awful disillusionments! How, during the black night of the war, we built up our hearts, in the midst of so much suffering and loss, in the hope of a new and brighter day that was breaking, a day in which the world would be free, in which the shadow of the sword would

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darken our sleep no more, in which there would be lasting brotherhood among the nations that had mingled their blood on the battlefields.

And now we wake from our troubled dreams with the fearful thought that this was a delusion; that notwithstanding the bravery and heroism and self-sacrifice it called forth, . . . the war has left the world worse than it found it, more full of evil passions, of racial hatred, of jealousy, of selfishness, of a chaos of un-Christian interests in which the brothers-in-arms are most of all at strife.

What an ironical spectacle the world presents at this moment! It is only five years since the Armistice, yet two of the Allied nations are holding each other at arm's length, and cultivating an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in which any trivial incident, any accident, any hot and unwise word, may at any moment provoke an outbreak of active hostility which can only lead on to further and more terrible warfare. .

The fact is clear to all eyes that, as a consequence of the war and of the evil passions provoked by it, the nations are now groaning and travailing in pain, crushed by poverty and misery, and threatened by an apparently inevitable catastrophe which may wipe the very life of man off this planet.

Thinking of this, there are some of us who, having felt the iron of the late war enter into our souls, are now telling ourselves that we would rather die than live to see our children and our grandchildren go through what we went through between 1914 and 1918.

Madness is still on the world. The promised reign of justice has proved a will-o'-the-wisp.

Judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yes, truth fails; and he that departs from evil makes himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. Isaiah 59: 14, 15.

TURNING AGAIN TO FORCE AND VIOLENCE

YES, justice stands afar off. And men are turning again to force to get what they want. Democracy gives way before dictatorship.

Regardless of justice or right or truth, what men want they take. Parliaments, cabinets, conferences, leagues, treaties, conciliation, arbitration, agreements, justice all have failed. The world is turning again to force and violence to settle its difficulties.

David Lloyd George, in the Metropolitan Opera House speech already referred to, said:

What is the real problem in Europe today? I will tell you. In spite of the war Europe still believes in force. Why?

France says: "Alsace-Lorraine was torn from our side fifty years ago. It was unjust; it was wrong; it was cruel; it was oppressive. Justice never gave it back to us. We had to lose 1,400,000 of our young men. You in the British Empire had to lose 900,000 of your young men. Force gave it back to us."

Poland says: "One hundred and fifty years ago our nationhood was destroyed. We were locked in the prison of great autocracies. We waited for justice. We thought we could hear possible footsteps, but they were simply the footsteps of our jailers outside. Force came at the end of one hundred and fifty years and unlocked the door."

The Russian peasant says today: "We never saw the light of liberty until the revolutionist came with his powder and blew our prison walls down!"

Germany says: "We trusted to justice. We trusted to a treaty. We are broken; we are shattered. Why? We are disarmed. We have no force!"

That is why Europe believes in force. That is why Europe believes in violence.

I heard yesterday from a man who had just returned from Germany, who met one of the officers who had been appointed at the Treaty of Versailles to break up the cannon and the machine guns and the torpedoes of Germany. He said up to the last year the German workmen, wherever he went in the workshops and arsenals, used to help him destroy these guns, and say: "For God's sake destroy them, these are the things which brought ruin on our country!" Now he says there is a change. They say: "We cannot trust justice; we cannot trust treaties; we cannot trust the word of great nations; force is the only thing that rules in the world!"

And Mr. Lloyd George adds:-

Unless you stamp out that conviction, civilization is doomed on this earth.

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A COUNSEL OF SUICIDE

THERE are many who, because all their fond hopes have come to nothing, are ready to believe and proclaim that there is no remaining hope of the salvation of civilization, that politics and governments are meaningless mockeries, that religion is only organized hypocrisy, that the churches are a snare, and that there is no human or divine institution or organization in which they will further trust. Force-force without stint, force without limit, force without mercy, force without justice, force without end, every man for himself, to have his own way, to bludgeon his way through -is becoming more and more the sole doctrine of millions, and all because man has left God out of his reckoning.

This plainly is only and altogether a counsel of suicide. It can lead on only from evil to evil, from selfishness to selfishness, from hatred to hatred, from revenge to revenge, and there can be no other end but in chaos and destruction.

Civilization is feeding on its own flesh. It is like a gigantic piece of machinery which by some tremendous shock has been dislocated. It rolls and crashes in harsh confusion. It grates upon our ears in its terrible course. And it carries within its giant, thrashing whirl, the mutilated and bleeding forms of those who have vainly tried to reduce it to order and harmony.

And when it has destroyed itself, and destroyed its maker, puny man, then God, whom man has ruled out in his making of civilization, will, upon the ruins of man's failure, bring into existence His own government of justice, mercy, and universal, lasting peace.

14. Coming Events as Foretold in Ancient Bible Prophecies

GOD'S hand has been very signally manifested in the history of the past. And He has a very definite program for the future. It is unfolding day by day.

What that program is may be clearly seen by a study of the Book of God. It has been plainly set forth in the Scriptures of Truth. The reader is asked to follow it closely by turning to the passages referred to in the statements which follow.

We do not need to accept at their own value the guesses of statesmen as to what the future holds. If civilization is doomed, God will declare it. If we are "Threatened by an apparently inevitable catastrophe which may wipe the very life of man off this planet," this will have been foretold. If the human race is to perish, God will say it. Does not His Word declare: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets"? Amos 3: 7. Did not David say, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him"? Psalm 25: 14. Has not our Lord plainly told us when we may know "that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand"? Luke 21: 31. Did not Paul write: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief"? 1 Thessalonians 5: 4.

A study of God's dealings with man discloses that He will never destroy a world unwarned. He has not changed His course or His methods of justice and mercy. He sent Noah to preach for one hundred and twenty years the coming of the flood of water; He will not permit a deluge of fire to overtake mankind unwarned. He sent angels to warn Sodom of its impending destruction; He will send a similar message to warn of the fiery tempest which overhangs the ruined world. He warned Nineveh of its downfall, Babylon of its impending overthrow, Tyre of its desolation, and Jerusalem of its destruction and captivity; He will not destroy a whole world without premonitions of its ruin. We know our God too well to believe He will allow death and ruin and dismay to come upon the millions who fill the earth, without one prophecy. one admonition, one warning, to prepare them for such a solemn crisis.

GREAT INTERNATIONAL TUMULTS IMPENDING

GOD'S program of coming events, as set forth in the Bible, plainly includes the following:

There are to be great international troubles, calamities, and upheavals, and these are to end in the war of the great day of God Almighty. Revelation 16: 14.

There is to come increased distress of nations, with perplexities, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which shall come on the earth. Luke 21: 26.

There will be a time of trouble such as never was since the nations first came into existence. Daniel 12: 1.

The nations are to gather to conflict, beating their ploughshares into swords and their pruning-hooks into spears. Joel 3: 10.

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They will rush upon each other like the rushing of mighty waters. Isaiah 17: 12.
Troubles and evils and calamities will go forth like a great whirlwind from nation to nation. Jeremiah 25: 32.
The nations will be angry, and the wrath of God will fall upon them. Revelation 11: 18.

THE PERSONAL REAPPEARANCE OF THE SON OF GOD

THE end of these troubles, tumults, and strife will be brought about by the personal reappearance of the Son of God coming in the clouds of heaven with an unparalleled manifestation of glory. Luke 21:27.

When the nations assemble to battle, then the Lord will bring down His own warriors to overthrow them. Joel 3: 2.

When nations rush at each other like the rushing of mighty waters, then God will rebuke them, and scatter them like chaff before the wind. Isaiah 17: 13.

When the armies of the nations are gathered to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, then Jesus will come upon them as a thief. Revelation 16: 15.

When the kings of the earth gather their armies to make war against Christ, then He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords, attended by the white-robed hosts of heaven. Revelation 19: 11-14.

When the nations are angry, then the wrath of God falls upon them, and the time of the dead comes, that they should be judged. Revelation 11: 18.

The complete and eternal overthrow of all the governments of the world will be brought about by the coming of Christ.

He will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psalm 2: 9.

He will grind them to powder, and the wind will sweep them away like chaff. Daniel 2: 35.

The nations and the governments of earth will be destroyed and given to the fiery flames. Daniel 7: 11.

They will be driven like the chaff of the mountains before the winds of God, and as the thistle down before the whirlwind. Isaiah 17: 13.

Jesus will smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and slay the wicked with the breath of His lips. Isaiah 11: 4.

He will tread the nations under His feet as vintagers tread the grapes. Jeremiah 25: 30; Revelation 19: 15.

He will put down all other rule than His own, and all power and all authority. 1 Corinthians 15: 24.

He will judge the nations in righteousness. Acts 17: 31.

He will break the oppressor in pieces. Psalm 72: 4.

He will slay the enemies who rejected His rule. Luke 19: 27.

THE SIGNAL FOR THE RESURRECTION

THE return of Jesus will be the signal for the resurrection of His people from their graves.

At that time the Lord's dead men shall live. Isaiah 26: 19.

They will come forth from their graves to eternal life. Daniel 12: 2.

This will be a resurrection of life. John 5: 29.

The faithful of all ages will then be recompensed. Luke 14: 14.

The patriarchs long hidden in their graves will hear the Lord's voice and answer it. Job 14: 15.

Job will meet his Redeemer and in his flesh see God. Job 19: 26.

All of God's people will be raised to be equal to the angels, and will die no more. Luke 20: 36.

Then mortality will give place to immortality. 1 Corinthians 15: 54.

Then the sons of God will be manifested. Romans 8: 19.

Then these weak, feeble, diseased bodies of ours will be fashioned like unto His glorious body. Philippians 3: 21.

The graves will be opened, and God's people will be gathered from all lands. Ezekiel 37: 12, 13.

From the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, they will be brought to meet their King. Mark 13: 27.

Jesus descending from heaven, and the dead in Christ arising to meet Him, He will catch up His people unto Himself in the air, and they will remain with Him for ever. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17.

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Taken to heaven, they will be presented before the presence of His glory, faultless, and with exceeding joy. Jude 24.

Such are some of the events which the teachings of the Bible lead us to expect. Further revelations in God's glorious Book appear in succeeding chapters.

15. No Human Structure Can Save the World

THE World War was brought to an end by the Treaty of Versailles. But the peace has proved to be only a seeming peace. The seeds of strife still remain. The weeds of trouble have not been eradicated. Many questions are still unsettled and undecided. National jealousies and animosities have not been blotted out. Personal hatred and bitterness is still smoldering..

No settlement that has been devised seems adequate to blot out the memory of the horrors which the war wrought by land and sea, the fields strewn with corpses and the trenches soaked with blood, the pitiless exposure to merciless winter, the terrible suffering of the wounded, and the unspeakable wretchedness of women and children who have been prisoners of despair.

There are still memories of screaming shells, mangled bodies, the rending asunder of great ships, the rain of explosives from the clouds, ruined cities, the tears of women, and the faces of little children pinched with hunger and blanched by fear.

Concerning the potentialities in the international hatred of Europe, David Lloyd George writes:

A temple to human right was built with material quarried out of all that is choicest in the soul of man. But its timbers are being drenched with the kerosene of hatred, and one day a match will be lit by some careless or malignant hand, which will set fire to this magnificent edifice; its splendor will be reduced to black embers, and the hope of mankind will be once more laid in ashes. – “Where Are We Going,” page 40.

There are the same national ambitions and the same national intrigues which were the cause of the former war. These have not been eradicated. There is the same distrust between those who were enemies, and even between those who fought side by side. Twenty millions of men have been killed or maimed. Hundreds of millions of wealth have been consumed. There are ruined lands, unnumbered graves, towering debts.

WAR IN THE HEART OF THE HUMAN RACE

THESE things have not been blotted out by the shaking of hands or the signing of treaties of peace. There may be peace, but it is peace in pretence and outward show; in the hearts of men, in the souls of nations, there is bitterness, hatred, hostility, jealousy, malice, fear, and all the potentialities of unending conflict and strife. Wars and rumors of wars continue and increase. There is, and will continue to be, “distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” Luke 21: 25, 26.

Speaking of the hatred now existing in the hearts of millions in Europe, David Lloyd George says:

Europe today is a cauldron of suspicions and hatreds.-Ibid., page 37.

Europe is a seething cauldron of international hates, with powerful men in command of the fuel stores feeding the flames and striking the fires.-Ibid., page 38.

Yes, there is war in the heart of the human race, war, and strife, and jealousy, and envy, and dissension, and bitterness, and all hatred and malice. Guns and battleships and great armaments do not make themselves; they are not spontaneous freaks or accidents of nature. They exist and stare us in the face solely and altogether because they are the concrete expression of an ideal which rules in human hearts and minds. They are here as the deliberate thought and premeditated act resulting from the rule of that ideal in human hearts. And these things promise never-ending turmoil and strife.

Today there is a spirit of unrelenting, unalterable, unforgiving hate between the various nations and races of men. The spirit of war and strife burns fiercely in myriads of hearts.

Turning again to David Lloyd George's book, “Where Are We Going” we find him writing this-

I warn you that it is madness to trust to the hope that mankind, after such an experience, will not be so rash as to court another disaster of the same kind. The memory of the terrors, the losses, the sufferings of the war, will not restrain men from precipitating the world into something which is infinitely

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worse; and those who think so, and therefore urge that it is not necessary to engage in a new crusade for peace, have not studied the perverse, the stubborn, and the reckless nature of man. Pages 30, 31.

As Sir Hall Caine has said, in the statement already referred to, "the war has left the world worse than it found it, more full of evil passions, of racial hatred, of jealousy, of selfishness, of a chaos of un-Christian interests in which the brothers-in-arms are most of all at strife."

THE PHANTOM HOPES OF THE WORLD

MEN have fondly hoped to compose the troubles of the world by treaties of peace, by conferences, by leagues, by understanding and agreement, and most of all, through the influence of religion. International conference after international conference has been held; disarmament has been proposed; appeals have been made to the League of Nations; a World Court has been formed; the premiers of the Allied nations have met again and again to compose their differences.

But it is becoming more and more plain to all men that the evils of the world which turn the hearts of men from peace to war cannot be overcome by parliaments, or cabinets, or conferences, or courts, or leagues, or commissions, or councils, or conventions, or treaties, or tribunals, but only by a complete change of the individual heart and the individual life by Jesus Christ. For wars issue not out of conditions and things and circumstances and delicately hung balances between nations and the breakdown of international diplomacy, but out of the natural human heart.

Wars are not the result of imperfection in human governments, but of imperfection in the human heart. "Whence come wars? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members." James 4:1.

And men do not, and will not, come to Jesus that they might obtain peace. Sir Hall Gaine says:-

If there is anything clearer than another, when we apply the principles of our faith to the present troubles of the world, it is that its salvation from the sorrow and loss of the late war, from its aftermath of poverty and suffering, from the race hatred and suspicion which are the bitter harvest of the battlefield, and from the still more frightful cataclysm which seems to loom on the forehead of the future, lies in religion, in the return of the nations to the moral ideals of Christ, in forgiveness, in the spirit of brotherhood, in mercy and mutual sacrifice. "A Letter to the Churches."

THE TENDENCY OF MANKIND ALWAYS DOWNWARD

WE agree with this remarkable statement, showing unusual insight into the real need of the world. At the same time we know that the nations will not turn to Christ, will not turn to the church, will not turn to religion, and will not be saved. We know this because the Bible has plainly declared it. The world will be overthrown by Christ, but it will never yield to Christ.

Reasoning not alone from the prophecies and teachings of the Word of God, but also from the analogies of the history of mortal affairs, we see but little hope of human improvement religiously. The tendency of the race as a whole has been downward spiritually from the beginning. As a whole man's penitence has been temporary, his apostasy permanent. His acknowledgment of God's authority has been feigned, or at best half-hearted, his loyalty to Satan practically unqualified. His reformations have been superficial and brief, his revolts deep and protracted. As widely as the race is scattered, so widely have the works of the flesh been manifested. Throughout all generations they have been the same everywhere. The fountain is corrupt, and the stream cannot be better than its source. The heart is deceitful, the life hypocritical. The source of wickedness is within, the manifestation of it without. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and it inherits all the lusts and depravity of carnality.

And these sins and lusts are not occasional mistakes, but the natural acts of a perverted and fallen character. These are the lusts of the flesh which constantly war against the soul (1 Peter 2:11); the out workings of that law of sin which wars against the law of the mind (Romans 7:23); the fruitage of the carnal, or fleshly, nature which is enmity against God, not subject to His law, knowing no rule but lust (Romans 8: 7)-these are the things which, with tireless vigilance, must be kept under, or they would make even an apostle an outcast. 1 Corinthians 9:27. And they can be subdued only by the power of God, controlled only by His Holy Spirit, and crucified and slain only by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Galatians 2: 20; 5: 24.

WHAT IS COMING?

NO HOPE IN MAN

THIS persistent, perverse, unholy disposition in “the natural man” does not change itself. Refinement will not change it. Education will not change it. Evolution will not change it. Civilization will not change it. The repressive enactments of human government will not change it. Changes in the structure of human government will not change it. A League of Nations or a World Court will not change it. It is ever the same. The fruit is like the tree, and the tree is vile. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The perfidious hearts and lives of a rebellious race can no more be changed by human means than an Ethiopian can change his skin or a leopard his spots. The only way a change can be brought about is by being “created [anew] in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Ephesians 2: 10.

In all the ages of the past the only permanent reformations have been those which were wrought of God in individuals. All national reformations and improvements have ended in degeneracy and revolt. All ecclesiastical reformations, after they have run their course, have ended in backsliding and apostasy.

WE LONG FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

IT would be easier for the child of God who understands by the prophetic Word the outcome of all human efforts toward bringing in lasting peace, to refrain from speaking just now. One who loves his fellow-men cannot but sympathize with their ardent hopes for a permanent cessation of the turmoil of the world. We long for peace and justice to be permanently established in this world as ardently as those who look for this to be accomplished by human means. Our minds leap eagerly and gladly forward to that time when the earth shall be for ever purged of war and hatred.

We sympathize with the men of large hearts and broad minds who stand as sponsors for every agency making for peace, and who are laboring unselfishly in the interests of their fellow-men. We join them in their earnest longings for stability and quietness in the earth. We hope their efforts may result in complete cessation of war-provoking strife during which the work of God among men may be carried forward to its conclusion. We sincerely hope they may be able to bring about some lull in the storm of conflicting interests and ambitions, that there may come a little time of peace, affording His church opportunity to finish His work. We therefore pray that God will use their efforts to restrain the wrath of men until His work shall be accomplished; and we pray for the men themselves, that their yearnings for peace may be realized by the Spirit of God opening their hearts to receive as their Lord and King the Prince of Peace Himself.

It may be that such a lull will be looked upon as an enduring peace. It may be that a great “peace and safety” announcement will be made, mankind boasting that it has at last found the way to lasting and universal peace. It is this we would guard against by directing attention to the true hope of the world, the only hope of abiding peace on this planet—the coming of the Son of God to establish His everlasting kingdom of peace.

THE TRUE HOPE OF THE WORLD

IT is for the purpose of directing attention to the true and only hope of mankind—the second coming of Christ—that we point out the certain failure of every human effort to save the world. Indeed, our attention is directed by the Lord Himself to the inability of leagues and courts and federations to cope successfully with the situation. He says:

Say you not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear you their fear, nor be afraid. Isaiah 8: 12.

And again we read:

Associate yourselves, O you people, and you shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all you of far countries: gird yourselves, and you shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and you shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. Isaiah 8: 9, 10.

In this very time, when the hopes of men are centered in human associations and federations, the Lord not only calls them away from these great combinations of human strength, but He invites them to Himself, saying:

Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. Isaiah 8:13.

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We would be remiss in the duty laid upon us by the Lord if, in this time when human society is more broken up and turbulent than ever before, we did not speak frankly. We cannot see the many and varied plans for world peace launched one after the other, laden as they are with human hope and pride, without pointing each soul to the only way he may reach the port of quietude, peace, and joy at last.

With the analogies of the past before us, and with the plain, clear teachings of the Word of God revealed to us, and with the warnings of the divine prophecies unfolding to our understanding, we look for another war, a war as much greater than the one called the World War as that was greater than all that preceded it.

16. The Next War

ANOTHER war, a far more devastating war, a war which will destroy civilization, a “catastrophe which may wipe the very life of man off this planet,” is inevitable.

Speaking of the possibility of war, David Lloyd George writes:

A statistical survey of European armies today is calculated to cause alarm. Europe has not learned the lesson of the war. It has rather drawn a wrong inference from that calamity. There are more men under arms in Europe today than there were in 1913-1914, with none of the justification or excuse which could be pleaded in those days.-”Where Are We Going?” page 53.

Describing a certain gas-generating compound before a Congressional committee, Captain Bradner, chief of research of the Chemical Warfare Service, said-

“One plane, carrying two tons of the liquid, could cover an area of one hundred feet wide and seven miles long, and could deposit enough material to kill every man in that area by action on his skin.

The winner of the gold medal of the Royal United Service Institution in England, Brevet-Colonel J. F. C. Fuller, in his essay on the warfare of the future, says:

It is quite conceivable that many gases may be discovered which will penetrate all known gas armor. As there is no reason why one man should not be able to release one hundred cylinders simultaneously, there is no reason why he should not release several million; in fact, these might be released in England today electrically by a one-armed cripple sitting in Kanichatka, directly his indicator denoted a favorable wind.

PLANNING TO KILL WHOLE NATIONS

IN the laboratories of the world today men are studying new ways of killing other human beings, killing them by wholesale, killing them by entire nations. Major-General E. D. Swinton, of the British Army, in discussing this, said:

I imagine, from the progress that has been made in the past, that in the future we will not have recourse to gas alone, but will employ every force of nature that we can; and there is a tendency at present for progress in the development of the different forms of rays that can be turned to lethal processes. We have X-rays, we have light rays, we have heat rays. . . . We may not be so very far from the development of some kinds of lethal ray which will shrivel up or paralyze or poison human beings. . . . The final form of human strife, as I regard it, is germ warfare. I think it will come to that; and so far as I can see, there is no reason why it should not, if you mean to fight. . . . Prepare now. . . . We must envisage these new forms of warfare, and as far as possible expend energy, time, and money in encouraging our inventors and scientists to study the waging of war on a wholesale scale instead of . . . thinking so much about methods which will kill only a few individuals at a time.

SCATTERING DISEASE-BEARING GERMS

DISEASE germs have already been used in warfare. Their use will be greatly enlarged in the next war. Some rare disease, flourishing in some distant part of the world, so that people elsewhere will have no natural immunity against it, will be chosen. The germs of this disease will be cultivated until they are sufficiently strong to produce a malignant type. Then, after inoculating the home armies and the civilian population, they scatter these bacilli by airplanes, by spies, by infected insects, vermin, or water, and other means, through the country of the enemy. Shortly the opposing army is weakened by sickness, and thus becomes an easy prey.

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So among the dread possibilities of the war to come is a sudden, blighting, mysterious epidemic, death stalking abroad indiscriminately, from which no man can save himself.

Then there are diseases of plants which may be easily cultivated and scattered, wiping out the grain crop of the enemy, and resulting in starvation.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY IMPOSSIBLE AFTER THE NEXT WAR

THE World War cost in money £40,000,000,000. If to this is added the indirect cost, such as property destruction, loss of production, and the money value of human lives, we have a total that staggers the imagination. We have not yet begun to pay the price. The future is mortgaged beyond the possibility of payment. The next war will completely bankrupt civilization. Economic recovery will be impossible.

CELL-DESTROYING GASES TO MAKE THE EARTH A DESERT

LETHAL gases will be the standard weapon of the war to come-that is, of course, providing scientists do not meanwhile discover or invent something more destructive. A property of the gases now being experimented with is one that sterilizes-not merely kills, but actually prevents cell growth. Listen to the comment of an expert:

You burst a container carrying a minute quantity of the substance which makes the gas, at the foot of a tree. You do not see the fumes rise; it is invisible. But within a few seconds you see the leaves begin to shrivel. While we are not quite certain, we estimate that land on which this gas has fallen will grow nothing for about seven years.-"The Next War," page 110.

In the coming war, clouds of such gas will cover hundreds of square miles, not only killing all unprotected living things, both animal and vegetable, but making the soil completely sterile-"for about seven years." Orchards, gardens, farms-all become deserts. There is no more essential item in the wealth of nations than the power of the land to produce food. The next war will destroy that power over large areas.

DESTRUCTION OF HELPLESS NON-COMBATANTS

THE Literary Digest for November 17, 1923, contains the account of a symposium conducted by the New York Herald on the subject of the next war, to which articles were contributed by three military men -a German general, a prominent member of the French General Staff, together with Commander Burney, of the British Navy, inventor of the paravane [A device intended to protect vessels from floating mines, and to destroy the mines.] during the war, and later a Member of Parliament.

Speaking of the slaughter of non-combatant men, women, and children, with other cruelties of primitive warfare, which are confidently predicted for the next war, the German general, who is said to have been commander of an army corps during the World War, stated that the reason for this return to barbarity would be the development of the modern airplane. He writes:

Little imagination is needed to predict what will happen. Air squadrons will drop their poison and fire bombs upon the cities, and the country back of the lines will be reduced to ruins.

In its summary of the symposium the Literary Digest says:

They agree that victory in this war will depend largely upon the destruction of helpless non-combatants, far in the rear of the fighting lines, and that this destruction will be chiefly brought about by airplanes. Poisons, including both gases and death dealing disease germs, will be scattered over the cities. Thermite bombs will start fires, and explosive bombs will destroy factories and lines of communication along with the civil population. The three military critics agree that there is no defense against this slaughter at the present time, since, to put it professionally, the development of the airplane has put the offence far ahead of the defense in modern warfare. They agree also that, in case of another great war, so much of civilization would be destroyed that a return to something resembling the Dark Ages would not be improbable. European civilization might easily be blotted out, agree the German and French authorities, and the British commentator, Commander Burney, of the navy, inventor of the paravane during the war, and at present a Member of Parliament, says that America would be anything but immune.

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SILENT, INVISIBLE, SCENTLESS LETHAL GASES

COMMANDER BURNEY, of the British Navy, in his contribution to this symposium, writes:

With regard to poison gas, the attack would perhaps be even more insidious. Gases now exist that are more than 1,000 times as powerful as anything used in the late war, and on a still day I venture to think that containers carrying gas instead of explosives would kill more people than the same weight of bombs. There is one gas which is so powerful that the person inhaling it would be killed instantaneously. When this gas was tried upon a cat, the animal fell over dead without even a tremor.

Most of the earlier gases, so I believe, affected the animal so that it showed signs of discomfort for some little time before it was vitally affected. The development here is important. Such a gas would not give people time to put on gas masks. Critics will say, however, that there will be plenty of warning because of the noise of the aircraft engines. Not so, says the scientist; the engine can be silenced absolutely, and we have already silenced about 60 per cent of the noise of the propeller. My own opinion is that within ten years aircraft will be practically silent. When that time comes, it will not be a case of "manna" descending from heaven, but silent, invisible, scentless gas that will kill certainly and instantaneously.

Another danger that such a gas will have for the city attacked is its capacity to hang for days at a time if it is not disturbed by wind. Being slightly heavier than air, it would sink into all the lower rooms, subways, and cellars, as well as into the bomb-proof shelters that may be erected in the future. One can imagine the effect of an attack upon a city with subways if the gas was to percolate down the ventilators and stairs. All persons traveling would be instantly killed.

With regard to germs and bacteria, I do not propose to enlarge on this matter, but I am given to understand that flasks and containers filled with these could be dropped into reservoirs, and would thus poison the water supply of all towns.

Perhaps those people who live in Chicago and other cities at great distance from the sea will consider themselves to be perfectly safe, owing to the limited radius of action of airplanes. I do not believe that they have any real reason to assume that sense of safety. The combination of the airship carrying airplanes gives to the attacking planes so great a radius of action that any town could be reached.

DISEASE GERMS OF HORRIBLE VIRULENCY

THE French writer, Colonel Jean Fabry, formerly of General Joffre's staff, declares that diseases spread by microbes will certainly play a large part in the next war." He observes that it has been "a long time since boiling oil and melted wax were poured on adversaries, but the next war seems likely to take us back to those old days, with infinite improvement in the machinery by which such tortures were made possible!" He also declares that "microbes, disease germs of horrible virulency, will be thrown into the drinking water of the cities of the enemy. Aeroplanes will be used for spreading these and other horrors among the civil population!"

THE DESTRUCTION OF CULTURE AND CIVILISATION

THE German contributor, General Berthold von Deimling, writing of the progress which has been made in the use of poison gas, says:-

Specially sinister progress also has been made in the use of poisonous gas in future war. A poisonous gas has been discovered-the so-called Lewisite gas-against which no gas mask will be a protection. For the further development of gas warfare the entire field of chemical industry is available, and it is not improbable that a gas has already been discovered which, highly concentrated, not only irritates but instantly kills.

For the throwing of this all-life-destroying poisonous gas, air warfare has at its disposal ten-ton bombs, which would be ten times as large as the largest used during the World War.

Truly no imagination is needed to depict what will happen in a future European war. The air squadrons will drop their poisons and fire bombs down upon the cities of the enemy, and Europe will be reduced to ruins. This will mean the destruction of culture and civilization.

Then consider the effect of war upon the human heart and mind. During warfare, hate propaganda is deliberately cultivated. Every soldier must be made into "a bit of a brute!" The civilian population is similarly affected. The World War was accompanied, as all know, by crime waves in all countries, and

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highway robberies, burglaries, and sudden murders of passion, increased alarmingly. Restlessness, lawlessness, and anarchy follow in the wake of war.

THE RAGING OF THE FIERCER PASSIONS

THE spirit of restlessness, lawlessness, and anarchy is not limited to one country, but is spreading throughout the world. The impulse to cast off the restraints that law and order have placed on the lower passions of man, has taken possession of myriads everywhere. The terrible calamities, destructions, and desolations which wait upon the footsteps of the demon of lawlessness, seem powerless to deter men in their maddened course. The fiercer passions which rage in the natural human heart are being given free rein, and are driving men everywhere into a terrible abyss. The Spirit of God is apparently being withdrawn from the earth, and man is being left alone with all the evil passions of his nature, with no power to restrain them, and these are breaking out in the most barbarous excesses.

We see in this the ominous forecast of that fearful period just before us, when God's Spirit will no longer strive with men and the door of mercy will be closed. We stand amid the shadows of the events which will close human history. We stand amid preparations for the final conflict. We stand upon the verge of that time of trouble such as never was.

There is a headlong rashness that is becoming more and more a characteristic of our times. Everything moves forward in startling haste. Prudence, wisdom, and caution are brushed aside as of little account, and this characteristic, which is so rapidly developing the spirit of headlong, disorderly haste, of constant restlessness, of feverish rashness, is marked in the Bible as one of the signs of the last days. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be heady." 2 Timothy 3:1-4.

UNBELIEF NEVER MORE IMPUDENT AND DEFIANT

IN the past the people of the earth have, to a greater or less extent, feared the Lord. They have not been altogether atheistic. The denunciations of His messengers have caused them to tremble. When the streets of Nineveh rang with the cry, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be Overthrown," none were so hardened as to treat that message with contempt. There have been other times when faith in God was weak, but unbelief was never more impudent and defiant than it is now.

Today there is a widespread absence of faith in the existence, the providence, and the government of God. Men's ears have become dull of hearing, their hearts have waxed gross. Their stolid hearts have passed beyond the feeling of alarm, so entrenched and fortified are they in unbelief and carelessness. There are multitudes who are practically atheists. God is not in all their thoughts. The exploded superstitions of a past age have been replaced, not by faith, but by a false science, which has become the gospel of the faithless; and by nature, which has become the god of the ungodly.

DRIFTING TOWARD AN ENSNARING DELUSION

CERTAINLY it seems as if the world is driving toward some dark, dire, devilish deception, a deception naturally awaiting those who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved. Throwing away their only safeguard when they reject the truth, they are give in up to embracing strong delusions as a punishment for their unbelief.

Such a manifestation of atheistic apostasy is foreshadowed in the Bible prophecies:

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thessalonians 2: 9-12.

And the eager acceptance of the "signs and lying wonders" of the present time by those who have rejected the truth (their unbelief of the truth being paralleled only by their credulous acceptance of the falsehoods of seducing spirits), indicates that the ensnaring delusion predicted in the Bible is even now entrapping its earlier victims. It may don new disguises and take on new shapes from day to day, but it is certain before long to combine its various manifestations in one mighty denial of the truth, of the Word, and of the authority of God-hissing out its defiance in God's very face, and belching forth its blasphemies

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before His very throne. It will yet meet its answer in that devastating storm of fire which shall destroy the ungodly and cleanse the world.

SCOFFERS LUSTFUL, CONTEMPTUOUS, CARELESS

PETER gives us another sign of the last days when he writes:

There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 2 Peter 3: 3-7.

There are scoffers today who are polite, learned, wise, and contemptuous; scoffers who sneer and deride and mock; scoffers who are careless and presumptuous, as well as "scoffers walking after their own lusts," giving free rein to all their passions; scoffers with the blear of lust in their eyes and the smell of alcohol on their breath, walking in rioting, debauchery, and sin; and in this fact, made so prominent in the atheism of today, we see the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

A REALISTIC DESCRIPTION OF THE NEXT WAR

AN editorial in the Memphis, Tennessee, Commercial Appeal, of December 17, 1918, describes what the world may look forward to when the next war breaks out:

Compared to the next war, the struggle which has just ended will be as a fight between children is to a struggle between giants.

In the next war cannon will be used that can actually hurl shells a distance of forty miles. Forty miles is as far as your great-grandfather could ride in a day's journey when traveling on business of state.

In the next war shells weighing 2,100 pounds will be hurled from these cannon, and their destructive force will be twice as great as any shell now manufactured.

In the next war a poison gas will be used which can penetrate wool and leather. One drop of this gas on the bare skin of the foot will destroy that member. A whiff of this gas will snuff out the life of him that breathes it. This gas can be hurled in shells, and the contents of one shell will kill everything that is living, animal and vegetable, within in area of five acres, and then will spread over other acres and do serious damage.

In the next war the present airplanes will be as pygmies to the airships that will be made. These ships will be armored and will carry high-powered guns. They will carry machine guns and other guns from which will be fired armor-penetrating shells. These airplanes can lift containers of poison gas material weighing a ton. When these gas shells are dropped over a fortress, they will destroy every living thing within a 400-foot radius.

In the next war these same airplanes will carry explosive shells filled with chemicals which will destroy the strongest fortification which men have dreamed of, and will tear holes in the ground into which a fair-sized skyscraper may be dropped.

In the next war there will be machine guns which can fire five times as fast as the Browning of last year, and there will be 75-centimetre guns which can fire as fast as the present Lewis gun. In the next war electricity will play a part which will enable a man standing on the ground to communicate as easily with a man ten thousand feet in the air as it is now to speak across a room.

In the next war there will be electrically controlled dirigibles, kites, and airplanes which may be poised over any area, having no man attached to them and controllable from the ground.

In the next war the tanks will be so perfected that machines having as much armor as a monitor, can go over the country as easily as-a Ford car now passes.

In the next war there will be undersea craft with a steaming radius of five thousand miles. These craft can carry as much tonnage as a cruiser.

They can come to the surface thirty miles away from a city, and can shower that city with gas shells and with high-powered shells, and ten of these cruisers firing on a city can asphyxiate every man, woman, and child in it within a few hours.

WHAT IS COMING?

During the last war the Germans violated all international rules by the use of poison gases. The English and the French were loath to retaliate in kind, but at the close of the war America had spent 60,000,000 dollars [£12,000,000] in manufacturing deadly gases alone.

The world, then, by common consent, has accepted the use of poison gases, and the development of the destructive force of these gases is in its infancy.

In the next war the progress of science in the knowledge of germs of disease will be made available for destructive uses.

In the last war Germany sent certain germs into Romania which were destructive of animals. In the next war we shall see some ruthless but scientific power scattering cholera and meningitis germs throughout the armies of their enemies. By means of these germs the waters of the rivers and the lakes can be polluted and will be polluted.

In the next world war the wastage in men and material and money will be as great in one month as it has been in an entire year during the war that has, just closed. . . .

The war just closed has put a staggering load of debt upon the shoulders of the people. It cannot be repudiated, it cannot be escaped. What is destroyed must be replaced, just as when a vacuum is created it must, at some time later, be filled.

The suffering in the next war will be beyond the measure of even the man or woman who has gone through all the pains that, up to the present time, can possibly come to one.

The next war will prostrate civilization and likely destroy it.

In other words, and summing it all up, the next world conflict may be the Armageddon of the Apocalypse.

17. What Armageddon Is

ARMAGEDDON is the death warrant of a race in revolt against God. It is the result of mankind's rejection of God's rule and his endeavor to govern himself. It is the destruction of every system of human government, the collapse of every human structure and institution. It is the inevitable outcome of man's rebellion against his Maker.

The restless tumult which today is shaking the world, is only the logical fruitage of the ceaseless horror of-war, commotion, and strife, out of which for centuries past, nations have arisen, survived during a more or less brief existence, and passed away, only to give place to others.

From the beginning there has been no stability in the world. Human projects have failed, human hopes have proved phantoms, human promises have turned out falsehoods. All that wisdom, genius, education civilization, and philanthropy have accomplished, still leaves the whole head sick and the whole heart faint. And the ten thousand human panaceas have brought no relief.

CIVILIZATION APPROACHES ITS END

AND now civilization approaches its end, and we do well to inquire into the real causes of its dissolution. The men who think, those who are serious-minded, have long pondered this question in their hearts. What is the trouble with the earth, and the race upon it? Why this age-long conflict, this long-continued struggle? Why this never-ending tumult and confusion, which, after six thousand years of storm and tempest, still gives no promise of calm, but merely presages an even more terrible hurricane of destruction?

Reason can give us no satisfactory answer to this old, old question. Philosophy, too, is helpless here. History gives no proper solution to the problem. The real causes they miss, and their glance at the difficulties of the case are but superficial. The web which surrounds the events of human history can be unraveled only by an Omniscient Mind. The secret cause of the world's difficulties can be set forth only by "the Oracles of God."

And God has told us the cause. His Word affords an answer to these perplexing questions. And that answer is as true as it is brief: "The Lord has a controversy with the nations." Jeremiah 25: 31.

This fact alone will explain the history of the past, the events of the present, and will cast great light upon those events which are yet hidden in the womb of the future. To comprehend the mystery of the past political condition and the future destiny of the world without an acceptance of this statement as fact, is impossible.

WHAT IS COMING?

And we are not left to vague conjecture and speculation regarding the reason for this controversy. It is a controversy between right and wrong.

The Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touches blood. Hosea 4: 1, 2.

THE CAUSE OF ALL WOE

SIN, then, is the cause of the controversy between God and man. The transgression which first interrupted the harmony existing between Creator and creature, brought a curse upon this revolted province of the divine dominions and a curse upon the rebellious race. And that curse has continued and has been the cause of all the woe, the strife, the unrest, the war, and the death, both of nations and of men; and it will finally overwhelm the world.

Man rebelled against God and broke His law. He held men amenable to the rule of right, and they would not yield obedience. They forsook their allegiance to the King of heaven. His high authority they set at naught. Hence He has a controversy with man. Sin is the cause of it. Sin made this breach, and ever since has been widening it. Sin, which is the transgression of God's holy law, separated man from God, and caused man to lift up his puny hand against his Maker.

And from the beginning until now, as a result of sin, the nations have sat in darkness, not because it was necessary, but because they willed it so. Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light. Not only individuals, but nations, have been rebellious. Beneath the "glory of nations" there is shame and crime. Throughout all history iniquity has been established by law. The blood of murdered innocence has cried out; blood has been in all their palaces of pride and power; there has been the gain of wrong-doing, the wages of oppression, the hire of sin, and the price of blood. The cry of oppression has ascended to God through the centuries. There is not a nation in all history that can stand justified before God.

As a result of sin, commotions rock the world today; turmoil reigns everywhere; black clouds hang with evil presage on all earth's political horizons. Mutual hatred embitters the relations of nations with each other. Self-destructive infatuation pervades the councils of the mighty; feverish restlessness permeates the world. Men's fairest schemes result in failure. There is "distress of nations, with perplexity"; "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." The nations are heaving in restless fury, like the roaring of the sea in a great storm.

A WORLD AT WAR WITH GOD

AND the reason for it all is that the world is at war with God. It is at war with His truth, His holiness, His justice, His people, His purposes, and His law. It is this that poisons all earth's banquets, that dislocates its machinery, that stains its pride. And it is this that will eventually, and before very long, utterly wreck the world. Yes, wreck the world. Utter ruin lies in the near future. Let no mistake be made here. God Himself has spoken concerning the destiny of the earth, and what He has said bears on this question of Armageddon.

God used the prophet Jeremiah, who in his youth had been set "over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, . . . to build, and to plant" (Jeremiah 1: 10), to inform us of the outcome of His controversy with the nations. Anciently it was the custom of the king to inflict the death penalty on criminal characters by a cup of poison; and in speaking of God's dealing with the nations, the prophet uses this same figure:

Thus said the Lord God of Israel unto me: Take the wine cup of this fury at My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me. Jeremiah 25: 15-17.

The prophet then enumerates by name the nations of that time who were treated as guilty criminals, deserving of God's wrath. Then his vision widens and covers unknown nations and empires of the future until it involves the whole earth, for he says:

All the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: . . . therefore shall thou say unto them, Thus said the Lord of hosts, the God

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of Israel: Drink you, and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. . . . Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, said the Lord of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He shall mightily roar upon His habitation; He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, said the Lord. Thus said the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. Jeremiah 25: 26-33.

GOD'S FEARFUL MALEDICTION HURLED AT THE NATIONS

THIS prophecy covers the record of the controversy between God and man, fore written by Jeremiah. The judgments of God which began upon Jerusalem and Israel and the surrounding nations because of their rejection of His authority and truth, were to over spread all the earth. The nations named, upon which the wrath of God was pronounced, have disappeared, but the prophet did not stop with them. He takes God's fearful malediction, and hurls it down to the very end of time, fastening it upon "all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth." The noise of this conflict is to "come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with the nations!"

The "great whirlwind," the great tempest of the wrath of God, will bring ruin to all the earth. As a result of it, the earth from end to end will be strewn with the slain of the Lord, ungathered, unlamented, unburied. God's wrath will "fall grievously upon the head of the wicked," and this work of desolation will take place "in the latter days!" Jeremiah 23: 19, 20.

In this manner the Lord will close His controversy with the nations. In this manner He will confound His adversaries. In this manner He will condemn the world with an overthrow. This will be Armageddon. When the nations of the earth unite against God, against His people, against His truth, against His law, and "make war with the Lamb," then "the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings!" Revelation 17: 14.

18. Where Armageddon Will Be Fought

ARMAGEDDON is not merely the war which will seal the destiny of the human race; it is also the place where this war will be fought.

"Armageddon" means literally the mountain, or hill, of Megiddo. It is a vast, triangular plain in the northern part of Palestine, about sixty miles north of Jerusalem. It is bounded on the west by the range of mountains terminating in Mt. Carmel; on the northeast by Mt. Tabor, and on the southeast by Mt. Gilboa.

The area enclosed by these mountain ranges has probably seen more fighting than any other similar area on the surface of the earth. It is doubtful if any other equal area is so blood-drenched as this.

This triangular plain is sometimes spoken of in the Bible as "the valley of Jezreel." Hosea 1:5. It is the plain shown on Bible maps as "the plain of Esdraelon." It became, indeed, a "valley of slaughter," and because of battles which settled the destinies of nations, it came to be known as "the valley of decision." Joel 3: 14.

So much slaughter took place in this valley that it became the synonym for mourning.

In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. Zech. 12:11.

A PREDESTINED PLACE OF BLOOD AND STRIFE

THE valley is the centre of many events closely connected with the history of Israel. The "Encyclopedia Americana" speaks of it as "the great battlefield where occurred the chief conflicts between the Israelites and their enemies." It was the military key of Syria, commanding the highway which ran northward into Phoenicia and Coele-Syria, as well as the road which ran across Galilee to Damascus and the rich valley of the Euphrates. George Cormack, in his "Egypt in Asia," page 83, says:

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The vale of the Kishon and the region of Megiddo were inevitable battlefields. Through all history they retained that qualification; there many of the great contests of south-western Asia have been decided. . . . It was regarded as a predestined place of blood and strife.

This spot witnessed one of the greatest triumphs of Israel when Joshua drove the heathen nations out of Canaan, when “fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo.” Judges 5: 19.

It was in this valley that the slaughter of the Canaanites under Sisera took place, when they were overthrown by Barak and Deborah. Judges 4. It was here that Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, slew Sisera, the enemy of God’s people (Judges 4: 21), and became one of the great heroines of Israel, noted in song and story as “blessed above women.” Judges 5:24.

It was just on the eastern edge of this valley, at Endor, that King Saul sought counsel of a witch, resulting in his death in the great battle with the Philistines, which also took place in the valley, at Mt. Gilboa, Jonathan perishing with his father, together with hosts of other Israelites. 1 Sam. 31: 1-7.

It was here, also, that Josiah, the king of Israel, was slain, and his army overthrown, in the warfare with Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt. 2 Kings 23: 29, 30.

Here, too, it was that Elijah slaughtered the prophets of Baal in that great test between the true God and the false gods. 1 Kings 18.

It was on the edge of this valley, overlooking this place so rich in historical associations, that Jesus grew to manhood, at Nazareth. Close by He performed His first miracle, at Cana. Not far away He delivered the Sermon on the Mount, announcing the principles on which His kingdom is founded.

And here earth’s mighty men are, before long, to fight the battle which will close the history of the warfare of man against man, of race against race, of nation against nation.

19. The Signal for Armageddon

THE downfall of the Turkish Power will be the signal for the beginning of Armageddon. This is plainly foreseen, and definitely stated, in the prophecies of Revelation.

But before dealing with this and the factors in the present situation in the Near East, I desire to sketch with rapid strokes some of the history of Turkey. The present situation as it fulfils prophecy cannot be appreciated without a brief and broad survey of the historical background.

In the territory controlled and occupied by Turkey we have a contact between the East and the West, between the Orient and the Occident. This contact dates back, at this particular point, four or five centuries before Christ, and has always been prolific of trouble.

The first world empires--Babylon and Medo-Persia -were Eastern empires. Western ideas were introduced in the East for the first time by Greece, the third world empire. Rome also extended her rule into Asia. With the Roman Empire the authority of the West was extended over the East clear to the valley of the upper Euphrates. To that authority the peoples of what we now call the Near East submitted.

In the West, Latin Christianity was organizing its forces and strengthening itself by alliances with civil rulers. In the East the Greek Church was developing similarly, though in a more quiet and less aggressive manner. But the natural conservatism of the Orient was to be broken by the advent of a new religion. In the seventh century Mohammed, claiming enlightenment and authority from heaven, not only launched a new faith, but put a sword into the hands of the East for its dissemination, with the result that there was a terrible upheaval, affecting both East and West.

TRIUMPH OF THE CRESCENT OVER THE CROSS

BY the power of that sword Mohammedanism made a drive into India. It overwhelmed the churches of Northern Africa in the persons of the Saracens, or Arabs, and obtained a foothold even in Europe, as a result of its drive into Spain. Then the tide ebbed. But later, the Turks, superseding the Arabs, drove again toward Europe, overrunning Asia Minor, and then brought terror to all Christendom by subjugating the Balkan Peninsula, capturing Constantinople in 1453, and in 1529 besieging Vienna. That was the astonishing phase of the contest between the Crescent and the Cross, of which this generation is destined to witness the final conflict.

Mohammedanism, as an engine of good government, has failed everywhere. Its civil rule has been neither good nor stable. All history testifies to this. Its Mogul empire in India collapsed. The Moors were driven out of Spain. The entire group of Moslem states in North Africa-Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli,

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and Egypt have been forced to accept Western supervision in order to save themselves from anarchic decay. The Ottoman authority broke down, slowly but surely, in the Balkans and the Near East. One by one Turkey lost control of Moldavia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Roumelia, Bosnia, Wallachia, Roumania, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Albania, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palestine, and Syria. For more than a century the world has witnessed the second ebbing of the Islamic tide.

The Turk can conquer, but he cannot educate or govern according to Western standards. Along the lines suggested he has little to offer that would inspire confidence. The fact that the religion of the Turks has always been propagated by the sword, forbids any hope of peace between the cross and the crescent. In short, the Near East is the point of contact between antagonistic civilizations, giving no assurance of peace.

THE QUARRELS AND DIVISIONS OF CHRISTENDOM

FROM the beginning of its history one of the chief sources of the strength of Islam has been found in the quarrels and divisions of Christendom. Constantinople was captured by the Turks in 1453, mainly because the Moslems were agreed about a theological unity, while their enemies were wrangling over a theological trinity. Outside the city, the army of the infidel was one; inside, the armies of the orthodox were several. It has been on such differences, sometimes religious, sometimes political, that the Turk has relied for centuries.

Three centuries ago, after a disastrous war, when the terms of peace were being discussed at the Sublime Porte, the reigning sultan, with the co-operation and approval of the Sheik ul Islam, ordered the following prayer to be recited at every sunset in every mosque in all parts of the Ottoman Empire:

May the Angel of Discord, who has always been our ally Ome again to our aid, and confound our enemies.

Italy, France, and Britain all rule over Mohamrnedan populations-Great Britain over one hundred million of them. The number of Moslems in the world is at least two hundred million. They have failed in statesmanship. They have failed in education. They have failed in political government. But they are a solid unit in religion, holding a common faith, and their Christian rulers deal with them very gently and warily.

There has not been a day for the last three-quarters of a century when Turkey as a political entity could not easily have been destroyed. During that time the Ottoman Empire has not existed by its own strength, but wholly by the sufferance and deliberate choice of the great Powers of Europe.

The condition of Turkey is accurately stated in a pamphlet issued by the Armenian Society of London:

It is impossible to talk of the Ottoman Empire as if it were a nation like the United States or like Holland. It is an artificial creation of treaties, that is kept in existence by the Powers for their own convenience.

A SCRAMBLE FOR OTTOMAN TERRITORY

WHILE it would have been an easy matter to have eliminated Turkey altogether as a civil state, the Powers have kept it in existence in order to avoid war among themselves. Because of the desire of every great Power for the acquisition of Turkish territory, and the danger that its destruction will result in an appalling scramble for its assets, the nations have dealt most carefully with the Turkish, or Eastern, Question. This has been going on for three-quarters of a century, and is frankly admitted by statesmen.

Lord Salisbury, when prime minister of England, in his Mansion House speech, November 9, 1895, said:

Turkey is in the remarkable position that it has now stood for half a century, mainly because the great Powers have resolved that for the peace of Christendom it is necessary that the Ottoman Empire should stand. They came to that conclusion nearly half a century ago. I do not think they have altered it now. The danger, if the Ottoman Empire fell, would not merely be the danger that would threaten the territories of which that empire consists; it would be the danger that the fire there lit should spread to other nations, and should involve all that is most powerful and civilized in Europe in a dangerous and calamitous contest. That was a danger that was present to the minds of our fathers when they resolved to make the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire a matter of European treaty, and that is a danger which has not passed away.

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THE COMPLICATED EASTERN QUESTION

AND that is about the situation today. The world stands trembling for fear that any attempted solution of the vexing Eastern Question may result in a war which will sweep civilization into the discard. And the Scriptures reveal that all this is to take place at the very end of the world, under the sounding of the seventh angel (Revelation 11: 15), when “the kingdoms of this world” “become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.”

When the time comes for the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the end of the world, God’s mercy is past, and His wrath is poured out upon the last generation of human beings, who have rejected all the accumulated light of His revealed Word. Concerning what happens then we read:

I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. Revelation 15.

This striking scripture is but an introduction to the most terrific judgments of God that ever have been, or ever will be, visited upon this earth—the seven last plagues. It should be noted that during the pouring out of these plagues no one can enter the temple of God. This means that when the plagues begin to fall, probation is past.

THE SIXTH PLAGUE

THE most severe trouble, woe, and distress which ever have been, or ever will be on the earth, will come under these plagues. They are the seven last plagues. The sixth plague is the last event to take place before the second coming of our Lord. Of this we read:

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 watches, and keeps 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.

Rotherham translates this passage as follows:-

The sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river the Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be prepared of the kings who were from the rising of the sun. . . . For they are spirits of demons doing signs, which are to go forth unto the kings of the whole habitable earth to gather them together unto the battle of the great day of God the Almighty. . . . And he gathered them together unto the place that is called in the Hebrew Har Magedon.

Sawyer renders the passage thus:

The sixth poured out his bowl on the river, the great Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way of the kings from the East might be prepared. . . . For [these] are spirits of demons that perform miracles, that go to the kings of all the world, to assemble them for the battle of that great day of God Almighty. . . . And they assembled them in the place called in Hebrew Armageddon.

The “Emphatic Diaglott has this translation:

The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way of those kings who are from the sun-rising might be prepared. . . . For they are spirits of demons, working signs, which go forth to the kings of the whole habitable world, to gather them together for the war

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of that great day of the omnipotent God. . . .And he gathered them together into that place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon.

Fenton translates the passage thus:

Then the sixth emptied his vial upon the mighty river Euphrates: and its water was dried up, so that a road might be prepared for the kings from the rising sun. . . . For they are spirits of demons-producing signs which they cause to be sent out to the kings of the whole habitable world, to muster them for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty! . . . They accordingly mustered them to the place which in Hebrew is named Har-Megeddon.

Moffatt renders the passage:

The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its waters were dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. . . . Demon spirits performing miracles, who come out to muster the kings of the whole world for battle on the great day of Almighty God. . . . And they were mustered at the spot called (in Hebrew) Harmagedon.

Weymouth translates the passage:-

The sixth angel poured his bowl into that great river, the Euphrates; and its stream was dried up in order to clear the way for the kings who are to come from the East. . . . For they are the spirits of demons working marvels-spirits that go out to control the kings of the whole earth, to assemble them for the battle which is to take place on the great day of God, the Ruler of all. . . . And assemble them they did at the place called in Hebrew "Har-Magedon."

Ballantine, in his "Riverside New Testament," renders the passage:-

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to make a road ready for the kings from the sun-rising. . . . They are the spirits of (demons who work miracles, and they go forth to the kings of the whole habitable world to gather them for the battle of the great day of God the Almighty. . . . The spirits gathered them to the place called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

Goodspeed translates the passage:

The sixth emptied his bowl upon the great river Euphrates, and its waters dried up to make the way ready for the kings from the East. . . . They are demon spirits that perform wonders, and they go out to the kings all over the world to muster them for battle on the great day of God Almighty. . . . So they mustered the kings at the place called in Hebrew Armageddon.

Under the sixth plague the river Euphrates is to be dried up. And this is to be done "so that a road might be prepared for the kings of the rising sun."

THE DRYING UP OF THE EUPHRATES

THIS certainly cannot refer to the literal drying up of the waters of the literal river. This river flows down from the mountains of Armenia into the Persian Gulf. It has been flowing at least ever since the Flood. And during all this time it has been crossed and re-crossed by mighty armies, even when it was at the flood, and no army ever found it necessary to have it dried up in order to cross it. So this language cannot refer to the literal river.

What is meant by the waters of the river, we learn from the following passage, which interprets the symbol:

He said unto me, The waters which thou saw, . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. Revelation 17: 15.

The water of the river is a symbol of that Power which occupies the territory in that part of the earth drained by the river Euphrates. The drying up of the waters of the river would mean the setting aside or the destruction of the Power. And that Power is Turkey. Turkey, then, according to the Word of God, is to be overthrown and destroyed.

But it may be objected that Turkey now controls only a part of the territory drained by the upper Euphrates. Very true; but a stream can be dried up only by drying up its source. When, a quarter of a century ago, it was decided to change the direction of the flow of the Chicago River so that instead of emptying into Lake Michigan, its polluted waters should be discharged through the south fork into the Des Plaines River, finally reaching the Mississippi by way of the Illinois River, this was not done by raising the mouth of the Chicago River, but by lowering its source, so that its waters would naturally flow south instead of north. Even so, if the course of the Euphrates is to be changed or its waters dried up, the change must be wrought, not at its mouth, but at its source, still controlled by the Turk.

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When the Euphrates is dried up, or, dropping the figure, when Turkey is destroyed, there will be a scramble for his territory, resulting in general war. This will be the certain result, both in the opinion of world statesmen and also in the teaching of the Bible.

As a result of the downfall of Turkey, “the kings of the earth, and of the whole world,” will be gathered to Armageddon.

Resulting from the downfall of Turkey there will be a repercussion throughout all the East, and a “road” will be “prepared for the kings from the rising sun” to attack the war-weakened Powers of the West.

They will come up with “the kings of the whole habitable world,” mustered for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

AN INTERNATIONAL, INTERRACIAL, INTERRELIGIOUS CONFLICT

WHO are these kings from the rising sun, the “kings of the East”? They pre the nations lying east of Palestine, the heathen nations, the colored races, the uncivilized, the barbarous nations of the world, constituting more than half the population of the earth.

Here, then, is outlined the real “yellow peril,” long foreseen and feared by the West. Here, indeed, is “the rising tide of color.” Armageddon will be not merely an international conflict, it will be interracial and inter religious as well.

In connection with Armageddon there will be the pouring out of the seventh, and final, plague:

The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. 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. Revelation 16: 17-21.

As a result of Armageddon, human governments as now constituted will pass out of existence for ever. Man, with his works, his cities, his kingdoms, his glory, and all his pomp, pageantry, and pride, will be overthrown.

At Armageddon international, interracial, and inter religious strife will give place to that phase of man’s effort to retain the dominion of this earth described in Revelation 19: 19 as a contest between the armies of earth. and the armies of heaven. The war between nations will be interrupted by the personal, visible return of Jesus Christ in power and great glory, for it is then that He comes to “break” the nations “with a rod of iron,” and “dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Psalm 2: 9.

20. The Return of Jesus

THAT Jesus will come again, the second time, is one of the plainest teachings of the Bible. No other stands out so clearly as this.

If we take only the testimony of Jesus Himself, who repeated again and again to His disciples the teaching that He would come the second time, we shall have sufficient evidence of the truth of this doctrine.

JESUS PROMISED TO RETURN

JUST before His death, for the comfort and encouragement of His disciples, Christ said to them:

Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:1-3.

Certainly this is a clear-cut, unequivocal promise, the meaning of which there is no possibility of mistaking. The Master Himself said: “I will come again.”

To the unbelieving Pharisees and scribes, just before His betrayal, He said:

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Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Matthew 23: 39.

When instructing His disciples, in answer to their question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24: 3) Jesus said:

Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: . . . and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24: 30.

And to His disciples again He said:

The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels. Matthew 16: 27.

When adjured by the high priest at His trial, Jesus answered:-

Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Matthew 26: 64.

Finally, in the last chapter of the Bible, this same Jesus repeats three times to His servant John this truth of His second coming: "Behold, I come quickly"; "And, behold, I come quickly"; "Surely I come quickly." Revelation 22: 7, 12, 20.

This uniform testimony of the Savior is enough to create conviction in every heart that accepts Him as its guide and teacher. There is no doubt here. Jesus is coming again.

THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING

THE purpose of the coming of Christ the second time is set forth in the Bible just as clearly as the fact of His coming. He is coming to receive His people unto Himself:

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14: 2, 3:

His people will be gathered together by His angels when He comes:

He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24: 31.

At the time when Jesus comes, most of His people will be sleeping in death. And therefore one of the primary purposes of the coming of Christ is, to awake the sleeping saints and give them an immortal existence:

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. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

Some of the people of God, however, at this time will be alive, not having tasted death. These will be united with those who have been raised from the dead, and both classes will be caught up together to be with Jesus:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4: 17.

When this takes place, both classes will be changed from their mortal, corruptible state and given a glorious immortality:

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. 1 Corinthians 15: 51-53.

TO JUDGE THE WORLD

ANOTHER purpose for which Christ will come the second time will be to judge the world:

For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth. Psalm 96: 13.

Paul makes it very clear that the judgment of the living and the dead will take place at the second coming of Christ:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, preach the Word. 2 Timothy 4: 1, 2.

It was at this time also that Paul expected to get his reward for faithfulness, for he says again:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing. 2 Timothy 4: 8.

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It is at the time of the second advent of Christ that the great and final separation of the righteous and the wicked takes place:

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Matthew 25: 31, 32.

At this judgment every man will be rewarded in exact accordance with his works. Rewards and punishments will be apportioned to the righteous and the wicked:

The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works. Matthew 16: 27.

THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE

THE second coming of Christ is also for the purpose of bringing complete salvation to His people—salvation from death and the grave for ever:

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9: 28.

Of this glorious time we read:

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Isaiah 25: 8, 9.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED

ANOTHER purpose for which the Lord will come the second time will be to destroy from the earth the wicked, those who have rejected His mercy and His truth:

The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8.

Concerning this same punishment we read:

With righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. Isaiah 11: 4.

John writes of this destruction of the wicked at the coming of Christ as follows—

The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou should give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth. Revelation 11:18.

THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

ANOTHER great purpose of God in the second coming of Christ is the restoration of all things which have been lost through the introduction of sin into this world:

He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution

of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3: 20, 21.

Jesus will come as King of kings and Lord of lords to reign for ever and ever:—

I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. . . . He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. Revelation 19:11-16.

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TO ESTABLISH AN ETERNAL KINGDOM

THE kingdom over which He will rule will be an everlasting kingdom:

In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: . . . and it shall stand for ever. Daniel 2: 44.

There was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7: 14.

The Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. Micah 4: 7.

Of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke 1: 33.

And to this kingdom the people of God shall be join theirs with Christ, and the coming of Christ will assure to His people the kingdom which has been promised the faithful:-

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. Daniel 7: 27.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matthew 25: 34.

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. Revelation 5:10.

THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING

IN order to prepare the people on the earth for His coming, that this great and glorious event may not come upon them unawares, the Lord has set forth in His Word many signs which show the nearness of this event.

The unparalleled running to and fro, the remarkable increase of knowledge, the striking activity in invention, all were foretold in the prophecies:

Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Daniel 12: 4.

The world-wide distress of nations and the fears that strike into the hearts of the human race when they look into the future, were also given as signs of the coming of Christ:

There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Luke 21:25, 26.

The trouble which is brewing and constantly breaking out between Capital and Labor is also foretold as a sign of the times:

Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. James 5: 1-3.

The condition of the religious world, its love of self, its boasting, its pride, its blasphemy, its disobedience, its ingratitude, its lack of holiness, its lack of natural affection, its truce breaking, its false accusing, its hatred of goodness, its treason, its headstrong recklessness, its haughtiness, its love of pleasure, its formalism and hypocrisy, and the corruption that permeates our entire social fabric-all are pointed out in the Bible:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. 2 Timothy 3: 1-5.

THE MANNER OF HIS COMING

THE manner of Christ's coming is also set forth with great plainness in the Scriptures. His coming will be literal. He is actually to appear in the sight of men:

Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9: 28.

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Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Titus 2: 13.

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven. Matthew 24: 30.

That the coming of Christ will be witnessed by the entire world is also made plain:

Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him. Revelation 1: 7.

The second coming of Christ will be accompanied by such a demonstration of power and glory that nothing in all the annals of history will compare with it:

The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Matthew 24: 27.

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24: 30.

He shall come in His own glory, and His Father's, and of the holy angels. Luke 9: 26.

A PERSONAL COMING

THE second coming of Christ will be a personal coming. He Himself will actually return:

While they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven. Acts 1:10, 11,

The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16.

21. The Millennium

THE second coming of Christ is the event which ushers in the millennium. The millennium is not, as many suppose, a thousand years of glory and peace on earth. It is not an age of progress. It does not result from the conversion of the whole world; nor will the world be converted during that period. Neither Christ nor His people will be on earth during the thousand years. That period does not offer a second probation to any.

On the contrary, it will be an age of darkness and gloom. It will be a period when death reigns over all the earth. The day of salvation will then have ended; the day of the Lord will have begun. And of this day of the Lord, or the millennium, we read:

Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it? Amos 5: 18-20.

Blow you the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Joel 2: 1, 2.

THE BINDING OF SATAN

DURING the thousand-year period-the millennium -Satan will be bound in some place called "the bottomless pit." Here it is impossible for him to carry on his work of deception. Here he receives a partial punishment for his career of evil.

I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and 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. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I

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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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Revelation 20: 1-5.

The fact that Satan is bound during the millennium has led many to conclude that this period will be a very happy, glorious time of peace among the nations, that all the nations will be converted to the gospel, and as a result disband their armies, dismantle their navies, and learn war no more. This theory has been taught so long that it has come to be widely believed, but it has absolutely no foundation in the Scriptures.

THE WORLD WILL NOT BE CONVERTED

THE Bible nowhere teaches that the whole world will be converted. In the parable of the wheat and tares, recorded in Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, it is made very plain that both the righteous and the wicked are to “grow together” until the “harvest,” which is explained to be “the end of the world.” At the end of the world, instead of the wicked all being converted, they are to be cast into a furnace of fire, where there will be “wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Instead of the world’s growing better and better, as the exponents of the world-conversion theory teach, we are plainly told in the Bible that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3: 13.

In describing the days immediately preceding His second coming, Jesus declared:

As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. Luke 17: 26-30.

A picture of the days just before the second coming of Christ, then, may be had by a study of the character of the times just before the Flood, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Concerning these conditions, we read:

God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6: 5.

THE ORDER OF MILLENNIAL EVENTS

THE order of events opening and closing the millennium is plainly set forth in the teachings of the Bible. It is to begin, as we have seen, with the second coming of Christ. At this time there will be four classes of people on the earth; namely, the righteous dead, the righteous living, the wicked dead, and the wicked living. The Bible makes plain what becomes of each class.

At the coming of Christ all the righteous dead will be raised from their graves, and will be taken to heaven with the righteous living, who are to be translated.

The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17.

The righteous dead, then, together with the righteous living, will be caught up to meet the Lord on the cloud. They will not remain in the air, as some teach, but will go with the Lord to heaven.

In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14: 2, 3.

In heaven they remain during the thousand years of the millennium.

They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Revelation 20: 4.

It is plain from this that the righteous are not on earth, but in heaven, during the thousand years of the millennium.

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The wicked dead are not raised at the second coming of Christ. They are left unmolested in their tombs. Their sleep is not broken at this time; for-

The rest of the dead [the wicked] lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Revelation 20: 5.

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

THERE are two resurrections—a resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Christ, and a resurrection of the wicked one thousand years later, at the close of the millennium. Thus the millennium opens with a resurrection and closes with a resurrection.

The living wicked will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ, and will remain dead until the second resurrection, at the close of the millennium. It is to the wicked living at the coming of Christ that the apostle refers when in 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-10 he writes:

You who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

From this plain teaching of the Bible we see clearly what becomes of the four classes on the earth at the second coming of Christ. The righteous dead will be raised, the righteous living will be translated, and together these two classes will be taken to heaven to live and reign with Christ for a thousand years; the wicked dead are left in their tombs, the wicked living are all brought to death, and together these two classes will remain in the prison house of death until the close of the millennium.

22. The Depopulation of the Earth

DURING the millennium the world will be in a completely ruined, wrecked, and depopulated condition. It is Armageddon which will begin the slaughter that is to be as wide as the world. Armageddon is not only the self-destruction of a race in rebellion against God, but it is the forerunner of the final overthrow that shall befall all the wicked forces of earth, a ruin from which there shall be no recovery, no return.

There could not, in the very nature of things, be any other issue than this to the great controversy between God and a race in revolt. True, the race might lay down its arms, and cease to fight against God, and thus bring an end to the rebellion; but so long as the race persists in its warfare, it can look forward to no other end than complete destruction.

For the controversy is one between right and wrong, between good and evil, and there can be no other issue to it, as far as men are concerned, except voluntarily giving up the wrong or perishing with it. In a warfare between a just and almighty Creator and His frail and rebellious creatures, between a righteous and omnipotent Ruler and His puny and revolted subjects, there can be but one end. Rebellious men must go down in death, while God triumphs. Wrong must be defeated by right.

SIN MUST BE ANNIHILATED

ON the part of Jehovah the controversy is a just and righteous one. And being such, it admits of no compromise of the eternal principles of righteousness to the willfulness of fallen and misguided man. Nor can God be indifferent to man's sin, or neglect it, or overlook it. This would be but to perpetuate wrong. No, the cause of the controversy must be rooted up, the thing which caused the separation between man and God must be destroyed. Sin must be annihilated. Before the controversy can ever end, its cause must be eliminated. There can be no other adjustment.

And, therefore, so far as man is concerned, there can be but two ways for the controversy between himself and God to end. Sin is to be destroyed. Man can give it up and return to God, or he can be destroyed with it. Either he must yield to his Creator, and return meekly, penitently, and obediently to his allegiance to God; or, refusing to do this and continuing persistently to set aside the divine authority, and rejecting the mercy which has been offered, and despising the grace which has been extended to draw him back, he must finally fall beneath the stroke of that justice which he has outraged, and be destroyed by the

WHAT IS COMING?

execution of those laws which he has transgressed. Either he must bow or be broken, yield or be overthrown, for God cannot deny Himself.

It is, as we have seen, at the time of Armageddon that-

Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground. Jeremiah 25: 32, 33.

“THERE WAS NO MAN”

IT is just after this great visitation of the wrath of God at Armageddon and the second coming of Christ, that the prophet has a view of the earth. He says:-

I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger. Jeremiah 4: 23-26.

A description of the earth during the millennium will be found also in Isaiah:

Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turns it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof. . . . The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. Isaiah 24: 1-3.

THE DEATH WARRANT OF A GODLESS RACE

THE utter depopulation and ruin of the earth such is the terrible destiny which overhangs this world. Not since the waters of the Flood overwhelmed the human race has such a terrible and widespread destruction been known to man. In history there has been no fulfillment of this prediction. The war which humanity has been waging against Jehovah has not yet reached its final issue. But the end is hurrying on apace. The wrath of God, like a pall of blackness, overhangs the impenitent world. It is the death warrant of a godless and impious race. Nothing but slaughter as wide as the world can fill in the terrible picture. And when the time has come for God to pronounce judgment-

Behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. Isaiah 66: 15, 16.

THE FURIOUS TORNADO OF GOD'S WRATH

THIS great tempest of the wrath of God will break suddenly upon a surprised and unready world. Those who have rejected God's final offer of mercy, His closing message of the gospel, will be solacing their hearts with the belief that universal and lasting peace has at last been brought about between the nations of the world. Claims will be put forth that man has at last solved the long problems of the ages and created a perfect form of international government. And then-

When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 1 Thessalonians 5: 3.

Like a furious tornado will the storm of the wrath of an offended God burst upon those who have despised His mercy. "In the latter days" it shall do its work, falling grievously upon the head of the wicked. Jeremiah 23: 19, 20. The earth will be strewn from end to end with the bodies of the slain of the Lord, as dung upon the ground!" Jeremiah 25: 31-33. The great and mighty, the nobles and princes, are called upon to howl and mourn over their impending ruin:

Howl, you shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, you principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and you shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. Jeremiah 25: 34, 35.

This is the final doom of the rebellious race:

Your hand shall find out all your enemies: Thy right hand shall find out those that hate Thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath,

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and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shall Thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men. Psalm 21: 8-10.

DASHED IN PIECES LIKE A POTTER'S VESSEL

WHILE the heathen are raging and the people imagining a vain thing, while rulers plot and kings devise impotent devices, then-

He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: and the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure.

Thou shall break them with a rod of iron; Thou shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psalm 2: 4, 5, 9.

In this manner the long controversy between God and man will close. There is no other prospect than this for a sin-cursed and impenitent race which persists in sin.

The race which obstinately continues its rebellion, and thus makes itself the enemy of God, cannot hope for life. For when Christ shall come to decide the controversy, then "a fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about." Psalm 97: 3.

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound the heads over many countries. Psalm 110: 5, 3.

STRUCK WITH DIVINE JUSTICE

SIMILAR to this is the instruction given to Ezekiel. After he beholds the terrible wrath of God poured out upon the nations which then existed, his eye pierces the future to the events of "the latter years!" And there, in connection with the consummation of the great controversy between a rebellious race and its Creator, he sees the countless foes of God marshalling themselves to battle against Jehovah like the gathering of a great tempest. But he also sees them met with the fearful fury and vengeance of a despised God, who rains upon them "hailstones, fire, and brimstone," while at the same time He summons all the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth to come and gorge themselves upon the flesh of - His enemies, the great and mighty of the earth, who have been struck with divine justice. Ezekiel 38: 3-9, 17-22.

In the vision of Daniel the kingdoms of the earth are represented by a great image, grand and imposing, the materials of which degenerate in character until from the head of gold we descend, through silver, brass, and iron, to the feet made of a mixture of iron and clay. And then, with a suddenness which takes the world unawares, a great stone, thrown by unseen hands with terrible velocity, strikes the colossal image on its feet, and crushes it all to powder, a powder which is driven and scattered by the whirlwinds and tempests of God's wrath until not a vestige of it remains, while the stone which overthrows the kingdoms of the world becomes a great mountain which fills all the earth.

THE RESTLESS MIGHT OF AN OFFENDED GOD

HERE is foreshadowed the fact that earth's kingdoms would degenerate, and the character of the race become so sinful that the resistless might of an offended God would at last smite them, resulting in their utter extermination, while their destruction would be followed by a better order of things in the kingdom of God, represented by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. This stone is to crush every opposing power, and fill the entire earth with its eternal and beneficent influence.

Passing on to the prophecy of Joel, we find him predicting the same events, and the utter overthrow of the enemies of God. All nations are summoned to the conflict. The men of war are bidden to come up. Their ploughshares are to be beaten into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears. Both weak and strong are summoned to the valley of Jehoshaphat, to which place Jehovah Himself is to bring down His mighty ones, and sit to judge the nations round about. Then the command goes forth-

Put you in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Joel 3: 13.

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Multitudes are there in that valley of decision. The skies overhead are clouded with a pall of blackness. The voice of God thunders out of Zion, the heavens and the earth are shaken as by an earthquake's power, and God's judgments fall with a fury which exterminates all His puny foes.

Similar allusions will be found in Amos, Obadiah, and Micah. Zephaniah foretells the time when God shall "rise up to the prey (Zephaniah 3: 8), when the nations are gathered and the kingdoms assembled. And at that time he declares that God will pour out upon them His indignation, even all His fierce anger, and the fire of His jealousy will devour the whole earth.

And the prophet Haggai delivers this message from God.-

I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. Haggai 2: 21, 22.

According to Paul, who comments on this passage, this shaking will be more severe than that on Mt. Sinai when the law was given, for that voice shook only the earth, whereas it will now shake both earth and heaven, removing everything that can be removed, while the things which cannot be shaken, and the kingdom that cannot be moved, will abide, and become the eternal heritage of God's people.

Thus the testimony of inspired men on the point of the destiny of the human race is characterized by unity and harmony. It leads to but one conclusion. The controversy between a revolted race and the Creator will be closed by judgments unparalleled and indescribable in severity.

THE BOTTOMLESS PIT OF SATAN'S CAPTIVITY

FROM the description which the prophets have given of the condition of the earth during the millennium, we see that it will be a waste, desolate wilderness. There will be no man here. The righteous will be in heaven. The wicked will all be dead. The cities of the earth will be broken down at the presence of the Lord. All the works of man will be destroyed. Darkness will cover the earth. The bodies of the dead will be from one end of the earth to the other end. There will be no one to lament them or bury them.

It is the earth in this condition which is called the "bottomless pit," into which Satan is cast and bound. The term "bottomless pit" is used in Revelation 9: 1, 2, and is there applied to the Arabian desert, from which issued the hordes of Saracens and Turks which are described in that chapter. The term means any place of darkness, desolation, and death. And when the earth, during the millennium, returns to its original condition of chaos, "without form and void," it becomes the "bottomless pit" of Satan's captivity.

THE BINDING OF SATAN

HERE, in this desolate earth, with its cities broken down and its whole expanse become a great wilderness, without any of the human race left, Satan will be compelled to stay for one thousand years. He is bound with a great chain. This chain is not a chain of iron or steel, or tungsten, or brass, but a chain of circumstances. He is unable to do anything. He cannot deceive the righteous, for they are in heaven, out of his reach. He cannot deceive the wicked, for they are all dead. There is nothing he can do. By the very circumstances of his position he is bound, and he must of necessity remain bound until some change is brought about either in the condition of the righteous or in that of the wicked.

While this is not Satan's final punishment, it is a just preliminary to it. It is sin which causes the wreck of the world. It is sin which causes the cities of the earth to be broken down. It is sin that slays the wicked. It is sin that makes the earth a desolate wilderness. All this is the work of Satan. This is the result of the rebellion he started in heaven and continued upon earth.

And now, during the millennium, he is made to understand what it all means, what its results have been. This ruined world is his handiwork. And for a thousand years he is compelled to view the results of his work. He is compelled to live in the conditions which he himself has brought about. His work of deception has been made impossible. The righteous have at last escaped his grasp, and are enjoying the delights of heaven at the court of the King of the universe. The wicked are before him, but they are cold in death.

WHAT IS COMING?

23. The Second Resurrection

AS it was the destruction of the wicked and the translation of the righteous at the second coming of Christ which bound Satan, so the great chain with which he is bound will be broken by the resurrection of the wicked at the close of the thousand years.

The millennium begins with a resurrection and ends with a resurrection. The righteous dead are raised at its beginning, and accompany Christ to heaven. The wicked dead are raised at its close.

The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Revelation 20:5.

It is plain from this passage that the wicked dead are not raised until the close of the millennium; for if the rest of the dead live not again until the thousand years are finished, then when the thousand years are finished, the rest of the dead (the wicked) will live again.

BREAKING SATAN'S BONDAGE

THIS, then, the resurrection of the wicked, breaks the chain of circumstances with which Satan has been bound during the thousand years, and makes it possible for him again to enter upon the work of deception. The emptying of the earth of all human inhabitants constituted his binding, and now the resurrection of the wicked brings about his release.

The vast hosts of evil angels have been gathered about Satan, and now this great company is joined by the innumerable throng of the wicked.

The earth . . . shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. Isaiah 26: 21.

The earth shall cast out the dead. Isaiah 26: 19.

Bishop Lowth renders these words, "The earth shall cast forth as an abortion, the deceased tyrants."

These are the ones spoken of in Isaiah 14: 9:-

It stirs up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth.

And this is rendered by Bishop Lowth: "He rouses for thee the mighty dead, all the great chiefs of the earth."

THE WICKED DEAD COME FORTH

HERE are included the giants who lived on the earth before the Flood, and who perished with the Flood. During the ages that are past the earth hid her dead. Blood defiled the land, and the pollution of the dead carcasses made it unclean from end to end. But now an end has come to all this. The earth discloses its blood, and no longer covers its slain.

The earth casts out the mighty dead. Every sinner comes forth. Death and the grave deliver up the dead which are in them. The sea delivers up the dead which are in it. The accumulated generations which were in the world "which then was," and was overthrown with water at the time of the Flood, generations which are now submerged in the bed of the oceans, and all the generations which have gone into their graves since the world was overflowed with water, come forth together to receive their final and eternal punishment.

Many of these who come forth in the second resurrection are skilled in warfare, and they are just as eager as ever to destroy their opponents.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY CITY

IT is at this time that the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, comes down from heaven and rests upon the earth.

I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. Revelation 21: 2, 3.

That beautiful city, lightened with the glory of God, destined to be the capital of the new earth, settles down upon the place prepared for it, in the sight of the wicked. And in the city are the redeemed of the Lord who have been living and reigning with Him during the millennium.

WHAT IS COMING?

24. The Contest Between God and Man Resumed and Finished

THE warfare of man against God, which was broken off at the second coming of Christ, when all His enemies perished, will be resumed when the wicked are raised from the dead at the end of the millennium. Their thousand-year sleep in death has not changed their natures in the slightest degree. They went down to their graves in rebellion against God. Their first impulse on awakening from the sleep of death is to continue in the same evil course.

The warfare of the rebellious race begins again just where it was broken off. But now it may be seen in its true light. It is not now confused by a medley of motives, international, interracial, inter religious. It is not a war of race or religion. It is not the colored race against the white, Protestant against Catholic, Christian against heathen.

It appears now in its true colors. It is a rebellion against God. It is sinners against their Maker. It is a revolt of the puny creatures of the earth against the Majesty of heaven. It is Satan against Christ, sin against righteousness, evil against goodness.

SATAN PLANS TO CAPTURE THE NEW JERUSALEM

AS Satan sees himself joined by the great host of the wicked, and beholds before him the New Jerusalem containing the righteous and the holy angels with their loved Commander, the Son of God he determines that he will not yet abandon his struggle for the supremacy of the world. He points out to his angels and the mighty men of the earth that the city appears to be unprotected, and would doubtless be unable to resist attack. He leads them to believe that after all they may be able, with the assistance of the mighty hosts of the wicked, to surround the city and overthrow the government of God, and take possession of the New Jerusalem.

As Satan lays before them this great project, they agree to it, and plans are made to carry it out. The wicked are marshaled in companies and organized for labor and warfare. Armies are formed and drilled. Weapons of warfare are prepared for the great struggle which is to decide the long controversy between Christ and Satan for the control of the universe. Companies, battalions, regiments, and corps are formed and drilled by great leaders in war.

The hosts of evil are all marshaled at last under one banner, that of the prince of demons. This is to be the battle that closes the warfare which began in heaven before the days of Adam and Eve, and has been the cause of all warfare since. The long controversy between Christ and Satan is about to have an issue.

Satan leads the hosts of the wicked against the city, and they surround it on every side. They are led to hope for success, but instead they meet their eternal destiny in oblivion. What happens then we read:

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. Revelation 20: 7-9.

THE TEMPEST OF GOD'S WRATH

As the great host of the wicked surround the Holy City, God goes forth from His place to punish His adversaries. Their wickedness has been great, and the tempest of God's wrath spends its fury upon the godless and the vile. The scepter of oppression is broken and the throne of iniquity is cast down. The empires of the earth have their power broken, and are given to the devouring flames. The fire of God falls from heaven, and the vast multitude of evil men and fallen angels are overwhelmed in its flames. Death is swallowed up in full and endless victory. The last enemy of God is destroyed by a power which is stronger than itself.

The fire which falls upon the wicked does not perpetuate them, but devours them. This is the second death, from which there shall never be any resurrection.

WHAT IS COMING?

THE FATE OF THE GREAT ADVERSARY OF GOD

THE fire will have the same effect upon Satan and his angels that it has upon the wicked. They also will be brought to nothing, and be as though they had never been. This is very plain from the words which God spoke to Satan:

I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. . . . I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. . . . I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shall thou be any more. Ezekiel 28: 16-19.

The destiny of Satan is also referred to in the Book of Malachi:-

Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, said the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Malachi 4: 1.

Thus the great conflict of the ages between Christ and Satan, between good and evil, will find its issue in the utter destruction of Satan and his angels and all who ally themselves with him. The fires of the last day will consume them, and leave them neither root nor branch. Satan is the root, and the wicked are the branches. The universe is to be cleansed from every stain of sin.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SIN

SIN itself will be blotted out of the universe when the wicked are destroyed. None of the wicked will ever be raised from the second death. Their punishment will be eternal. They will never live again.

There will be no eternally burning hell into which the wicked will be cast, and in which they will continue to sin and suffer. God will have a clean universe.

Special attention is directed to the words used in the Bible to describe the fate of sinners:-

They shall "die" (Ezekiel 18:4); they shall suffer "death" (Romans 6:23); they shall suffer the "second death" (Revelation 20:14, 15); they shall be destroyed (Psalm 145:20); they shall suffer "destruction" (Job 21: 30); they shall "perish" (Psalm 137: 20) ; they shall be burned up (Matthew 3:12; Malachi 4: 1) ; they "shall not be" (Psalm 37: 10) ; they shall come to an "end" (Psalm 37:38); they shall be consumed (Psalm 37:20); they shall be devoured (Psalm 21: 9) ; they shall be "slain" (Psalm 62:3); they shall be "cut off" (Psalm 37:9); "they shall be as though they had not been" (Obadiah 1:16); they shall be "silent in darkness" (1 Samuel 2:9); they shall be "no more" (Psalm 104: 35) ; they shall be "blotted out" (Psalm 69:28); they shall suffer "perdition" (2 Peter 3:7); they shall be ground to powder (Matthew 21:44); they shall be "hewn down" (Matthew 3:10); they shall see "corruption" (Galatians 6:8); they shall be torn in pieces (Psalm 50:22); they shall be "rooted out" (Proverbs 2:22); they shall be as "nothing" (Jeremiah 10:24) ; and they shall be as "naught." Isaiah 41:12.

THE FATE OF THE WICKED

THESE clear, striking expressions are surely sufficient to establish the truth that the Bible does not teach the God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal conscious torment. This doctrine was invented by Satan himself in the Garden of Eden, when he told Eve that if she disobeyed God she should "not surely die," although God had plainly told her that she should "surely die." Genesis 2: 17.

The doctrine of eternal torment for the wicked has no place in the Bible, and will have no place in reality when the wicked are punished. Their punishment will be eternal, but their punishment is death. The fire that falls upon them from heaven at the close of the millennium will consume them altogether. Each person will be punished "according to his deeds" (Romans 2: 6), but ultimately the fire will bring them all to utter death and destruction. "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6: 23.

The father of sin, together with sin and sinners and all their evil results-sickness, disease, pain, sorrow, grief, and death-are to be destroyed for ever. Thank God, His mercy is seen even in the destruction of those who refuse salvation.

WHAT IS COMING?

25. The Eternal Kingdom of Peace

PEACE is coming-peace, lasting and world-wide. Through the ages of the ages it will endure.

We have already seen that peace will never come through man or through any of his works. Man has failed to produce a government which can give permanent peace. All that man can do is to produce, in the end, an Armageddon.

When man has demonstrated his failure, God will take charge. He will destroy sin and sinners, and then He will establish His own kingdom of eternal peace on the earth.

GOD'S COVENANT OF PEACE

IT was a covenant of peace which God first made with man. It is to a fulfillment of this covenant of peace that the prophets confidently point. The messenger who brings good tidings of great joy is one who publishes peace. Jesus Himself is the Prince of Peace. There is to be no end of the increase of His government and of peace.

In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. Psalm 72: 7.

Psalmist and prophet together look forward with eager eyes, and sing of the time when Jehovah shall bless His people with endless peace (Psalm 29:11); when "the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psalm 37:11); when peace shall be within the walls of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:7); when men "shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace" (Isaiah 55:12); when the very officers shall be peace and the exactors righteousness (Isaiah 60:17); when peace shall extend to Jerusalem like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream (Isaiah 66:12); when "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17); when God's "people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." Isaiah 32:18.

THE EARTH PURIFIED

THE earth will be purified by the same fire which consumes the wicked. The ruined works of men will be burned by great billows of flame that sweep over the earth. The last remnants of sin will be thus consumed.

The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 2 Peter 3: 10.

The long rebellion against God is ended. Man's last foe, death, has been destroyed. The sinful, restless, warring world has at last been overthrown, and all creation is now at peace with God. The first heaven and the first earth, the great amphitheatre of sin, the scene of strife and rebellion, have passed away, and when they have been dissolved by the fires of the last day, then by the word of the Lord are brought into existence "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 13.

Upon the billows of flame which have purified the earth, the Holy City, with the righteous nations of the saved within it, has ridden safely, even as the ark rode the angry waters of the Deluge. When the purifying flames subside, having fully accomplished the work of cleansing the earth, the city settles into its place in fulfillment of the scripture: "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21: 3.

THE FULFILMENT OF THE ANCIENT PROMISES

THEN the earth will blossom again, and become the home of the redeemed people of the Lord.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5: 5.

Then shall be fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them [the redeemed]; 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 excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellence of our God. . . . For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way,

WHAT IS COMING?

and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35.

Then will be seen the fulfillment of many of the ancient promises.

Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. Isaiah 65: 11.

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21: 1.

The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Psalm 37:11.

At that time also the promise found in Micah 4: 8 will be fulfilled:

Thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion [the church], unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion [the earth when first created]; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

THE ETERNAL HOME OF THE RIGHTEOUS

WHEN the earth has been fully cleansed and sin and sinners are no more, the righteous will go forth from the Holy City, and “they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” Isaiah 65: 21. The whole earth is to be filled with the redeemed of the Lord. They will build homes which will never be destroyed. They will have -no fear of fire or earthquake. Sin has passed out of existence for ever. There will be none to make afraid. Peace and contentment and unspeakable happiness will fill every heart.

Sabbath by Sabbath and month by month the people of the new earth will gather at Jerusalem to engage in the worship of the King of kings. Isaiah 66: 22, 23. Here in the city of God the redeemed will partake of the fruit of the tree of life. Here also they will wander through the groves which border the “river of water of life,” which proceeds “out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Revelation 22: 1, 2.

“There shall be no more curse!” Revelation 22: 3. Sin will have been eternally destroyed, and will never return. Everyone of the created intelligences on the other worlds, all the angels, and every soul that has been redeemed at such an infinite cost, will have fully decided that God is righteous altogether. They have had enough of sin. We do well to rejoice in the certain promise of God that when He destroys sin, “He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time!” Nahum 1:9.

NO MORE VIOLENCE, WASTING, OR DESTRUCTION

THERE in the glorious land of the new earth “My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.” Isaiah 32: 18. “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shall call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” Isaiah 60:18. “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree.” Isaiah 55:13. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4. “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” Isaiah 33: 24.

The beautiful city of God, the New Jerusalem, shall “be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” Isaiah 62: 3. “Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Revelation 21: 11. “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 honor into it.” Revelation 21: 24. “There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 22: 5.

And in the new earth I shall “know even as also I am known.” 1 Corinthians 13: 12. Companions and loved ones, long separated by death, will then be reunited.

WHAT IS COMING?

Their love and their sympathy for each other will be greatly deepened, and will continue throughout the ages of eternity, never again to be broken by death.

There all the faculties of the human mind will be developed, and the mind's capacity for knowledge will be constantly enlarged. No enterprise which is entered upon will be too great to be carried forward to completion. No aspiration will be formed which cannot be reached. No ambition will be too high to be realized. There will be no end to the acquirement of knowledge. It will be possible to travel from planet to planet, and from system to system, in the study of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of the universe of God. Our associates and companions will be the angels of God and the sinless intelligences of the other worlds.

THE UNFOLDING OF THE AGES OF ETERNITY

AND to all this there will be no end. As the ages of eternity unfold, there never need be any fear that the years to come will bring a termination to the happiness -of the redeemed. When myriads of ages have rolled by, still beyond stretches eternity.

And you, dear friend, to whom this book has come, may I not press upon you the urgent need of being prepared for these things which are coming upon man? There is a way of escape from the appalling destruction of the last days. The close of human probation, followed by Armageddon, will fall swiftly upon a world all unprepared. It need not come thus to you.

Jesus is the way. In Him is safety. And in Him is eternal life, and an abundant entrance into His eternal kingdom of peace. Now, while you have opportunity, become acquainted with Him, make your peace with Him. Mercy's gates are still open, though they are soon to close. God's ear will yet hear the penitent's cry. The blood of Jesus will yet atone for sin, and cleanse whiter than snow. Make no longer delay. Now, now, go to God with all your sin, accept His sacrifice, believe His Word, and He will graciously receive and pardon all your guilt.

“And may “the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope.”
Romans 15: 13.

BEYOND THE STORM

THERE is a place of sacred rest,
Far, far beyond the skies,
Where beauty smiles eternally
And pleasure never dies;
My Father's house, my heavenly home,
Where many mansions stand,
Prepared by hands divine, for all
Who seek the better land.

When tossed upon the waves of life,
With fear on every side,
When fiercely howls the gathering storm,
And foam% the angry tide,
Beyond the storm, beyond the gloom,
Breaks forth the light of morn,
Bright beaming from my Father's house,
To cheer the soul forlorn,

In that pure home of tearless Joy
Earth's parted friends shall meet,
With smiles of love that never fade,
And blessedness complete.
There, there adieus are sounds unknown,
Death frowns not on that scene;
But life and glorious beauty shine
Untroubled and serene.

WHAT IS COMING?

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