

DISCOURSES ON EZEKIEL

THE SETTER OF DATES

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*“Many shall be purified, and made white,
and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly:
and none of the wicked shall understand;
but the wise shall understand.”*

Dan.12:1

PREFACE

For the past year (1929-1930), the Authoress of this book gave very instructive lessons on the writings of Ezekiel. She was profoundly impressed with the number of significant dates, which Ezekiel records. When her findings showed us that the prophet wrote to our day and that we actually appear in his vision of the cherubim, we felt impelled to put these powerful truths before the public. Ezekiel spurs us on to run for the Prize and let no man take our crown.

We consider this the most important prophetic utterance today. It is the culminating message. Read it; ponder it; believe it; pass it on. Let us listen for the trumpet blast.

The Publishers

REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest:** Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20th century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation – abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

Note: *Definitions of references pulled from WikipediA, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.*

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THE INTRODUCTION

"Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. Hear; for I will speak, and the opening of my lips shall be right things." [Pro.8:4, 6]

In the opening verses of his book, Ezekiel gives us a short account of his pedigree. We learn that he was the son of **Buzi**, meaning "*contempt*," the priest of the well-known scriptural family, Zadock. Hebrew tradition claims that he was a son of Jeremiah; but there is no warrant in either of the prophecies for such a claim. We never read that Jeremiah had a wife, or family. Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar 11 years before the downfall of Jerusalem:

"And he carried away all Jerusalem and all the princes and all the mighty men of valor, even ten-thousand captives and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land." [2Ki.24:14]

Daniel and his 3 companions had been taken captive with a former great company 8 years previously [Dan.1:1].

Ezekiel's name, meaning "*strengthened by God*," is expressive of the man and also of the people whom he represents. We have our first glimpse of him by the river **Chebar**, meaning "*great*," with a colony of the captives, taken from Jerusalem. Chebar is north of the Euphrates into which it flows and is also called the Great Canal. In Ezekiel 3:15, the town is given as Telabib. We learn that Ezekiel had his own house [Eze.3:24, 8:1]. We also know that he was married, for he mentions the death of his wife in the one instance where he gives us a hint of his personal life [Eze.24:16-18].

Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Daniel were contemporaries. Jeremiah prophesied before and during the captivity; the other 2 during and after the carrying away to Babylon. It is more than likely that they were acquainted, but each had his own specific ministry for that trying time. In some phases of their character, they resembled each other. That is, they were honest, true, and inflexibly upright; but in other phases of temperament and disposition they were entirely different, especially Ezekiel and Jeremiah. The latter was diffident, shy, kind, gentle, tender-hearted. He was the prophet of the disrupting of the nation and the death-struggle of Judah was an agony to his sensitive soul. Ezekiel on the contrary lacked the emotional, sympathetic temperament of Jeremiah. He was a man of force and energy and self-control. He had a deep sense of his responsibility. We may sum up their outstanding differences in a few words: Jeremiah's interest and sympathy appeared more exercised in behalf of the people, though not forgetting God; while Ezekiel seemed more exercised in sympathy with God, though not forgetting the people. They both had their places on the program and each played his part in the drama of life in the will of God to His entire satisfaction and good pleasure. Each did what he could as he could and they will have their rewards. The results are left with the Author and Finisher of their faith. Their works do follow them.

Ezekiel and Jeremiah, each in his own individual personality and temperament, portray the Lord Jesus Christ in His 2-fold nature.

- Jeremiah shows us the human side of Christ, His gentle, tender, sympathetic nature that wept at the death of Lazarus and over the city of Jerusalem. He was always one with the people—their sorrows were his sorrows, their triumphs His glory.
- Ezekiel on the contrary shows us the side of Deity in Christ—stern, uncompromising, incorruptible and filled with a sense of the justice of God in uncovering sin and judging it.

Jeremiah is always seen praying; Ezekiel seldom: but both are God's men in His purpose and plan.

Ezekiel's diction also is far different from that of Jeremiah. The whole of his writings shows how well-fitted he was by natural disposition to oppose the "**rebellious house**," the people with the flinty face and stiff neck. He assumed the same attitude toward them that they showed toward the Lord. His writings abound in figurative representations, either in allegorical conceptions of the Truth, or in enigmatical construction; but all testifying to the vigor and brilliancy of the man, who yet was merely the instrument of the Divine Mind.

He, as well as Jeremiah, was representative of the people of the Lord, as well as the Lord of the people. Marvelous mysteries of the Word of God!

DIVISIONS OF EZEKIEL

There are 2 great division of the book of Ezekiel:

Division 1, Predictions Before the Destruction of Jerusalem	Eze.1-33
Division 2, Predictions After the Destruction of Jerusalem	Eze.34-48

EZEKIEL AND HIS VISION OF GLORY [EZE. 1]

"Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel, the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar, and the hand of the Lord was there upon him." [Eze.1:1-3]

Ezekiel is a prophet of the last days. He is telling us in type and symbol, vision and message, of events that are even now being fulfilled, and of others which will come later. He begins his prophecies with emphasis on the date of his call to the prophetic office. This happened in his 30th year, the very age when as a priest he should have entered his priestly ministry had he been in Jerusalem in the temple service. He also pressed at the outset the fact of the exact year, month and day that heaven was opened and he was privileged to see "**visions of God**." This is a most striking statement and carries with it

marvelous significance when we learn the value of these prophecies as related to the present time.

DELICIOUS DATES

We say, Ezekiel at the very threshold of his book fixes our attention on dates. He repeats the fact of it being “*the fifth day of the month*,” when he received the first vision, and adds further, that it was in “*the fifth year of king Jehoiachin’s captivity*.” Now this is suggestive. He is instructing us in important matters if we have ears to hear.

The beginning of the **TIMES OF THE GENTILES** was in stages and covered a period of 19 years; hence, we should expect a corresponding gradation in the end (see our tracts, *Davidic Covenant* and *The Times of the Gentiles*). Ezekiel was taken to Babylon as captive in king Jehoiachin’s captivity. The latter was the second of the trio of kings of that transition period, when the Jew’s bondage was being consummated. That date was 598 B.C. and it has marvelous correspondence with the present time when its reversal is on the way to be realized.

It is an indisputable fact that 2,520 years, or 7 prophetic times of 360 years each, have been given to the Gentiles to rule over the Jews. We will not attempt to prove that statement in the exposition of this book; for it has been shown repeatedly in our previous writings as well as in others. Besides there can be no doubt whatever on the subject now; for the proof is before our eyes. We can see it. We add just one word. The mathematical wonder of the number 2,520 is exceedingly interesting, and indicates the Divine Wisdom of its use in this connection. It has been said, that ...

“The figure is the Least Common Multiple of all the numbers from 1 to 10. That is to say, you would have to go on counting up to 2,520 before you could find a figure into which you can divide every number from 1 to 10 without leaving any remainder.”

BEGINNING OF THE END

2,520 years, reckoned from 606 B.C., the date when Gentile times began, brings us down to 1914 A.D., when the end began. We are still in the transition period. The bondage of the Jew must be loosed in stages even as it was commenced. Hence, 2,520 years, reckoned from 598 B.C., the date of Ezekiel’s captivity, corresponds with 1922 A.D. of our time. And, as we would infer, that year was a most pregnant one as relating to the release of the Jew and his land; for these 2 purposes cannot be divorced. They go hand in hand. Some may enquire, “But what was the startling event of the year 1922 A.D.?” It was the year of the official declaration of the British Mandate over Palestine. This was the recognition by the nations of Europe of the rights of the Jewish people to return to Palestine and reconstruct their National Home. That truly was a momentous, far-reaching event, that after 19 hundred years of exile from their land, the Jews were allowed to return. It was the inauguration of a new epoch for them. It presaged the reversal of the captivity, or treading down of the city of Jerusalem. Marvelous miracle!

And it is of no little significance that Ezekiel comments upon the date of his captivity which he declares was 5 years previous to the date of his prophetic office. His series of prophecies began in 593 B.C. and they relate to events **AFTER** that date. The year 1927 A.D. corresponds with and answers to 593 B.C. There must have been some striking event, or events in that year to justify its positive identification by Ezekiel. In glancing back over that year and its signs which relate directly to the Jew, we found the following.

- On the one hand, heaven seems to be opening to them,
- while on the other hand, judgment begins to fall upon the world.
- Note some sign-posts (taken from our publication *Grace and Glory*, July 1927) which measures just 2,520 years from the year in which Ezekiel began to prophesy.

THE DRY BONES SHAKING

The interest toward Christianity is spreading rapidly among the Jews. Over in Europe, there has been literally a mass movement in that direction. It is said that in Hungary alone, 40,000 Jewish people have embraced Christianity. In the city of Budapest, 2,500 Hebrews entered the Presbyterian Church, and half as many more entered other Protestant denominations. In the city of Vienna, 1,000 Hebrews embraced the Christian faith; among them being Hans Hertz, son of the founder of the Zionist movement. And, in other countries as well as our own, the Jews are coming into Christianity in numbers. Oh, it makes our hearts rejoice to see that God is again turning toward His chosen nation.

AWAITING THE MESSIAH

Great excitement and enthusiasm are prevailing among the Jewish population in Bokhara, a part of the Union Soviet Republic. It is said that mysterious signs and heavenly messages were given concerning the coming of the Messiah. A mountain in that region commenced to belch forth smoke, which, according to a legend among them, is a sign that the Messiah's arrival is at hand. The same legend says also that the mountain is the gate of paradise. In a certain place, a dove was found with a mysterious note written in Hebrew under its wings. Another item contributes to the belief of the nearness of the Messiah. A message from a Bokharan Jew, living in Palestine, declares that He is coming soon. The enthusiasm seized the people so strongly, that they are celebrating the occasion by festivals, dancing and praising God on the streets. Oh, yes, the Jews will put the Christians to shame with their demonstrations of heavenly joy and their expressions of gratitude to God, when their wanderings are over and their restoration has come.

SIGNS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Peter assures us that "**wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath shall precede the coming of the notable day of the Lord**" [Act.2:19]. The beginning of these things is here. The dire upheavals of today ought to speak to every heart of the nearness of the end. The daily papers are expressing their amazement at

the numbers of dreadful casualties, storms, floods, etc. Many signs have been seen in heaven—sunspots, total eclipse of the sun, meteors hanging in the sky and some falling to the earth and bursting with a loud explosion. Some folks in our city recently viewed a gorgeous sight in the sky. About 10 o'clock, a meteor seemed to be travelling rather low and fast across the face of the sky. As they gazed upon its brilliancy, it burst like a sky-rocket, flooding the heavens with a multitude of glorious illuminated particles of its substance, which dazzled the beholders with its beauty. It was a sign in the heavens; but they did not realize its importance.

The earthly signs are just as portentous and significant:

- 100,000,000 tons of rain, with terrific lightning and thunder, have poured down upon France and the British islands.
- A late earthquake in Palestine is a very emphatic sign. There were at least 1,000 deaths, 109 of them in Jerusalem alone. It was the greatest earthquake that has befallen that land in a 100 years.
- Another earthquake was reported from Australia, the other side of the earth, aggravated by land explosions, a terrific noise, as though all the demons in hell were clamoring to come out.
- Then again we read that Arabs of the desert were terrified by earth-shakings which lasted 40 minutes.

God is no respecter of persons, or places these days. He only looks upon and saves the one from these disasters who is trusting Him for deliverance. There is no escape from the power that rules all creation.

Kilanea, the world's largest volcano, is seething with fire in its latest outburst. It flooded the entire bottom of its 8 mile around crater pit with molten lava; 3 fountains of the fiery liquid spurted up thru the top of "*the pit of everlasting fire*," as the volcano is named. Throughout the day, a terrific hot blast, carrying sulfur fumes, drove spectators away from the edge of the pit. Several times it shot out streams of molten rock, putting the natives in deadly fear. One time, the volume of melted rock was so mighty that it carried whole forests on its back, setting them on fire like great lighted torches, as it rolled toward the sea. Mark you, my friendly reader, these wonders and signs occurred and were recorded in 1927, which is 2,520 years since Ezekiel first saw heaven opened, and beheld visions of the present time. Is it not also a coincidence, that these observations should have been related in the July *Grace and Glory* publication which answers to the month ("*the fourth*," [Eze.1:1]) in which "*the Word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel*?" Surely, He is nigh, even at the doors.

THE VISION OF GLORY

Ezekiel's first vision is marvelous. He is in his 30th year and among the captives by the river Chebar when the heavens are opened to him. There is quite a correspondence here with the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was 30 years of age when He saw heaven opened at His baptism in Jordan [Mat.3:16]. This is the only place that the phrase "*heaven opened*," is found in the Old

Testament, and it surely is prophetic of Jehovah's tender mercy beginning to be shown to the Jews. In Revelation 4:1, we read of a door opened in heaven. John hears the words, "**Come up hither**," and he is caught up there. These 2 prophets, Ezekiel and John, are closely connected and in harmony with each other in their prophecies and are occupied with the same events, the same people, mainly the same period of time.

The great vision of the Cherubim under the firmament, and the dazzling Man above upon the throne, seen by Ezekiel, is almost the counterpart of the scene described by John. The only difference is their location. Ezekiel beholds the living creatures on earth. John beholds them in heaven. John is shown some happenings that come after those with which Ezekiel is favored in the earlier part of his book, though he too sees the later things afterward. It will simplify Ezekiel's writings to view them in line with John's visions.

"The Word of the Lord came expressly" to the Prophet and he heard it, and saw it. Hence, if we desire to understand his prophecies, they must come expressly unto us, and we must take hold of them. **"And the hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel"** [Eze.1:3]. Here we have the order for the servant of the Lord: ❶ First, the opened heaven; then the vision of Jesus as the One in authority, Head over His Church; ❷ afterward the direct call and the enablement by the power of God. The sentence, **"the hand of the Lord was upon him"** (or **"came upon me"**) is found 7 times in the book of Ezekiel: Ezekiel 1:3, 3:14, 3:22, 8:1, 33:24, 37:1, and 40:1.

The great vision of glory, which greets us in Chapter 1 has been unfolded in our tract, **"Cherubim and Seraphim."** We can add little to the instruction found therein, except to emphasize the fact, that the vision reveals Christ on the throne at that point of time when Ezekiel's prophecies begin to be fulfilled. We have learned from the correspondence of these dates with the end that it was in 1927. It is possible, though, and we believe probable, that Christ began to take His place on the judgment throne in 1914, when **THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES** began to close. Christ is correcting, separating and judging His Church now. Peter tells us that **"judgment must begin at the house of God"** [1Pe.4:17]. They that yield to His authority are being qualified to sit with Him in His judgment of the nations [Mat.26:31-46] and later reign with Him on His throne of Universal Empire.

John, in his Patmos vision, views Christ in His capacity as Judge of The Church, **"walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."** His bosom is girded up, teaching of the restraining of His mercy, as He searches, probes and reveals the hidden depths of the hearts of His people. He is bringing to light all that is not in conformity to His will and insists on the correction and the putting away of all that offends. If there first be the willing mind, He will strengthen for the obedience.

Observe that the throne which Ezekiel views, and with which the Cherubim are connected and in harmony, is the throne of a Man. First, the living creatures had **"the likeness of a Man"** [Verse 8]. Then there was **"the likeness as the appearance of a Man"** upon the throne. And that Man was enshrouded in glory with the rainbow about Him.

“And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.” [Eze.1:27-28]

There cannot be the shadow of a doubt, that this description anticipates the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ on His throne of judgment and government, all authority given into His hands. His 4-fold character as King, Servant, Man, and Son of God, portrayed in the Gospel Records, is well known; but in the vision, the Cherubim are seen with the same faces. Hence, we would infer that they have a part in the judgment throne of Christ while they are still upon earth. They are representative, as we have noted, of the overcomers who have been corrected and are ready for translation. They are doing the will of God, carried along in its mighty irresistible movings and shortly they will move up to heaven where John at a later date beholds them. He sees them in the throne and round about the throne when the Lamb of God receives the title deed to the world [Rev.5].

LOCATION OF THE THRONE

Ezekiel views the storm cloud, the whirlwind, and the fire coming from the north. These are symbolic of Divine Glory and attest the fact of the Presence of Jehovah. The Shekinah cloud is always associated with His appearance to Israel. He led them out of Egypt in a pillar of cloud and fire. Sinai was enveloped in a thick cloud and the Lord descended upon it in fire [Exo.19]. The vision is seen coming from the north. This is significant; for the throne of God is in *“the sides of the north”* [Isa.14:13]. The city of the great King, the heavenly Jerusalem shall be built on the north [Psa.48:2]. Also, we read that *“promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South”* [Psa.75:6]; but promotion comes from the north, that is from the throne of God above.

The bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, as mentioned by Ezekiel, tells us further of those last-day events. It reminds us of the mercy that was promised to the earth after the deluge [Gen.9]. Israel's hour of judgment is approaching; but *“the bow about the throne”* tells us that Jehovah's wrath will be tempered with mercy. The judgment must come before the restoration; but the one is the harbinger of the other. The everlasting covenant must be fulfilled to the people of destiny. The storm cloud and the whirlwind will pass away and only the rainbow will be seen around the throne. Judgment is His strange work; but His mercy endures forever.

Ezekiel was overcome by the glory and majesty of the vision. He fell upon his face in deep abasement before the matchless splendor of the man upon the throne and he hears a voice speaking unto Him. It was not one of the Cherubim who spoke. They are silent in Ezekiel's vision, though in Revelation they are heard calling forth the judgments of God upon the world. Here is further proof that our interpretation is correct. They figure the overcoming Church which shall jointly share with Christ in His throne. Ezekiel sees them on the earth under the throne, directing the moving of the judgment of which they are a part. The Word which they proclaim is judging the world whether the latter heed it or not. Their voice is that of the Almighty, even as was John the Baptist's in his day. Their voice has power. It brings

results with its commands even if these are only heard by the Lord. They are bringing great results to pass by prayer and supplication, reigning through the abundance of grace which they are appropriating. ***“Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them” [Eze.36:37].***

EZEKIEL’S COMMISSION [EZE.2 TO 3:14]

“And He said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak unto thee. And the Spirit entered into me when He spake unto me and set me upon my feet, that I heard Him that spoke unto me. And He said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel to a rebellious nation that have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me unto this very day; for they are impudent children and stiffhearted (hard hearted). I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear (for they are a rebellious house) yet shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them.” [Eze.2:1-5]

The glorious vision of the Lord affected Ezekiel in a strangely solemn manner, even as was the case with Isaiah, Daniel, and John who all received somewhat similar visions. He fell upon his face to the ground; but the Lord graciously lifted him up by His compelling Word. He addressed him as ***“Son of Man,”*** which title was also given Daniel [Dan.7:17], and it is found exactly 100 times in the book of Ezekiel. The Lord called Himself by the same name 86 times. It is His title as the rejected Man who shall nevertheless be the accepted One in a soon coming day. We infer that Daniel and Ezekiel are in some sense types of Christ in His suffering and exaltation because of being called by this title.

The man upon the throne commanded the prophet to stand upon his feet and the power was there for the enabling. ***“The Spirit entered into me,”*** he explains. The Word and the Spirit are connected, and yet distinguished the one from the other. Ezekiel further adds, ***“I heard Him that spake.”*** He understood what the Lord desired him to know, namely that he was appointed as prophet to the house of Israel.

His commission was similar to that received by other prophets. It was a definite call to a definite work, no imagination about it. He was sent by Jehovah to a **rebellious** nation, the same word used for **HEATHEN**. It suggests that Israel will be the heathen in the time when this prophecy of Ezekiel shall have its real fulfillment. This would be contrary to the Anglo-Israel theory; for according to that teaching, the so-called Christian nations are the 10 lost tribes, or Israel. But it really does not concern The Church in any marked degree to know who Israel is or where located. Our concern is to ascertain where we are on the program of God’s drama and when we are to take our departure and how much good we may do our fellowman while we remain. These are the questions that should interest us and we are looking into these necessary things. There is no speculation, nor uncertainty connected with them either; but they are plainly answered in the Book.

Ezekiel’s vision and prophecies are of vital interest to us because we are assured that now is the time of their fulfillment. We believe that the prophet

represents the 2 witnesses of the end time [Rev.11] who may be even now called and commissioned and speaking to the rebellious house of Israel, though not manifested or known as those men. There are watchmen on the walls today that are declaring to the people, *“Thus saith the Lord.”* Why are not one, or more, of these the antitypical Ezekiel? The year 1927, the corresponding date in the end time, was a most significant year as regards the dealings of Jehovah with His ancient people. The heavens have been opened to them in a most marked manner since then. Hence, why should we not expect that these 2 witnesses have already been favored with a vision of the glory and appointed to a definite work? Anyway if not, they are scheduled to appear shortly, according to John’s prophecy [Rev.11].

“And when I looked, behold a hand was sent unto me, and lo, a roll of a book was therein...Moreover He said unto me, Son of Man, eat the roll and go speak unto the house of Israel.” [Eze.2:9, 3:1]

Scrolls play an important part in prophecy. Zechariah sees a similar document flying over the earth [Zec.5:1]. In his vision, John is commanded to take the scroll, which is open, from the hand of the Angel, which is Christ Himself, and eat it [Rev.10:9]. These 3 men, Zechariah, John and Ezekiel, prophets of the end time, are declaring the same things; hence, the scroll in each case has similar meaning. It is proclaiming the lamentation, mourning, and woe that are coming upon the world because of its rebellion against the authority of Christ. Ezekiel as well as John ate the roll and both found it sweet as honey in their mouths; but John tells us that afterward his belly was made bitter because of its contents. These scrolls symbolize the message of judgment that these prophets were appointed to announce. Zechariah also has the same message for a disobedient, lawless generation who refuse to yield to the Lord and His Word. His scroll is seen flying throughout the earth, bringing a curse wherever it goes.

Ezekiel’s experience at this point is most interesting and instructive. He acts out his own yielded life and the inspiration of his words. He received the little book, accepted it, ate it, and then gave out the message it contained. The Lord is responsible for all that the Prophet says and does; his life is no more his own, neither are his words. The Man on the throne is his Master. He says, ***“Son of Man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel and speak with my words unto them.”*** There is no question whatever as to who is the responsible party back of the prophecy which Ezekiel proclaims.

Yet, failure is predicted by Jehovah for the message and messenger. He says, ***“The house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto Me.”*** But that prophecy was not to hinder nor discourage Ezekiel. His commission was to speak Jehovah’s words regardless of the people’s attitude. Absolute obedience was demanded of him. He could then leave the results to the Master. Like the faithful ox that will walk around in the same old beaten track, year after year without faltering or refusing to disobey, so those men of God went on in obedience to the Divine Will. It was not their business to question how or why, theirs but to do and die if necessary. All this is considered extremely fanatical and foolish by the religious, level-head today; but it is the way of the Man of God in every age.

Also, men of today insist that we cannot be successful if we do not think we will succeed. It is considered the height of folly to tell the truth about men and their doings. Pessimists are warned to keep their distance. Even well-meaning and enthusiastic Christians are caught in the vortex of the world's false assurance and hypocritical "bull," and do not want the facts declared. They like to pretend that things are all right with the world and that The Church is getting its affairs in shape for a millennium; but alas, the very opposite is the verdict of the Lord. ***"The time will come when they shall not endure sound doctrine,"*** is the unpalatable message Paul speaks for the last days. They shall not endure it, much less rejoice in it. That time is right here. Paul's message as well as Ezekiel's message is refused today even as it was when they personally proclaimed the Truth. But what shall these later messengers do? Shall they quit the field because there is no great reception of the Truth? No, no, they cannot but speak the message if they are called and commissioned as were those prophets.

Ezekiel was taken up by the Spirit and he heard behind him a voice of a great rushing, ***"Blessed be the glory of the Lord from this place."*** He also heard the noise of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another and the noise of the wheels over against them and the noise of a great rushing. Ezekiel is borne up by the Spirit into the **DAY OF THE LORD**. He is rushed along by the power and authority of the Man upon the throne above and the Cherubim beneath. The great vision of the glory of the Lord is still visible to the prophet, only now it is viewed in motion. We can feel the power of it as we read his words. The great activity, the mighty moving of those seraphic beings sound to the prophet's listening ear as ***"the rushing, mighty wind"*** of which we read in Acts 2, when the Spirit descended upon The Church on the day of Pentecost. He there came upon the first company of believers of this age and baptized them into one body which provisionally was the One Baptism whereby all believers of this age were constituted the one Body...The Church. But the sound which Ezekiel hears, though it is still the rushing of the Spirit, yet now it is His power in The Church, or that portion of that body who have yielded to His enduement and are clothed upon with power from on high and are doing the will of God upon the earth. They are a most mighty people, a great force as joined to Christ on His throne in heaven. They are taking hold of world sovereignty and are irresistible conquerors. God is moving in them and they are moving on in his will, moving out of the way the mighty principalities and powers, spiritual wickedness in high places, thus defeating Satan and all his host, by simple faith in the Word of God. But the world knows them not.

Ezekiel's words in the former description of these majestic beings is most suggestive and instructive. When they went, he heard ***"the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, as the voice of speech, as the noise of an host; when they stood they let down their wings."*** It is unmistakably clear from this language that these messengers are not angels, neither are they just ordinary redeemed men, but extraordinary beings. Angels are not linked up with humanity and the throne of Christ in any measure. The coming age, which is even now at hand, is not put in subjection unto angels, but it is put under the dominion of Christ the new Man and those overcoming saints of the present age who shall reign jointly with Him [Heb.2:5-18]. The Cherubim are representative of these victorious ones, living creatures indeed; some of whom are on the earth at the present time and are taking hold of their throne

rights in Christ, in spite of all the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil to defeat them.

TWILL NOT BE LONG, OUR JOURNEY HERE;
A LITTLE HOUR, THE FALLING TEAR.
TWILL SOON BE O'ER THE SIGHS AND GROANS,
THE NIGHT OF SORROW AND OF MOANS.
AND THEN A DAY OF CLOUDLESS SKY.
ETERNAL YEARS WITH CHRIST ON HIGH.
A LITTLE WHILE; TWILL SOON BE PAST,
THE TIME TO WATCH, TO PRAY AND FAST.
OH, PRIV'LEGE RARE TO US IS GIVEN,
TO WAIT FOR CHRIST OUR LORD FROM HEAVEN.
HE'S COMING SOON WITH WORDLESS POWER.
OH, LET US WATCH THE LITTLE HOUR.
A LITTLE HOUR! T'WILL PASS AWAY;
AND CHRIST WILL COME AT DAWN OF DAY.
OH, BLEST INDEED THE ONES WHO HEAR
THE TRUMPET CALLING LOUD AND CLEAR,
COME UP ABOVE; THE WATCH IS PAST.
THE GATH'RING HOME HAS COME AT LAST.

EZEKIEL'S FIRST PROPHECY [EZE.3:15 TO 7:27]

"Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib that dwelt by the river Chebar and I sat where they sat and remained there astonished among them seven days. At the end of seven days the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel." [Eze.3:15-17]

This is the 3rd section of the 1st Division of the book of Ezekiel. Here the Lord laid upon Ezekiel the great responsibility of watchman to the house of Israel. He is brought by the Spirit to the village of Telabib. It was no doubt at another point of the river than where he had seen the vision of the glory. Ezekiel is now made as an actor to the astonished Jews assembled at Telabib. He plays a part in 4 scenes. These were signs to the house of Israel.

1. The 1st was the "**tile sign**," which portrays Jerusalem in a siege [Eze.4:1-3].
2. The 2nd was the "**posture sign**," Ezekiel lying 390 days upon his left side and 40 days on his right side; prophesying all the time as to the destruction of the beloved city and the Jews' captivity [Eze.4:4-8].
3. The "**food sign**" and its preparation [Eze.4:9-17] was the 3rd, which occupied the same time, 390 days upon which he laid on his left side. The "**food sign**" was also a prediction of the famine of those dreadful days of judgment when the Jews would eat defiled bread.
4. The "**shaving sign**" was the 4th and is described more minutely than the others. The hair was shaven from head and beard of the Prophet and divided into 3 parts: ❶ The one part to be burned in the fire, ❷ the other part smitten about with a knife; ❸ while the other fraction was to

be scattered to the wind, whence after it a sword was sent. Also, a few parts were taken and bound in the skirts of Ezekiel [Eze.5]. This sign is easily seen to be that of judgment also, even as were the other signs.

Then the Prophet speaks 2 solemn denunciatory messages which close this section:

1. The 1st predicts the destructions that were to fall upon the land and the people, and their dispersion [Eze.6] even as the signs predicted.
2. The 2nd message proclaims the utter end that was to come upon the 4 corners of the land [Eze.7].

Ezekiel remained among the captives in Telabib for 7 day,; astonished and dumb with the burden of his prophecies upon his countenance. His was no lip service. He had to eat his message. The judgments which he must speak overwhelmed him; for he knew they would surely come to pass. His silence was finally broken by the Lord Himself. He addressed the Prophet telling him that He had made him “**a watchman unto the house of Israel**” [Eze.3:17]. His duty and responsibility in this respect was set forth emphatically. Warning the people was the first and important item of his ministry; hence, he must hear the Word from the Lord’s mouth, for himself. Otherwise he would have no tidings for others and could not sound the alarm. The false prophets had no tidings from the Lord. They said, “Peace, peace” when there was no peace. They spoke their own thoughts and followed their own dreams, the imaginations of their own deceitful hearts, instead of God’s Word. They did not believe the solemn messages that Jeremiah had given; therefore they were guilty of the false security, the decline, and apostasy which was in evidence in Israel. The same curse of false prophets abounds today. The Word is rejected, ignored, and denied by the people because of their attitude. The solemn truths concerning the judgments that are predicted to come upon a wicked, apostatized, God-defying generation are not heard, much less heeded. The watchmen who stand by the declarations of the Lord and sound the alarm are as popular today as were Jeremiah and Ezekiel in their day. They are even as popular as a death’s head at a feast for jackals; but they must be true to God.

DETAILS OF THIS PORTION

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.” [Eze.3:17-21]

Ezekiel was commissioned to warn individuals, rather than the nation as a whole; for it was too late for their survival as such. He was to warn the wicked to turn from his wicked way, or his blood would be required at his hands. If he delivered his message and the wicked did not heed him, he had done the will of Jehovah which is the important item. It was the same with the righteous. If he did not heed, but acted contrary and turned from his righteousness, he too should die in his iniquity; but the Prophet is blameless, he has done what he could. After being warned, each one is responsible and must bear the consequences of his own conduct. The doom of the nation cannot be averted; but individuals may escape by hearing the Word and acting accordingly.

The above portion of Scripture, as well as the corresponding one in Ezekiel 33, are often used in defense of the error of salvation by works; but it is so childish, that it hardly deserves an answer. Ezekiel's message has nothing whatever in common with the doctrine of The Church. He is talking to Israel, a people under the broken covenant and the only way to escape was by repentance and turning to God in obedience. Even the one who had been obedient, the one whose acts were righteous, if he failed in the midst of the great national apostasy, when the judgment was ready to fall, his former acts would not avail. He too would be swept away in judgment with the nation; but this is not the Gospel. The Apostle Paul is the teacher at whose feet we learn the doctrine of The Church.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for the man of God; but all Scripture was not written for The Church alone, nor does it concern that body personally. But the Writings of the Apostle Paul are the exclusive property of The Church. They were written to them and for them and concern them alone. Hence, let us read them and learn the eternal security as well as the exalted destiny of the Body of Christ and then we will not be confused, neither will we give to others, nor take to ourselves, Scripture which is not ours.

After Ezekiel is solemnly charged to deliver the message, the hand of the Lord is upon him [Eze.3:22]. We believe the phrase "***the hand of the Lord***" has the same significance as the different viewpoints of John in the Patmos Visions. He is given a fresh revelation and a new message each time "***the hand of the Lord***" is mentioned as falling upon him. At the present instance, Ezekiel is brought to the plain where he again beholds the glory of the Lord which he saw by the river Chebar. He falls upon his face and says,

"The Spirit entered into me and set me upon my feet and said unto me, Go shut thyself within thy house." [Eze.3:24]

He could not deliver the warning message which he had just heard; he was shut up by the Lord. Ezekiel was a sign to the people. He was now to act out their attitude to Jehovah's words. He was to shut himself up in his house, thus declaring that they were shutting up their hearts, refusing to hear the judgment peals. He was made dumb for a time as a witness to them of what was coming upon them. God was going to refuse to speak to them for a time for their disobedience and rebellion toward Him. It appears from the context that the people bound him and then the Lord would not let him speak to them by the way of retaliation. He was thus a reprover to them by his very silence. His dumbness was a witness of the long years in which the nation would not

hear the Word of the Lord by any prophet. He testified that there was no hope; for they were a rebellious house and judgment could not be stayed. But yet his dumbness was not complete, nor constant. The last verse of the chapter proves this fact,

“When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; he that heareth, let him hear and he that forebears, let him forbear; for they are a rebellious house.” [Eze.3:27]

After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Prophet’s mouth was opened and his powers of speech permanently restored as we read: **“And it came to pass...that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came to me saying, The city is smitten. Now the hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb” [Eze:33:21-22].**

The fall of Jerusalem betokened its absolute treading down by the Gentiles. It was from that time in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. The times of the Gentiles was a fact. The Jew was in subjection. Hence, the loosing of Ezekiel’s tongue at that point has marvelous significance when viewed in its relation to the end when the reversal of conditions is on the way to fulfillment. The times of the Jews are beginning. The loosing of their captivity is a fact in a certain measure. Ezekiel is not only a sign to the people; but he is their type. The rise of Jerusalem will surely come even as its fall. It is on the way to it now, and when it is accomplished, Jehovah will no more be dumb toward His people, the Jews. They will again hear His Voice and, filled with fervor and zeal, will rise up and be the evangelists to the world. All these events in the book of Ezekiel have corresponding value in the end time, but in reverse order.

The 4 signs [Eze.4-5] are predictions of the doom which was even at that day hanging over the city; but which the captives in Babylon refused to believe. The false prophets who were in their midst encouraged them in the false hope of their speedy return to their land; hence, the predicted destruction by Ezekiel was thought incredible. The prophet’s acted out signs of the people’s condition in the siege that was to come on the city was foolishness to them; but, Ezekiel was not thereby excused from his part in the play.

1. THE TILE SIGN

“Thou son of man, take thee a tile and lay it before thee and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem. And lay siege against it, cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about. Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee, and the city; and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.” [Eze.4:1-3]

The significance of this is plain. Jehovah would instruct his people of that day, as well as of a later time when they were in a siege, that He had allowed it. In 70 A.D., the Roman army came up against Jerusalem and it was a far greater siege than that of Nebuchadnezzar’s day; not only in extent of time, but of suffering. We believe it also refers to another siege which is yet to come against Jerusalem in the latter end of the Great Tribulation, the time of

Jacob's trouble. That will be the worst siege and the greatest famine will be experienced then.

The Prophet was commanded to take a tile. It literally meant a clay slab which the Babylonians used to write upon. Libraries of such tiles are said to have been uncovered by the work of excavators. Those tiles were almost square, generally 14 by 12 inches. Some have been found engraved with astrological figures and building plans; hence, we learn that they were used as we use paper. Ezekiel was to draw upon the soft clay surface a picture of Jerusalem in the siege. The prophet himself was to act as though he was the besieger. He was representative of Jehovah who was against Jerusalem, or men would never have destroyed that beloved city.

Notice the word **against** in these few verses. It is repeated 7 times, suggestive of the Lord's attitude toward them. Their iniquities and rebellion had separated them from God [Isa.52:2]. The first sign, therefore, is the witness of the successful siege of Jerusalem by their enemies. At that time it was the Chaldeans, later the Romans, and still later the armies of the world will be gathered around Jerusalem. Yet they gave no serious attention to the Prophet, but yielded to their foolish dreams believing the false prophets. We see the same condition today. Our age, so boastful, self-righteous, and secure in its apparent strength will end in great catastrophes. ***"Judgment will again be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding place"*** [Isa.28:17]. God's Word shall be fulfilled regardless of peace acts and Peace and Safety slogans. Nothing can stay His Hand when once the hour has struck.

2. THE POSTURE SIGN

"Lie thou also upon thy left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt bear their iniquity." [Eze.4:4]

In the 2nd sign, we are given to see the punishment upon the people, rather than upon the city, as in the 1st sign. In his own person, the Prophet tasted the degradation and judgment which was about to come upon the nation. It is not said that Ezekiel should lie 390 days upon his left side and then 40 days upon his right side continuously. We rather incline to the opposite view; for the fact that he must prepare food to eat during those days excludes this extreme deduction. No doubt he obeyed the command as he understood it and gave the people the sign the Lord desired.

The number of days, 430 in all, are representative of years as the text shows. We are reminded of Exodus, where the sojourning of Israel in the land of Egypt is given as 430 years when God was as a stranger to them. That time was a most emphatic type of this present dispensation when Israel are wanderers on the face of the earth. That 70 years in Babylon was but an earnest of this later and greatest captivity that is just about at its final loosing stage. Evidently, the 390 and 40 days (or 430 days) foretell the 430 years of God's silence toward Israel, from Malachi to the anointing of Jesus. Immediately, He began to speak unto them as figured by the loosing of Ezekiel's tongue. More than this; as we read, the Lord said expressly to Ezekiel, ***"For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the***

days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel [Eze.4:5]. Hence, we see that the sign pictured the actual meted-out punishment that was to fall upon the people. The primary application then of the 390 and 40 days must be to the period of their punishment. The Prophet therefore bore, in his own person, the suffering which the nation was to experience. In a sense, he was a type of Christ who bore the iniquities of all mankind in His own body on the tree. It is written of Him, ***“He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed”*** [Isa.53:5].

3. THE SIGN OF FAMINE AND DEFILED BREAD

“Take thou also unto thee wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and fitches and put them in one vessel and make bread thereof according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side...And the meat that thou shalt eat shall be by weight twenty shekels a day. From time to time shalt thou eat it. And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of a man... Thou shalt prepare thy bread thereon.” [Eze.4:9-10, 12, 15 RV]

Here is where the critics are horrified. Some of them actually refuse to acknowledge the God that would require such an abominable thing. But the Lord realized what He was doing. He knew the storm this would invoke from unbelief all down through the centuries; nevertheless, he insists on Ezekiel's obedience in this matter also. The prophet too is horrified and in despair as the fact overwhelms him that Jehovah exacts obedience. He cries to Him for a change in respect of the dung. The answer comes that he may substitute cow's dung and Ezekiel must be satisfied with this concession. God's ways are sometimes strange and His will exacting; but, if we are in His hand there is nothing to do but obey.

This eating defiled bread is a sign, as the others, of the horrors of the Babylonian siege and the later one, the Roman, and the still future one that is not far distant at the present writing. The eating by weight presaged the scarcity of foodstuffs. It sounded the bell, warning of the coming famine; a terrible famine that will be part of the judgment of this doomed world. The defilement of the bread witnesses especially of the unclean conditions that will obtain during the siege and what abominable things the people in Jerusalem will be obliged to eat, even as they have already eaten in the past when they have been scattered, as it is written, ***“Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles whither I will drive them”*** [Eze.4:13]. It was also announced by Hosea that ***“they should eat unclean things in Assyria”*** [Hos.9:3-4].

Ezekiel baked the bread as the Lord commanded, while, no doubt the captives looked on the scene with amazement that a priest could eat such food. The least taint of uncleanness was abhorrent to a Jew and much more to a priest. But the Lord was showing them the defilement of His priestly nation and, if it was abhorrent to them, how much more abhorrent to Him to view their corruption; for He is holy. By their eating the bread of defilement, they were only showing out the corruption of the old man. The Lord turns away from man's sinfulness with the same repugnance that Ezekiel felt for the defiled bread; and, He desires that they know it.

4. THE FINAL SIGN

“And thou son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber’s razor and cause it to pass upon thy head and upon thy beard and take thee balances to weigh and divide the hair.” [Eze.5:1]

The hair that is shaved from the beard and the head of the prophet witnesses of the scattering of the people. The razor, the sword of God’s justice, was to be used to separate them into 3 parts:

- The **ONE PART** was to be burned with fire, a picture of the fate of a part of the people during the siege; and besides the fire, the pestilence and famine was to consume them.
- **ANOTHER PART** was to be destroyed by the sword;
- **STILL ANOTHER PART** was to be scattered unto the 4 winds, that is, dispersed among the Gentiles. The sword would also follow these latter.

Then there was **A SMALL NUMBER** that should be preserved as figured by Ezekiel hiding a few in his garments, symbolic of Jehovah covering a few from the deserved judgments. And **SOME OF THESE** were also cast into the fire, figuring the refiner’s fire, from which a preserved remnant shall come forth as pure gold. They will be blessed and be a blessing to the world as is repeatedly witnessed in the Scriptures [Isa.6:13, Jer.23:3, Eze.6:8].

All these judgments mentioned came upon the city, the land, and the people; but they will come again. The Jews are going back to their land now. The Lord has opened the way, but His people are still in unbelief. They do not as a people see that His face is toward them and that the time is at hand for their restoration to His favor and their place in the world. Hence, their greatest tribulation is yet future. These 4 judgments await a future fulfillment. We have the proof of this fact in this very portion as Jehovah speaks in this wise,

“I will do in thee that which I have not done and whereunto I will not do any more the like because of thine abominations.” [Eze.5:9]

Jesus said, relative to the Great Tribulation, that there was never such a time of trouble in the world and never shall there be again its like [Mat.24:21]. The abominations of Israel have been greater than other people in the sight of God, because they had great light and responsibility. They profaned the sanctuary of the Lord repeatedly, but the last profanation of His Holy Place will be the worst. They will allow the Antichrist to put his image in the place where the glory of God was wont to be manifested; hence, their punishment will be more severe. Poor people, how we weep for them when we realize the sufferings that are yet before them.

THE FIRST MESSAGE

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man set thy face toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them. And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the Word of the Lord God.” [Eze.6:1-3]

Here we have the solemn message of judgment against the whole land of Israel. The city of Jerusalem had been mostly in view in the preceding predictions. The mountains were especially the places of idolatry; hence, God was against them. They were called “*the high places*.” Images and shrines of different kinds were erected upon these mountains where all manner of evil practices were allowed. Moses had predicted that Israel would come to such a low state, and he also spoke the judgment which would follow such departure from God...

“I will destroy your high places and cast down your images and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols and my soul shall abhor you...I will bring the land into desolation and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished. And I will scatter you among the nations and I will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.” [Lev.26:30-36]

Is not that an astonishing prophecy given by Moses hundreds of years before it was fulfilled? Jehovah may delay judgment, but it will come. His Word shall come to pass in due time. Though the vision tarry, it will come, as Habakkuk declared [Hab.2:3]. Yet, Ezekiel assures there shall be a remnant to whom the Lord will show mercy. They will acknowledge their sin and loath themselves for the evils that had been committed. In all the history of Israel, as of The Church also, there have been some whose hearts were steadfast with the Lord. It has been even so in this present dispersion of almost 19 hundred years, there has been a remnant also of the Jews [Rom.11:5]. That remnant is increasing in these last days. It is quite a host already with the promise of an abundant harvest.

Ezekiel is commanded to smite his hands, that is, clap them together, and stamp with his feet to express the outward vehemence of the judgment. These manifestations are also signs of exultation and delight; but here they are signs of positive fury and betoken the judgment that is due to fall upon the mountains of Israel.

THE SECOND MESSAGE

“Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Also thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel; An end, an end is come upon the four corners of the land.” [Eze.7:1-2]

The message closes the first prophecy of Ezekiel. All the other elements, angles and forms of the judgment peals that preceded, are now compassed and emphasized in this final message. It takes us down to the end of the judgment of that time of Ezekiel; but much more. It takes us down to the judgment of the Roman invasion of the land. An utter end came upon the land in both instances. The people were scattered and the land left desolate; but we also believe this message foretells a future devastation upon the land. The end will come again for Israel because of their sins and apostasy; and the devastation will be more pronounced than it ever has been in the past. Hence, the final judgments will be greater than all that has gone before, because the people will deserve it in vaster measure. The apostasy will reach its climax both in Israel and The Church in the end time. That end is right at hand. Count how many times the word **end** is mentioned in the first

few verses of this chapter. Then we find that the end is a time of evil; it is the day of judgment [Eze.7:10, 12].

In Hebrew, the whole chapter is in the form and rhythm of a poem. It divides into 3 sections and appears to include all Ezekiel's predictions taking us way down to the end. No doubt we could call this portion of the 1st division of the book an "Outline of the Whole"; hence, Chapter 7 gives us the end of the calamities and the results on the land and the people.

THE FIRST PART

This includes the first 9 verses and occupies us with the set time for judgment. The Lord had waited long; but the end of His mercy had come. ***"He being full of compassion often forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned He His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath"*** [Psa.78:38]. But now the cup of their iniquity is full, as is also His cup of wrath. They have rebelled more and more and the day of reckoning is at hand. Jehovah's fury was now ready to sweep over the entire land. That judgment came as foretold. His eye did not spare nor did His heart pity them. He fulfilled His Word by Ezekiel and Jeremiah. They lived to see its execution.

But that is not the end. There is another end as is unmistakably plain to those who read the Scriptures. When the present wickedness and apostasy has reached its climax there will come the day of reckoning again. It will be ***"the day of vengeance of our God"*** [Isa.61:2]. He will speak to the nations ***"in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure"*** [Psa.2:5]. The whole world will be in rebellion against the Lord and against His Anointed King, Christ, and His anger will wax hot against them. It will be the "Against Period"—God against man. Man energized by Satan, will be in a mighty conflict out of which God will emerge victorious; then woe to the defeated dupes. They will call to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of the Lamb for He will be as a Lion in that fearful time of wrath. His judgment is as sure to be poured out in the future as it was in the past.

THE SECOND PART

Here is given a description of the doom of that day of evil which was to fall upon the city of Jerusalem [Eze.7:10-18]. The decree could not be revoked. It would come in all its terror. Though they blew the trumpet and called the army to the battle, none responded. God had put the fear of Nebuchadnezzar into every heart. The people felt that the Lord was angry and would not fight for them; hence, why make any effort to defend the city? They knew their iniquities had separated them from the Lord and His Word was against them. The ***"rod"*** mentioned was the king of Babylon at that time. Sword, pestilence, and famine would devour them, instead of their adversaries. A few would escape, the remnant whom Jehovah loved, and they would be upon the mountains mourning as doves. How pathetic and truly symbolic of another day; the great day, the terrible day, the end of man's day, and the ushering in of the manifested **DAY OF THE LORD!**

THE THIRD PART

We have the climax of the poem in the 3rd portion [Eze.7:19-27]. Here we are informed of the cause of all their backsliding and rebellion, which brought the judgment upon them: It was their **“silver and gold.”** The pre-exile prophets declare the same fact. Jerusalem and the whole land of Palestine enjoyed great prosperity and indulged in extravagant living before the captivity. **“Their land is also full of silver and gold, neither is there an end of their treasures”** [Isa.2:7]. As riches increased their vanity increased, and also their desire for pleasure, even as is the case today; hence, the captivity came. Many saints are cut back, made helpless, and unable to do even one thing for the Lord, because they are chastened of Him. He has put them in this condition of captivity. But there is always a cause, even as we read here. The Lord desires that His people know that He does not wantonly afflict them. The chastening will not continue forever, nor will it be too severe. When it has yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness [Heb.12:11], that is, when the object is attained, the Lord will deliver His people. **“Bread corn is bruised; but He will not be forever threshing it; neither will He break it with the wheel of His cart, nor bruise it with horsemen”** [Isa.28:28].

In the case of Israel, God’s wrath was a fever heat. He declared that it would fall upon His heritage and then they would realize the utter worthlessness of their riches. They would cast the silver and gold into the streets; for it would not deliver them. Zephaniah, in his earlier prophecy of the national calamity, made a similar declaration:

“Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of the Lord’s jealousy. He shall even make a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.” [Zep.1:18]

The Apostle Paul gives a similar testimony of the conditions in Christendom at the end. **“Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous,”** meaning lovers of money, **“lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God”** [2Ti.1:5]. The very same evidences of Israel’s departure from God, characterize the present religious age: Worldliness, money-loving and money-spending, pleasure seeking and luxurious living abounding and increasing on every side, witness to all who have ears to hear that the judgment of God cannot be much longer delayed. The Lord will soon take His faithful people out of this corrupt scene and the then-propheesied woes will begin to fall upon the world.

We can plainly see that Ezekiel’s prophecy relates to these times. There is no mistake about it. He declares, **“My face also will I turn from them and they shall pollute my secret place; for the robbers shall enter it and defile it”** [Eze.7:22]. This refers to the setting up of the image of the beast called the **“abomination of desolation”** [Mat.24:15]. This event comes to pass in the latter part of the 7 years marked out by prophecy as the time of the Great Tribulation upon the Jew [Dan.9:27] **“and upon all the world”** [Rev.3:10].

It will be the greatest insult to the Lord that has yet been handed Him. In the book of Revelation, John tells us of this blasphemous counterfeit in a fuller sense than any of the other prophets. What they hint at he reveals. The wicked apostate nation, as well as the whole of the world, will be judged according to their attitude to the image set up in the Holy Place in Jerusalem.

They will receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads, which will protect them from the Antichrist's wrath, but expose them to the wrath of the Lamb. It will be the sign that they are marked for perdition [Rev.16].

VISIONS CONCERNING JERUSALEM [EZE.8-11]

"And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, as I sat in mine house and the elders of Judah sat before me that the hand of the Lord fell upon me." [Eze.8:1]

We here commence another section of the 1st division of Ezekiel. And, it marks an important epoch, being emphatically dated by the Prophet. These dates have corresponding value at the present time. We are positively assured they are on the way to fulfillment in reversal order, as noted earlier in Chapter 1 under the headings of "**DELICIOUS DATES**" and "**BEGINNING OF THE END**." Ezekiel received his first vision in the 5th year of King Jehoiachin's captivity (which was also the beginning of his exile) and is answered in our day by the year 1927. The 6th year, 1 year later, finds its correspondence in 1928.

This section is in 4 decided scenes, each one comprising a chapter:

1. The Prophet is shown all the dreadful abominations that were manifested in the temple [Eze.8].
2. The sighing, faithful remnant was marked by the man with the inkhorn and thus preserved from destruction [Eze.9].
3. The vision of the coals of fire follows, to which is added the vision of the glory [Eze.10].
4. The final revelation of the section is the vision of the depravity of the leaders of the people and the departing of the glory [Eze.11].

While these visions had some relation to the conditions at the time of Ezekiel, yet their greater correspondence is to end-time events. Here surely we are able to see their application to the book of Revelation. We call attention to the image of Antichrist that will be set up in the temple which is shortly to be built in Jerusalem, thus defiling the secret place [Rev.13]. There will be a sealed and preserved remnant. They receive the mark of God and, hence, are preserved from the mark of the beast [Rev.7:4-8]. Answering to the "**coals of fire**" vision, the record in Revelation informs us of fire from the altar being cast upon the earth [Rev.8:5]. And, the glory which is even now returning to Jerusalem will again depart, but only temporarily, for the little while (42 months) the Gentiles will have control of the city [Rev.11:2].

VISIONS OF ABOMINATION

These further revelations to Ezekiel were given him in his house while the elders of Judah surrounded him. They probably had come to him expecting to hear a new Word from the Lord. Suddenly the hand of the Lord is upon the Prophet and he beholds the glorious likeness of the Man upon the throne. In

the Septuagint translation of the Bible, the word for **fire** is **MAN**. There is a similarity between these 2 words in Hebrew: The one is **ESH** and the other **ISH**. Anyway, fire or man, we know it is the Lord Jesus Christ in His millennial glory that Ezekiel envisions on that throne. His hand takes hold of the Prophet, he is lifted up between the heaven and earth, and is brought by the Spirit to Jerusalem. It is here he is given to see the image of jealousy which was northward at the gate in the entry. It was an idol.

THE DEN OF SERPENTS

Ezekiel now beholds a hole in the wall and is commanded to dig into the wall. He discovers a secret door which he opens and enters into a chamber. It was a den of serpents and 70 ancient men of Israel were offering incense before those beasts. It was idolatry after the manner of Egypt. The leader's name is mentioned and this must have been a great surprise to the Prophet; for Jaazaniah was the son of the illustrious and God-fearing scribe, Shapan, who received from Hilkiah the book of The Law and read it before King Josiah [2Ki.22:8]. Those wicked men in that chamber of death had forgotten all about that time of reformation. They thought God could not read the imagery of their mind for they said, "***the LORD hath forsaken the earth***" [Eze.8:12].

Remember that this was a vision. Ezekiel, like John on the isle of Patmos, is carried forward to future times and saw coming events rather than what was transpiring in his day; and yet, there was a slight correspondence at that time also. But these things were not actual. There was no chamber of serpents in the temple, neither was there an image of jealousy like the Prophet saw. The Lord showed Ezekiel what was in the peoples' mind. Note the word **imagery**. Their heart was not cleansed from sin. "***The imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are evil and only evil continually***" [Gen.6:5] is written of the natural man. He cannot worship God acceptably even though he is religious. In fact, the religiousness generally gives rise to self-righteousness which is a stench in the nostrils of the Lord. Jesus said of such, "***Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?***" [Mat.23:33]. These scenes which Ezekiel is allowed to look upon are symbolic references to the apostatized condition of the nation at the end.

THE WEeping WOMEN

The Prophet is now instructed to turn and view another abominable scene. He is brought by the Spirit to the gate of the Lord's house and there he beholds some weeping women. He is told that their tears are for Tammuz. Tammuz was the Babylonish god of Spring and was supposed to die each Fall, go down to Hades, and then revive each returning Summer. The women celebrated the death of this god as the decay of earth's reproductive powers. With the ceremonies were connected some of the vilest practices, which is always the case with false worship, as is seen today in all heathen lands.

SUN WORSHIP

For the 4th time Ezekiel is forcibly taken by the Spirit and brought whithersoever He lists. This time He takes him into the inner court of the Lord's house where he beheld 25 men with their backs toward the temple and their faces toward the sun. These were sun-worshippers; and the worst of

the abomination was the fact that they were priests who were there to fulfill their appointed courses in the order of the Lord. Their attitude was one of defiance, as they were declaring by their turned backs, that they had willfully rejected Jehovah and His worship. This too was but a vision, but it describes what was in the hearts of the priests. They were not true to the Lord or their high and holy calling as identified with the temple and the worship of Jehovah. It proves their heart was not tuned in with heaven. A phrase in the closing part of Verse 17 is very mysterious and strange, ***“And lo they put the branch to the nose.”*** It probably was some shocking and wicked rite connected with the lusts of the flesh in some horrible manner; and, no doubt, refers to something vicious and hateful in the end time.

There are sun-worshippers today; the cult is growing. A few months before World War I, there was a great sun-festival held in Paris. Thousands took part in its orgies and immoralities. There are a multitude of these folk in the English speaking world too. They have turned away from the Sun of righteousness and are worshipping the creation rather than the Creator. Worshipping the creation rather than the Creator is the real understanding of the vision. In the end men will worship nature and call it God. They are doing so at the present time.

The proof that these 4 abominations have their counterpart in the latter time is found in Verse 17. The Man on the throne addresses the Prophet saying of the people ***“that they have filled the land with violence and have returned to provoke me to anger.”*** That could have no meaning whatever as relating to Ezekiel’s time, for the people were not returning then. They were going away. Last year, 1928 corresponds with the 6th year of the Prophet’s exile. There must have been some events which answer to these terrible abominations shown to Ezekiel. The Jews going back to their land in unbelief and expecting to worship God in their high-handed, lifted-up condition of heart may be the solution. Their self-righteousness and self-justification are abominable to Jehovah, as is their dependence upon the arm of flesh. Maybe this refers to Israel as well as Judah. The 10 tribes are also to be restored to the Lord. They may be the ones that are in view—their religion and worship all connected with them being out of harmony with the Lord; hence, abhorrent to Him. The whole heart of the nation is sick: for elders, priests, and women were involved in those abominations. Isaiah diagnosed the case long ago and it still is true. ***“From the sole of the foot, even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. They have not been closed up nor mollified with ointment”*** [Isa.1:6]. Hence, the Lord must deal unsparingly with the people. His fury will not be turned away until they turn to the Lord and are turned into a new Creation; then, He will turn to them.

THE MAN AND THE INKHORN

“He cried also in my ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.”
[Eze.9:1]

The vision of Chapter 9 is closely connected with the preceding one of the worship of idols. Judgment must follow even though Jehovah’s people are the guilty folk; and, Ezekiel sees the judgment. It is of a discriminating

character; for all are not guilty. There is always the sorrowing, faithful few that sigh and cry for the abominations that are committed. The messengers are commanded to mark them; but, for the sinners there is no mercy shown. They had defiled the temple and now the temple was to be further defiled by their dead bodies.

The men that are called to execute judgment are 6 in number. They come with slaughter weapons in their hands, ready for business. Some claim they represent angels, but with this we do not agree. The Word plainly declares 6 men came at the call of the Leader to execute the judgment. We believe these are redeemed men who have a part with the Lord Jesus in judging the world. Angels are not to be the judges of men, but otherwise; men are going to judge the world and also angels [1Co.6:2-3]. In all the Scripture relating to the time of judgment the angels refer to men, glorified humans, who are linked with Christ, the God-Man in His cleaning-up work in the world. They are a part of His Body. In the book of Revelation the angels mentioned there almost invariably refer to men.

Ezekiel 9 forcibly reminds us of Revelation 7. There we read of the sealing of 144,000 of the children of Israel. The judgments of God cannot fall until this company have been sealed and thereby protected from the judgments which will fall upon the apostates of Israel. As they who sighed on account of the abominations were marked by the angel with the inkhorn, so the 144,000 will be marked and escape the impending doom. The signs of grief over the dreadful conditions were proof that they were loyal to Jehovah and His worship. Likewise, at the present time, in the midst of the evils that are manifest in Christendom, there is a faithful remnant who sigh and cry for the abominations and to whom the Lord is saying, ***“Because thou hast kept the Word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of trial which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth”*** [Rev.3:10].

This word **mark** is the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet; it is TAV and signifies “cross.” The letter “T” was CROSS in the old Hebrew script as well as in the Phoenician and Samaritan. The cross was also used in the Egyptian language, and it was a sign of life. The blood sprinkled on the door posts of the Hebrew’s houses in Egypt was in the form of a cross, over the top and down the sides [Exo.12:23]. They were thus protected from the angel of death, the judgment that was coming upon Egypt.

The word of command ***“Begin at my sanctuary,”*** reminds us of the words of Peter, ***“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God and if it first begin at us, what will be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?”*** [1Pe.4:17]. The Lord is walking in the midst of Christendom today judging everything contrary to His mind, separating and correcting those that yield to His words. Later, He will judge Israel: ***“I will judge (separate) between cattle and cattle”*** [Eze.34:22]. He will correct those that will yield to His discipline; but the many will be cut off in the overflowing devastations that are coming upon the nation of Israel.

In the vision, Ezekiel beholds the command carried out to the letter. So in the end it will be. There is no such a thing known as spiritualizing these judgment peals of Jehovah. The world will find this out one of these days when it is too late to escape the deluge of destruction that will be meted out to a world that has rejected the atonement of Calvary. The religious synagogues, of which

many are the temples of Satan, will be filled with the dead bodies of the slain; and, especially will this be the case in the temple in Jerusalem where the image of the beast will be the idol, and allowed to rule and arbitrate the destiny of the people for a short time. There the dead bodies of the Jews will fall and thus defile the temple that was already defiled by idolatry. The touch of a dead body meant defilement for 7 days [Num.19:11] and now Ezekiel views the Holy Place (for so they considered the sanctuary) filled with the dead. The Prophet is shocked as he was when he was told he must eat defiled bread [Eze.4] and a cry of horror escapes his lips:

"...and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?"
[Eze.9:8b]

Ezekiel is confounded and dumbfounded.

- What can Jehovah mean?
- Was it not contrary to God's holiness to defile the place dedicated to Himself?
- Would He destroy all the people?

These were the questions that engrossed the Prophet. He could not understand the Lord. He is answered immediately. The iniquity of the house of Israel and the house of Judah were filled up. God could no longer pity nor spare. He must show that He is Sovereign. His commands were carried out. The man with the inkhorn made the report saying, "***I have done as thou hast commanded me***" [Eze.9:11b].

Judgment is God's strange work; nevertheless He must work. Men have very little idea of what horrors are near at hand. Some have their eyes opened, but few are living in the power of the vision; hence, their testimony falls on unbelieving hearts. But if some do not believe "***shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?***" [Rom.3:3].

VISIONS OF THE COALS OF FIRE AND THE DEPARTING GLORY

THE DEPARTING GLORY

"Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight." [Eze.10:1-2]

The Prophet is again privileged to behold the throne in the firmament above the Cherubim. It is the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus we are instructed that He is sitting on that throne now; for these visions all relate to happenings of the present day. In this vision Ezekiel does not see the Man on the throne; but His voice is heard. The man clothed with linen, the same one we saw with the inkhorn, is commanded to go in and take coals of fire and scatter them over the city. He appears to be the executor of the

judgment on Jerusalem. He is the Lord Himself; but in another character than King...He is the Judge. We see Him in the same official place in the book of Revelation:

"Another Angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer and there was given unto Him much incense that He should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne...And the Angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar and cast it upon the earth." [Rev.8:3-5]

This Angel is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, even as other angels mentioned in Revelation are the overcomers of this Church Age associated with Him. He is the only One that could offer the prayers of the saints upon the incense altar, even the very same One who is found worthy to take the book from the hand of the one sitting on the throne and open the seals [Rev.5]. He is the King-Priest into whose hands all judgment is committed. John views Him pouring out of the wrath of God upon the whole earth; while Ezekiel beholds Him as judging Jerusalem.

The man clothed with linen enters in between the wheels as these glorious living creatures stood at the right side of the house; while the cloud filled the house. We have remarked before that this cloud was the visible sign of the Lord's favor toward Israel, and it shall be so again when they acknowledge Christ as their King and are the acknowledged people of God.

The time figured here, when the Prophet beholds this vision, refers to the present day when the favor of God has, in measure, returned to the nation of Israel; but they are not cognizant of it. Hence, He will withdraw Himself again for a season because of their unbelief.

Ezekiel, the seer, beholds the glory of the Lord going up from the city. It stood over the threshold for a while and the whole house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory. It is a gradual departure, which is shown the Prophet, as though the Lord is loath to leave the city and the people whom He loves. But the judgment must come. They are not yet ready for the blessing which He is ready to give them. And they will show forth this condition of heart by making a covenant with the revived Roman Empire for 7 years [Dan.9:17]. That will proclaim the fact that the Lord is again rejected, hence, He will depart with His glory for a while.

We would naturally infer that after the man had taken the coals of fire from the altar and had gone out to scatter them over Jerusalem, that the next event would be the burning of the city. But no, that is not the case. There is a digression in the program. Instead, Ezekiel sees the glory of the Lord. That is significant and proves the former statement regarding the vision. The coals of fire presage judgment; but the Lord will not be present in the city when the burning takes place.

The Cherubim move on. These wonderful creatures are similarly described in Ezekiel 1, with the exception that here the eyes are made more prominent. They are seen as everywhere upon them, symbolic of their manifold wisdom. They are omniscient even as the Lord, their life. And yet, what a pattern for us; they are obedient to the command of the Man on the throne. The Prophet emphasizes the fact that it was said in his hearing, "**O wheel**," which may be

translated, “*Roll on,*” or “*O Wheel, whirl.*” This is suggestive of what the attitude of The Church to Christ should be; but, alas, how little of this subjection is manifested. Yet, we are assured that all the redeemed who constitute this matchless company will have shown, and are showing continually, this dependent attitude toward Christ, the head of the Body.

We notice a striking change in the order of the faces of the cherubim from that of the opening vision. There the face of the man and the face of the lion are on the right side; while faces of the ox and the eagle are on the left [Eze.1:10]. But now the cherub appears as identical with the ox [Eze.10:14]. The Prophet expressly declares that the moving picture at this time was not different from the former vision [Eze.10:15, 20-22]. It must teach that the “ox” expresses the character of the Cherubim more than the other faces. This most wonderfully instructs us; for the ox speaks of service and sacrifice. Hence, we infer that the very essence of the life of the Cherubim is a giving up of themselves to do the will of their Master. Who of us are in this class, “*led as sheep to the slaughter and killed all the day long*” [Rom.8:36]? The Cherubim are truly representative of Christ’s very life as the Gospel records show Him to us:

- Matthew the **KINGLY ONE**;
- Mark the **LABORER AND SERVANT**;
- Luke the sympathetic **BROTHER OF MAN**;
- John the **SOARING SOUL**, mounting up to heaven’s gates and **LISTENING IN** to heavenly sounds.

These characteristics are all manifested in His people as they yield to Him; and these are represented by the living creatures which Ezekiel beholds by the river Chebar, figurative of the Great Stream of living water whereby they are nourished, sustained, and refreshed—the very Spirit of God Himself.

When the command “*Whirl, wheels*” [Eze.10:13] was given, everything moved. The cherubim and the wheels beside them went. The wings of the Cherubim were raised, and up from the earth the living ones were lifted, the wheels never swerving from their sides. They were inseparable. The Cherubim stood and the wheels likewise. The Spirit was in absolute control. Accelerator and Director all in One. The glory of God is seen as departing from Jerusalem. But it will not be forever, nor even for a century. In a few years the Glory will return, never to leave Jerusalem again. Jehovah will bide His time until the Jews learn the weakness of the flesh upon which they are leaning (when the Antichrist and the allied nations will have proved their perfidy) and they call upon Him whom they have pierced. Then, the Glory will return; Jerusalem will be a praise in the earth and the Jews will be the blessing to the world. They will be the channel of salvation to all mankind. Abraham’s blessing will have its fulfillment then: “*In blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed”* [Gen.22:17-18].

THE LIVING CREATURES

SEE THE LIVING CREATURES.
HEAR THEIR RUSTLING WINGS.
NOTE THE ROLLING WHEELS ALL FULL OF EYES,
GOING FORTH MAJESTIC;
LOUD THEIR CHORUS RINGS,
HAST'NING ON WITH SPLENDOR FOR THE PRIZE.

WHO THE LIVING CREATURES?
WHO CAN EVER TELL?
MAN AND LION, OX AND EAGLE—ONE.
JOHN, IN REVELATION,
DOTH THEIR NATURE SPELL—
SAVED FROM EV'RY KINDRED 'NEATH THE SUN.

QUICKENED BY THE SPIRIT,
GUIDED EV'RY DAY,
RUNNING, RISING; TURNING NOT ASIDE.
SPARKLING LIKE THE BERYL,
HIDDEN ALL THE WAY,
RADIATING JESUS IS THEIR PRIDE.

ON AND ON THEY'RE BOUNDING,
IF NOT STANDING STILL;
HELPING HAND TO NEEDY SOULS THEY LEND.
ALWAYS GAZING UPWARD
TO THE FATHER'S WILL,
PRAYING, SHINING, SHOUTING TO THE END.

FRUITAGE OF REDEMPTION
ARE THIS MYSTIC THRONG,
RULING NOW BY FAITH 'MIDST EV'RY CARE.
WAITING FOR TRANSLATION;
HOPING IS THEIR SONG,
SURE TO REIGN WITH JESUS IN THE AIR.

JUDGMENT AGAINST THE LEADERS

"Moreover, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the Lord's house which looketh eastward, and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men among whom I say Jaazaniah, the son of Azur and Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah, princes of the people." [Eze.11:1]

This chapter has much in little. It is a wonderfully condensed portion of the book of Ezekiel. It concludes the visions concerning Jerusalem and her doom, also the withdrawal of the vision of glory. The departure of the glory had begun; but here we see the marvelous creatures actually going up from the city. However, before this consummation, we read of a vision which Ezekiel records of the wicked princes and a prophecy against them. The Prophet had been watching the departing of the Cherubim and the glory of the Lord when he is again taken hold of by the Spirit, in the vision, and carried to the city of Jerusalem, 500 miles distance, where he beholds 25 men. He recognizes 2 of them, Jaazaniah and Pelatiah. He had seen a man by the name of Jaazaniah in the 8th chapter among the 25 men that he beheld with their backs to the altar [Eze.8:19]; but these cannot be the same men. The

former company were of the priests; this group is of the princes, or leaders of the people. Together, they show us the complete corruption of the chosen people...they have all gone astray. The priesthood and princes were steeped in wickedness and defied God. The judgments previously announced through Jeremiah, and now also through Ezekiel, were coming to pass. The names of those mentioned are interesting. We may learn lessons from Scriptural names:

Jaazaniah (*"he will be heard of the Lord"*)
is the son of **Azur** (*"helper"*),
while **Pelatiah** (*"delivered of the Lord"*)
is the son of **Benaiah** (*"built up of the Lord"*).

These names indicate that the men were not living in the power of their names, even as Christians at the present time are not doing. They had turned away from God and His Word and were walking in deliberate disobedience. We read that they devised mischief and gave wicked counsel, which caused the people to offend. In regard to the prophesied judgment, they said, *"It is not the time to build houses. This is the cauldron; we are the flesh."* They were aware of Jeremiah's letter wherein he told the captives that they would be in Babylon a long time [Jer.29]. They ridiculed that divinely given counsel. They denied the Word of the Lord, calling Him a liar, as it were. They declared that Jerusalem was the cauldron, or seething pot, and that they were the flesh and would be protected in that city which Jehovah loved. But alas, how mistaken they were. There is no safe place for the rebellious and disobedient. God's government must be maintained; otherwise, how can He judge the world. The only safe place in the universe is in the will of God. Jehovah's rule must be upheld by saint and sinner. Jerusalem in the hands of the wicked is as Sodom or Gomorrah [Rev.11:8]. It means something to obey God; and it means something to disobey Him, as the folks will find shortly. God is not mocked. It is still true that *"whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"* [Gal.6:7].

All this rebellion and disobedience of the people, and the consequent judgment of God, finds a repetition in the beginning of the next age. Religious leaders in Christendom and among the Jewish people, like those 25, reject His inspired Word and refuse to accept His ultimatum—His Son or judgment. They will rise up in defiance of the claims of Christ. They are doing so at the present hour in which we write; daring to insist on bringing peace to a rebellious world. It is a false hope: *"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked"* [Isa.57:21]. These leaders, as well as the whole world, will shortly realize that the Word is true. When the judgments of God are poured out, the world will learn righteousness.

The Prophet faithfully delivered his unpalatable message. As he spoke, the Lord gave the sign of its inspiration: Pelatiah suddenly died...judgment fell upon him immediately. He probably was one of the most daring in his defiance of God, sneering, no doubt, at the Lord's messenger, when sudden death overtook him. It was the seal of God upon the message.

Ezekiel was overcome with the summary manner in which God dealt with the man. He fell upon his face and entreated for the remnant of Israel. He feared that all the people would be cut off. He is such a marvelous type of the true

prophets of God. They reveal the will of God, prophesy of the terrible plagues and sorrows which overtake the people in their sins, and yet at the same time they weep over the erring. They have the mind of God in this respect and pray for the salvation and blessing of the people of the Lord, even as we do today when we see them letting down and yielding to the influences of the world. Notice how God answered Ezekiel's prayer.

RESTORATION AND BLESSING

"Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred and all the house of Israel, wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the Lord; unto us is this land given in possession. Therefore, say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they will come...I will even gather you from the people and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered. And I will give you the land of Israel."
[Eze.11:14-17]

The Prophet has cause to rejoice. It is the first comforting message he has received. Though the Lord does not repent of the edict to cast them out of the land, yet, He tells of their gathering back again. Furthermore, there is a special message to the little remnant that was always faithful to Jehovah: **"I will be to them a little sanctuary."** Then follows the great future restoration and regeneration promise. It is the cheering note today for the Jewish people. Their regathering is sure. The blessings promised must come. God is able to perform all He has promised. Not one word shall fail of ought that we read of the final restoration and exaltation of the Jew. To deny the literal regathering of the ancient people of Jehovah is to deny the Word of God.

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." **[Eze.11:19]**

Their return from exile is here definitely promised to Ezekiel and it could not refer to the remnant's return from Babylon (as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah); for the people as a whole were not regenerated at that time. Their heart of stone was not taken away. They did not receive a **"heart of flesh,"** which refers to the new birth that will be the experience of all the people in that happy, halcyon day of their regathering. They will be filled with the Spirit. The latter rain will be poured out upon them and they will be submerged in the Divine Overflow. Oh, what a people they will be! It will be wonderful to contemplate that nation when God's blessings rest upon them. Literal prosperity will follow as well as spiritual. They will be an obedient nation and as such will eat the fat of the land. Nothing will be denied them. They will bask in the sunshine of Jehovah's love. We are glad and rejoice for them and with them.

These great promises were not fulfilled to that feeble remnant who returned after the 70 year's captivity in Babylon. These great visions of the national restoration are still future. They will become realities when the Lord Jesus Christ, their King, takes to Himself His great glory and reigns. But, alas, Ezekiel did not view that great event. Instead, he saw the departure of the vision of Glory which sounded the death knell to Israel's hopes at that time.

"Then did the cherubim lift up their wings and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city. Afterwards the Spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision I had seen went up from me." [Eze.11:22-25]

We are sure Ezekiel was disappointed after getting such a message of blessing and restoration to see the Blesser Himself depart; for the glory of the Lord gradually withdrew from the temple where it had dwelt. But blessed be God! The promise was sure. Jehovah must return and fulfill all His Word to His people. The Glory of the Lord stood upon the mountain on the east side of the city...that mountain is the Mount of Olives. It is the very same mountain upon which Jesus stood before He ascended to His Father [Act.1:12]. And, it is on that very same mountain that "**His feet shall stand**" when He returns [Zec.14:4]. Is that not significant? Those Cherubim, joined to the Man upon the throne and standing there upon that mount, are representative of the Lord Jesus Christ and His people in the **DAY OF THE LORD**. At that time, the Body of Christ will be with Him. "**His feet**," that is a company of His people who constitute the lowest part of His Body, will stand on the Mount of Olives. The Head of the Body will be upon the throne. His heavenly people will actually be manifested as Himself in that day. We can hardly grasp the marvelous fact, that we are a part of Christ—"**bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh**"—but then it will be actually seen. All the temple and the city, yea, and finally the whole earth, will be filled with the glory of the Lord. Oh, the marvels of the day that is dawning! We shall be a part of the Glory that shall lighten the world. "**For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face**" [1Co.13:12]. The Church of Jesus Christ is a wonderful people because of their wonderful Lord and Life; but how much more wonderful are the overcomers among them. These shall sit upon the throne as the Wife of the Lamb; for they will be worthy. They have made themselves ready [Rev.19:7].

There are some Christians who...

- Do not consider the mystical Body of Christ in the marvelous sense that Scripture warrants. They do not deny that The Church is the Body of Christ, but at the same time they give her an inferior place. Now, our body is one with our head; though it is true the head rules and regulates the body, yet all the members share with the head. So likewise with the Body of Christ. But some folks imagine it presumptuous to claim such honor. They think it humility to bewail our inferiority complex but that is simply unbelief. It glorifies God to believe Him and walk in the power of what He has provided for us in Christ. The feet of the personal Christ, the Man Jesus (who was, say 6 feet tall) the Head of The Church could hardly be visible from Jerusalem. It will take a great company of His people, redeemed and glorious, to fitly represent Him there.
- Then, there is another point in this connection upon which saints disagree. It is whether Christ Himself will be seated on the throne in

Jerusalem or represented there by one of the royal seed of David. We are of the latter opinion, because Christ's throne is of universal import. Furthermore, His whole body of people shall reign with Him, and a choice company shall reign as His queen conjointly sharing His throne honors. How could such a great multitude reign in Jerusalem? It would be impossible. The heavens shall be the home of the glorified Church of Jesus Christ. The Lord said to the 12 Apostles, "***In the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel***" [Mat.19:28]. Where in Jerusalem or in all Palestine is there space for all these rulers. The government, or kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, is no little 2 x 4 affair; but a Worldwide Empire with rulers and rulers, kings and kings, governors and governors; all in beautiful harmony and subjection to the one great glorious Lord Jesus, Head and King over all. That is what a close study of the Scriptures teaches and we believe it will be just that way.

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

SHE STAYS SO CLOSE TO THE SIDE OF HIM
 HIS OINTMENT FALLS ON HER;
 HENCE, WHAT IF THE DARKNESS GRIM
 COMES HER WAY, THE SMELL OF MYRRH
 SOON CHANGES TO THE LAVENDER.
 HER PRESENCE BREATHES A HEAVENLY SCENT;
 AND LINGERS AS THE ROSE
 OF CHRIST'S FRAGRANCE REDOLENT,
 AS WIND FROM THE GARDEN BLOWS
 SWEET PERFUME, AS IT GOES.
 AND AS SHE WALKS SHE BEARS ALONG
 INCENSE, ALL HEARTS TO STIR.
 AND MEMORIES OF JESUS THROG
 AS HIS HOLY CHARACTER
 IS REPRODUCED IN HER.

SYMBOLIC MESSAGES AND PARABLES [EZE. 12-19]

"The Word of the Lord also came unto me, saying, Son of man thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not. They have ears to hear, and hear not; for they are a rebellious house." [Eze.12:1]

We commence another section, the 4th, with Chapter 12. All that the Prophet has spoken of (the doom of Jerusalem, the visions he had seen, the signs he had acted out for the people's benefit) fell on deaf ears...they were neither heeded nor heard. Hence now, the Lord speaks again to Ezekiel and announces a speedy judgment. Furthermore, the Prophet receives a series of messages and parables. The 2 phrases, "***The Word of the Lord came***" and "***Thus saith the Lord***" are repeated again and again in this subdivision and give character to its contents. It is a solemn portion, truths of deep import emphasized and made striking; and is of vital interest to us at the present time if we have ears to hear.

The Prophet is now commanded to act out the removal of the people from Jerusalem. He was a sign to them. As he did, so certainly should they do. He was to prepare as for a journey. He probably dressed as a traveler, a pack on his back, sandals on his feet, and a staff in his hands. In their sight, he was to remove from the house, in their sight, all things that were movable. Then he was to go from one place to another as though on a journey. He was to dig through the wall and carry his stuff out through the hole with his face covered. He obeyed the voice of Jehovah to the letter. What a laughing stock he must have been to the people. How they must have jeered and ridiculed the man of God as he played the part which the Lord commanded him. Oh, how little God's people today know of this absolute obedience to the will of the Lord. We say the Prophet was a sign to the people; but did they consider or repent? Oh, no, they did not. They continued on in their rebellion and unbelief as the Lord knew that they would. In the morning, He spoke to Ezekiel concerning the attitude of the captivity to his message. He enquired as to what the people said unto him. Furthermore He told the Prophet what to answer.

"This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel that are among them. Say, I am your sign; like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them. They shall remove and go into captivity. And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight and shall go forth. They shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby. He shall cover his face that he see not the ground with his eyes. My net also I will spread upon him and he shall be taken in my snare and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it though he shall die there." [Eze.12:10-14]

Herein is the explanation of Ezekiel's queer performance. He is acting out the doom that awaits the king in Jerusalem, as well as the people that are encouraging him in his self-willed disobedience. Zedekiah is the prince that is meant. It is a prophecy of his fate which was almost literally fulfilled when he attempted to flee from Jerusalem after it had fallen into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar's army. His eyes were put out and he did not see the ground. We find the details of his flight in Jeremiah 39:4 and 52:10-11, and also in 2 Kings 25:1-7. It was a marvelous prediction—a moving picture indeed. Ezekiel acted out a moving trip; but according to the picture, Zedekiah actually moved. Many critics have sought to explain the miracle by saying that Ezekiel acted out this little play **AFTER THE EVENTS HAD TRANSPIRED IN JERUSALEM**. Others have claimed it was written **AFTER THE FALL OF THE CITY AND THE CAPTURE OF ZEDEKIAH** as he was seeking to escape. Hence, the Prophet added some details that were not present in order to make it more striking. But neither of these explanations explain Ezekiel's prophecy. This is the Word of God. Ezekiel did not prophesy these things of himself. Jehovah inspired him to so act, speak, and write. However, such perfect fulfillment of the minutest details of these predictions are an unpalatable dish for the critics; hence they seek to disprove them.

All these visions, messages, and signs, which have so far occupied us, are closely connected and were predicted before the city was destroyed. Every vision, message, and sign had a fulfillment, in a sense, at that time; but that is not all—they have a future reference also. There is another one close at

hand. Jerusalem will be in another siege, the greatest that has ever been known. All the nations of the world will have armies gathered around the city in the will and purpose of God. The prophets tell us of that day. It is even the day of Jacob's Trouble [Jer.30:7], the like of which has never been known and never will be experienced again. The usurping prince of this later day will be the False Prophet, the 2nd beast of which we read in Revelation 13.

"Moreover the Word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness. And say to the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants and of the land of Israel, They shall eat their bread with carefulness and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein." [Eze.12:17-19]

Here is an additional message, Ezekiel is again the peoples' sign—as he is doing so shall they do. It tells of the affliction and terror that should come upon them. Also, the land would show the results of the invasion of the enemy; it should be desolate and waste. But Israel heard not. The captivity before whom he was acting believed none of his words. Although part of them had fallen at that time, they sneered at the predictions of judgments and refused to acknowledge others would follow. It is the same today. Ezekiel is talking loud (a real "Talkie") to the Gentile as well as the Jew. The signs of the truth of his prophecies are before their eyes; but what attitude are they taking? They are taking the very same as those captives in Babylon. They are not heeding his words. Jehovah expects them to see that His Word in the past has been fulfilled and turn to Him in repentance. He is giving them an opportunity while He waits; but, He waits in vain as is more manifested in the following portion.

"And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man what is the land of Israel, saying? The days are prolonged and ever vision faileth. Tell them I will make this proverb to cease." [Eze.12:21-22]

The above words are exactly what the unbelieving folk say today. Especially the Jew who agrees with the rebellious of Ezekiel's day and says, *"Oh, there is nothing to the future of Jerusalem and the restoration of Israel. It is only a dream. It is a long time that the Jews have been looking forward to that fulfillment, but it is all foolishness."* These are some of the present day utterances of the same unbelieving heart. But God will show them. He is not going to delay much longer. They will be obliged to change their tune shortly, or at least the words of their song, and say instead, **"The days are at hand, and the effect (fulfillment) of every vision"** [Eze.12:23] The rebellious will be shut up by seeing the prophecies coming to pass before their faces. The false prophets will be silenced even as they were in Ezekiel's time. If the people had believed the true messenger they would have repented and cried to the Lord for mercy. Unbelief was the cause of their condition and it is the cause of all their sorrow, as well as all men's sorrow at the present time. Although His Word is being fulfilled before their eyes, they will not believe that God has spoken. They think themselves secure. When we tell them of the 2nd Advent of Jesus, they say, even as the Apostle Peter tells us they would, **"Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation"** [2Pe.3:3-4]. This is the spirit that has permeated Christendom...the coming of Jesus is looked upon as a foolish phantasm.

The judgment of the world in righteousness by that Man, Jesus Christ, whom God has ordained to this purpose, is ignored, rejected, and ridiculed [Act.17:31]; but every man will stand before that bar of justice. The people, because of the talk of the false prophets' foolish dream that the world is getting better, have a wonderful program prepared—national peace and a millennium of prosperity and reformation for the world; but, God has a different one. He has revealed it by the Old Testament prophets in visions and messages which have been confirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, in the writings in the New Testament. Hence, these 2 series of books of the Bible are a double witness to the revelation which God has given to man that in the “**mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established**” [Mat.18:16].

But The Church, as well as Israel, refuses to believe that God's program is the one that will have the stage. They set aside the Word of prophecy. They say, “**The vision is for many days**” to come” [Dan.10:14] and know not that the fulfillment is at the door. “**My Lord delayeth his coming,**” the evil servant declares [Luk.12:45]. But the Lord will speedily rise up and end the false hope and security which is all about us. “**When they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction**” [1Th.5:3], is the inspired Word. And we are very near that moment, so near that we are amazed that so few realize its imminency and are stirred to its possibilities.

FALSE PROPHETS AND PROPHETESSES ARRAIGNED [EZE. 13]

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God, Woe unto the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit and have seen nothing.” [Eze.13:1-2]

In these verses, the Lord accuses the false prophets and prophetesses of several charges. The 1st one is that they have spoken out of their own hearts. That is, their messages originate with themselves. They were not based upon the “**Thus saith the Lord,**” but were the product of their own minds. They expressed the thoughts and desires of their darkened hearts and gave no heed to the Word of God. Oh, how pertinent is this accusation to conditions in Christendom. How can anyone deny the application? The false prophets abound. They are far in excess of the true ones; and, their words have far more weight with the people. They believe them rather than the real prophets because they do not desire the Truth. They are false to God and they want false teachers and false words. How sad, but true!

These charges of Ezekiel not only applied to conditions then, but are really spoken to religious leaders and religious bodies of our time. Because of the false prophets, the churches are in a state of apostasy.

“They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word.” [Eze.13:6]

They are self-called and self-appointed. They become the mouth-pieces of lying spirits. They are the messengers of a false hope and a false peace and

behind them stands Satan, the father of lies. These lying spirits possessed the prophets in Israel's day [1Ki.22:19-23] and they are still seeking and finding outlets for their devilish dreams. It is predicted of the last days that people will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons [1Ti.4:1]. We need not refer that condition to any future time, it is here now. Seducing spirits sure enough!

The Lord then pronounces condemnation upon the false prophets. He is against them. His hand is upon them for punishment. Their punishment shall consist of 3 things mentioned in Ezekiel 13:9:

1. They shall be outcasts from the congregation of the Lord;
2. their names shall not be mentioned in the writings of the house of Israel; and
3. they shall not enter into the land of Israel.

This 3-fold judgment of these wicked men, who were a curse to the people at that time, figures a judgment of worse traitors to Jehovah in the end time whose names shall be blotted out of the book of the Lord and out of the memory of the people of Israel. They will lead the poor folk astray in the end, because they will reject the Word of the Lord and substitute for it the wisdom of men.

Paul's writings are full of warnings as to the departure of the ministers in Christendom from the Truth, and its attendant evils; but there will also be the Jews. These Gentile and Jewish leaders will be a double witness to error and the Antichrist and bring the most terrible woes upon the world. Jude's little epistle of 25 verses describes these terrible men and their eternal doom in vivid, striking words; and there is no imagination, nor fiction about his outburst of righteous wrath. Remember, that this letter is just as much God-breathed as any other portion of the Holy Writings.

These false messengers have defiled The Church of God with their unholy, erroneous doctrine, and Paul declares, by the Spirit of God, "***If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy; for the temple of God is holy which temple ye are***" [1Co.3:17]. The Church, that is, all believers, constitute the spiritual temple of God. It is founded upon the Truth, the doctrine concerning the Lord Jesus Christ—His Virgin Birth, His vicarious death, His resurrection and ascension to heaven, and His coming again. Any rejection of these essential items of the Scripture defiles the temple. It is the most devilish corruption and blasphemy. God will destroy the wicked leaders and the false prophets who are making merchandise of the Gospel.

Ezekiel describes them as building a wall and then plastering it with untempered mortar. Let us note how suggestive this language is of the present conditions.

"Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy

wind shall rend it. Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?" [Eze.13:10-13]

A wall is for defense. Those leaders among the Jews banded themselves together and invented all manner of schemes to escape the judgments of God; for only thus could they justify themselves and vindicate their false message. But their unity and fellowship was of the flesh. There was no living faith or power holding them together. They daubed it with untempered mortar, answering to man's power, strength, loyalty, and oaths, to cement and make them an invulnerable multitude.

Oh, how marvelously the description fits present conditions, both religious and political. The worldwide unions, confederacies, both of church and nations, which are before our eyes, are the result of the teaching of false teachers and prophets and their cleaving together is simply of man. It is a whitewashing which will not stand when the judgment of God hits the combinations. They will crumble when the great hailstones fall upon the refuge of lies. The mortar will then be seen in its true character.

In Genesis 11, we are shown an illustration of the Prophet's day, but more especially of the present day. The people were as one, "***One language and of one speech.***" They were all agreed to build a city and a tower, one whose top should reach to heaven. They desired to make a name for themselves. Is it not a forcible reminder of what the nations and churches are endeavoring to do? The false prophets have made them to hope for the possibility of a World Empire and World Unity—church and state to be as one. But alas, the cement is man-made...the unity is of the flesh and not of the Spirit; hence, the slime will not stand. The untempered mortar will give way and the great building will fall. It is inevitable. All the schemes, ambitions, inventions, and confederacies of men will collapse when the Lord shakes the earth. Judgment will sweep over all these destructive critics and all the things that men have built and their false prophecies will come to naught. There must be the unity of the Spirit to hold men together or they will never stick. Only such a union will stand in the evil day. Listen to the mockery of Jehovah: "***Lo when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?" [Eze.13:12]***. When these Divine Predictions are fulfilled, when a boasting, Christ-rejecting world and an apostate church are submerged in the dreadful judgments of a wrathful God, what help will all the nice sounding words, the silly vaporings of the false prophets afford? The whitewash will be dissolved, the unity be a thing of naught, and the defilement of the temple seen in its true light. Then everyone will receive his due reward. Strict justice will be meted out to the prophets. It will be a day of woe for them.

FATE OF THE FALSE PROPHETESSES

The false prophetesses in Israel come in for their share of the fiery indignation of the True Prophet. They too were scored.

"Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? And will ye pollute me

among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies?" [Eze.13:17-19]

And if he had been like some of the prophets today, they would have received a double portion, for even true prophetesses are not spared by these latter day servants of the Lord. They seem not to have read that God ever used a woman for anything except to darn socks, wield the potato masher and the scrub brush. But maybe they will be surprised when all the saints meet together in glory to see how many women will come in for the reward of having labored with Paul in the Gospel. They will have missed the reward of having helped them, as the Apostle Paul admonished his true yokefellow,

"And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." [Phi.4:3]

Ezekiel's denunciations were against false prophetesses, who spoke out of their own mouths, even as the prophets of Belial. They were a soothsaying class, sewing something to their arms and wearing veils to appear as though of a mystic character. They claimed magic skill, occult science, as it is now styled, somewhat of the character of mediums today. We would infer from the language that they dressed for the part, or gave their poor dupes amulets to wear to protect them from evil. Today, we have much of this occult science in our midst. The trinity of evil doctrine—Christian Science, Unity and Spiritualism—belongs to this class. All are the offshoot of women; for though Unity apparently has a man as its founder, its teaching began with Mrs. Eddy. She is the mother of that lusty demon-empowered son also. The majority of its philosophies and teaching came from so-called Christian Science. These 3 occult religions all claim to be founded on Christian ethics; but they are far from Christian. They have no foundation but the flesh, no death, no resurrection, no ascension, no coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ in a material sense. They give a philosophical interpretation to the most precious Christian doctrine and destroy the Christian hope of a true heaven, a living God, a personal Lord, and an abiding Comforter in the form of the Holy Spirit. God's wrath and condemnation rests upon these terrible delusions, and it is woe to those teaching these errors.

But there is a further thought here. Women in scripture invariably represent religious bodies. Hence, we would infer that these false prophetesses represent, in the fullest sense, all the false religions in Christendom. All those bodies of people calling themselves Christian, yet teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, having left the true doctrine of The Church, are meant. They are truly deceiving the people, claiming infallibility like the Romish system, or otherwise leading folks astray from the simplicity which is in Christ.

The description of these false prophets and prophetesses fits the above interpretation,

"Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life." [Eze.13:22]

These wicked men and systems prophesy lies, say smooth things, preaching “*peace and there is no peace*,” even as Ezekiel 13:10 implies. The righteous are saddened with the error that is broadcasted; but the wicked rejoice. Modernism, with its deadly poison, is strengthening the hands of the evil. Crime is increasing by leaps and bounds and the cause of it may, in great measure, be laid at the door of these false teachers and systems of iniquity that claim to be religious. There is no fear of God among the people for, according to the falsifiers, there is no God and death is the end of all, or at least there is no judgment after death, and no hell or eternal punishment. The young people are not taught to respect the Bible as the inspired Word of God; hence, they are blasphemous and impudent, without even natural affection. Oh, if the Lord does not interfere in a very short time, men will be as the beasts. There is no hope for a world that casts off God and rejects His Son, refusing to acknowledge His right to their life.

MESSAGE TO THE WICKED ELDERS

“Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me and sat before me. And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face. Should I be enquired of at all by them? Therefore speak and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him according to the multitude of his idols.”
[Eze.14:1-4]

Those elders appeared before the Prophet presumably to enquire of the Lord as to His will; but, there was no need of this conference. Ezekiel had faithfully uttered the messages of judgment and impending doom and they had heard and rejected them; yet, now they come and enquire of the Lord. He answered the fools according to their folly. They manifested the wickedness of their hearts and the depths of degradation into which men fall who reject light...they become hypocritical. These elders come with pious, religious pretensions. It sounded well to enquire of the Lord; but He knew their hearts. They were full of idolatry.

Jehovah asks, “Should I be enquired of at all by them? To seek the Lord in such a condition of willful evil is an open defiance of Him. Yet, this is the same condition people are manifesting these days. They are professing godliness but denying the power, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, though pretending to be religious while idols are set up in their hearts. Men are money mad. The dollar is their god; but they will attend the services at church, as they call the religious exercises. They will take an interest in the Bible class study; but they do not want reality. They are just playing at religion and God will have none of it.

Those elders appeared to be alright; but God knew their heart. We cannot deceive Him. The Lord calls to repentance: “***Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols***,” He calls. But if they do not, He announces that He will deal with the miserable hypocrites. He will answer the unrepenting idol-worshipper who separates himself from the Lord. He says He will deceive those that dare to deceive others:

“And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.” [Eze.14:9]

There were many deceived and deceiving prophets in Israel. They cared nothing for the spiritual welfare of the people; but prophesied for filthy lucre.

THE 4 INEVITABLE JUDGMENTS

“The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch mine hand upon it and will break the staff of bread thereof and will send famine upon it and will cut off man and beast from it.” [Eze.14:12-13]

With the above citation we begin the portion devoted to the 4 sore judgments due to fall upon the land. At the time of the prophecy the land was Palestine; but at the end it is the whole world that is threatened with these dire judgments; however, Palestine will not be excepted by any means. It will not be Holy Land to Jehovah, but rather unholy, even as the plain of Sodom and Gomorrah when He rained down fire upon it.

Jesus said, **“Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences”** [Luk.21:11] and these are only **“the beginning of sorrows,”** He adds elsewhere [Mat.24:8]. Men cannot, or do not want to, believe that these 4 evils, or any evils, are coming upon the world. According to their argument, a world famine can now be overruled by transport, pestilence by disinfection, war by peace leagues, etc.; but, there is the earthquake problem to face. What about the shaking earth? How to control its tremors? Yet, the other judgments are just as sure to come as the earthquakes, regardless of all the precautions, peace pacts, and perfection of scientific discoveries of man.

FAMINE

The 1st of these judgments mentioned by Ezekiel is famine. Whether they will come in the order mentioned is not clear. We incline rather to the opposite view, for John (in the Patmos visions) gives war as the first sign of judgment [Rev.6]. The Lord informs the Prophet that these exceptionally sore evils are coming because of exceptional defiance and rebellion of the world. The end time will show forth the wicked heart of man in greater magnitude than has ever been manifested. The whole world will be in a state of anarchy against God. They will refuse to bow to His ultimatum that Gentile times are over and His Son is King. They will refuse to let Him be seated and insist on holding the scepter in their hands. God will rise up against them. He will build up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down and seat His Son on the throne of Judah even as it is written [Act.15:16]. The prophets all agree as to this fact and vainly do men seek to defy and defeat Deity. It is impossible. The strength of men is nothing to His power. He is supreme, and although they have achieved much, and will finally confederate and gather together to forestall and hinder the fulfillment of the Scriptures, yet Jehovah will conquer. In fact, when men are secure, when they are confident that all is well, then is the moment that God will show them that they are nothing, and less than nothing—vanity of vanities. He will let them go on from strength to strength,

achievement and prowess, and when they have reached the summit of their ambitions and are sure there is nothing more to wish or fear, ***“then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape”*** [1Th.5:3].

Men do not believe that a world famine is possible; but the fact remains, that God says it will come, and it will. Famines are realities in the world even now. Three of the greatest famines in history occurred within the last 10 years:

- China has suffered 2 terrible woes of this description since 1914 and
- Russia another.

These have been the greatest famines recorded in any country in any time. Men and women were reported to be dying by the thousands in the streets. It is even said that China has a perpetual famine. Why does not the world, with its marvelous facilities, rush provisions to them? You would think the Christian world, as we love to call ourselves, would be the first to help their fellowman, do unto them as they would be done by, and thus pave the way for the Gospel; but alas, they need the Gospel as well as the Chinese. They are just as much heathen in heart. Unless they have been born again, there is no difference for ***“All have sinned and come short”*** [Rom.3:23].

NOISOME BEASTS

We believe the 2nd of these end-time woes is symbolic rather than literal, though the latter may be a fact also. We have no record in the history of Palestine that such a calamity, as that of wild beasts, ever came upon them; but, the Gentile world powers are represented as wild beasts by the Prophet Daniel [Dan.7], showing their beastly character as viewed by the Lord. John, the Revelator, also refers to men as beasts [Rev.13]. Hence, we believe such are meant by the Prophet.

The Lord Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, sets earthquakes as the 2nd of these sore judgment evils, saying, ***“There shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places”*** [Mat.24:7]. There have been many of these lately. In 1920 an earthquake shook China and was felt around the world. The greatest shaking fell upon an area 15,000 miles square, while vast landslides engulfed whole villages. A million were reported killed. It ranked as the most destructive earthquake in the history of the world; and, there have been many more since that one. Just now as we write, there was an earthquake which shook the whole eastern coast of the United States. Its tremors were felt even in Canada. These are warnings that others will follow.

WAR

The 3rd of these judgment woes is war. Ezekiel says ***“If I bring a sword upon the land and say, Sword, go thru the land, so that I cut off man and beast from it”*** [Eze.14:17], or as the Lord Jesus expresses the matter, ***“Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom”*** [Mat.24]. In other words, a world war is predicted. We had one recently; but another is inevitable. Nothing can stay the dogs of war. God has spoken and no peace is possible until Jesus Christ appears and puts down war forever. Though it may seem that we are pessimistic when we

predict the failure of all these peace pacts and peace efforts, yet we are assured that God's Word shall be fulfilled.

Who would ever have imagined World War I as a possibility, or estimated the havoc it would occasion, or the changes it would make? Likewise with the future. No one can truly paint the picture, the somber, dire specter of the coming war that is sketched for us in the Word of God. Its unspeakable horrors, as well as unbelievable changes, are without parallel, though we have a slight pattern in World War I:

- 10 years ago there were 41 kingdoms in the world and now there are but 17 of those remaining.
- 24 thrones including 3 of the greatest empires have collapsed.
- Furthermore, the world has been in a ferment ever since, ready at any minute to break forth again into a mighty conflagration.

And, this will continue with but a short time of peace until Christ is seated on the throne of empires. As Ezekiel prophesies,

"Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem and take off the crown. Exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until He come whose right it is to reign, and I will give it to Him." [Eze.21:26]

We are living in a time of great upheavals. There has been nothing comparable to the changes in Europe since the down fall of the Roman Empire; but we say, the worst is yet to come.

PESTILENCE

The 4th of these sore judgments is pestilence. It is the sure follower of war. It comes mysteriously, generally without any signaling, yet it will be here on schedule time. Ezekiel is made to speak for God, in no uncertain tone,

"Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it (yet it will come), as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." [Eze.14:19-20]

No power, no science, no antitoxin, no remedy, no men, though they had favor with God, could stay that epidemic. After World War 1, we had a similar plague though on a much smaller scale. It seemed to appear simultaneously in every country of the world and took an enormous toll of life. The total world mortality has been estimated at not less than 12 million people. It was an epidemic without a parallel; but there will be another that will exceed its terrors, and it is not far away. A worse influenza will fly upon the 4 corners of the world and the death rate will reach more than 12 million at this later date. If any escape the 3 other judgment woes, he is liable to fall under this plague; for God's declarations as to these judgments cannot fail. The Word is more emphatic on this point than is generally the case; no doubt because men claim that they can do away with these evils. But the Lord insists that they cannot do one thing to avert these calamities. Even prayer will not change His program. No, not any supplication, not even of His choicest servants, can

avail to turn away His anger when once He has whetted His sword and risen up to the judgment.

The declarations are especially significant at this place. Twice, 3 of the mightiest men of prayer are mentioned. They were righteous men who had power with God; but here it is declared that though they were in Jerusalem they would deliver only their own souls by their intercessions. “Prayer changes things,” folks are wont to say so glibly these days; but here are 4 coming evils that prayer will not change. Noah, Daniel, and Job (the 3 men Ezekiel is inspired to mention) were witnesses and intercessors at 3 different epochs; each a time of judgment.

- Noah, before the deluge, prayed and was the means of saving his family.
- Daniel prayed for the Jewish nation in Babylon and his prayers brought results. His people were delivered out of Babylon.
- Job prayed for his friends and God spared them.

These men and their times are typical of end-time events. All 3 of them figure the true Jewish witnesses of God at the judgment period, who, though they will be righteous, God-fearing, praying men, will not be able to change God’s plan or purpose. They shall only deliver their own souls. Then, there is a word of comfort for these men, the remnant of the end. In the midst of the 4 judgments, they shall be preserved.

PARABLE OF THE UNFRUITFUL VINE [EZE. 15]

“And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? Or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it; and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work? Behold, when it was whole it was meet for no work; how much less shall it be meet for any work when the fire hath devoured it.” [Eze.15:1-5]

Beginning with this chapter we have 3 divinely inspired parables which further show us of the false hopes which the people in Jerusalem and also the captives in Babylon still cherished relative to the captivity, which was even then coming to pass. But “*hope springs eternal*,” the poet has said; and surely in this instance it is a fact.

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, the weakling scion of a princely race, refused to acknowledge the authority of God in his tenure of the throne. He would not step down and let Nebuchadnezzar have the dominion which Jehovah had conferred upon him. But, he was not alone to blame for insisting upon his rights as he reasoned; the people had encouraged and strengthened him in his false position. The princes and leaders listened to the false prophets and heeded their words instead of the true men of God.

Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, though Nebuchadnezzar had set him upon the throne of Judah, as subject to Babylon, after his 2nd invasion of Jerusalem. Zedekiah and the people with him were looking for help from the alliances which they had formed with other nations. They had even asked Egypt for help, as Ezekiel informs us:

“But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?” [Eze.17:15]

That was rebellion against God; hence he was gradually executing judgment upon the land and the city; yet Zedekiah refused to believe the verdict of his own eyes. He continued in his impenitent state and hoped things were not as bad as they seemed. The captives in Babylon also shared the same hope. It is even so today. Men refuse to believe the Word of God and the evidence that is before them. The signs of the times are brimful of illustrations of the truth of the fulfillment of Scripture. We are amazed beyond measure at these things and marvel that men are not awakened to the immanency of the coming of the Lord.

The first of these parables which are joined together in this section is an apt and interesting illustration of Israel. The Lord, through the Prophet, asks a few questions about the vine. The people's confidence and boast was in the fact that they were the vine of Jehovah. The false prophets were no doubt encouraging them with the beautiful words of Scriptures, such as the prayer of Asaph and other portions, quoted often as referring to them.

“Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt. Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou preparest room for it and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea and her branches into the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges so that all they that pass by that way do pluck her?” [Psa.80:8-12]

But the false prophets seemed to overlook the many other Scriptures which told of the judgment predicted to fall upon the vine and the vineyard, because of the wild fruit which the vine brought forth. Isaiah declares that Jehovah had done all that was possible to make that vineyard profitable; but nothing availed. When it was time for fruit, He looked and it only brought forth wild grapes. Jehovah's patience was at last exhausted, as we read,

“And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof and it shall be eaten up. I will break down the wall thereof and it shall be trodden down. I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, or digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it; for the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel...and he looked for judgment and behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.” [Isa.5:5-7]

We also hear the witness of Hosea against the vine,

“Israel is an empty vine; he bringeth forth fruit unto himself; according to the multitude of his fruit, he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of the land, they have made goodly images.” [Hos.10:1]

Hence, we see that their boast of being Jehovah's vineyard was a foolish boast. The vine is good for only one thing, as Ezekiel intimates in his parable, that is...to bear fruit. Apart from the grapes it brings forth, it is good for nothing. The wood cannot be used for any purpose whatsoever. Will men take a piece and put a vessel thereon? The Prophet asks. It is good for nothing but to be burned with fire. When it is cast into the fire, we learn that it is burned at both ends and even in the midst. He is revealing the certain fate that is about to overtake Jerusalem. It is to be burned with fire because it was an unfruitful vine; and so it came to pass when Nebuchadnezzar's armies came up and besieged the city in the 9th year of Zedekiah, the walls were broken down and the city burnt [2Ki.24, Jer.52].

The parable of the vineyard, as given by the Lord [Mat.21:33] also refers to Israel as is plainly evident. He declares that the Lord sent His servants to gather the fruit, but they beat one, stoned another, and killed another. Finally, the Son was sent; but they treated Him even worse than the servants. Hence, He asks, ***"What will the Lord of the vineyard do unto those husbandmen?"*** He allows them to pronounce judgment upon themselves, which they do, as their answer indicates; ***"He will miserably destroy those wicked men and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen which shall render him the fruits in their season."*** Even as in the time of Ezekiel, this judgment came upon Jerusalem and the people.

But the day is coming in which the Lord will visit His vine again. He is already anticipating that time. He has been visiting the Gentiles for almost 2 millenniums; but He is about to transfer His attention to the Jews. He will visit them shortly; first in judgment, then in grace of which fact the next parable abundantly witnesses.

THE PARABLE OF THE ABANDONED CHILD [EZE. 16]

"Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem. Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan. Thy father was an Amorite and thy mother an Hittite." [Eze.16:1-3]

The 2nd parable is a beautiful story of grace. There is no greater detailed description of the unmerited favor of God found in the Scriptures than our lesson. It is not only an incomparably fascinating story, distinct and unusual, but instructive as well. We are taught in parabolic fashion the sovereignty of God in the matter of the blessing of humanity whether in the case of Israel, The Church, or the individual. It is all of grace. God's dealings with Israel are taken as a figure of all His ways with mankind. We have their past, present and future history set forth here to show that they were not chosen and set apart for God, because of any intrinsic holiness in themselves. Nay! According to the parable, it was their needy, naked, and neglected condition that called forth His pity. The allegory may be divided into 5 parts.

THE 1ST PART: JERUSALEM'S ORIGINAL CONDITION

We learn the purpose of the parable in the first part of the chapter. It is that Jerusalem may know her abominations; but it is not meant for her only, for the whole nation of Israel is included in the application as is easily seen.

First, Jerusalem's origin is mentioned. "***Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite and thy mother a Hittite.***" We know that does not apply to Abraham and Sarah, from which the nation sprang; but it refers to the city whose origin was "***of the land of Caanan.***" As we learn from Genesis 15:16, the Amorites were the original possessors of Palestine. The Hittites are also mentioned in Genesis as the inhabitants of the land [Gen.23:3, 10]. Jerusalem is thus described as of an ignoble and unclean source. Her condition is likened to that of a babe cast out into the open field and left to the mercy of the elements and wild beasts of the land. Can we imagine a more helpless state than of an infant in such a case? It is the picture of absolute weakness, and such is the lesson the Lord desires us to learn from the narrative as regards Jerusalem, Israel, or ourselves as a part of humanity. We were as good as dead, even as was the babe in the field. The sentence of death passed on all men in Adam; hence, God must undertake our case; and this He did, as the parable shows.

THE 2ND PART: JERUSALEM'S CHANGED CONDITION

And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live." [Eze.16:6]

The Lord declares that He passed by Jerusalem when she was naked and unclean. He saw her pitiable condition and spoke the word that made her live. Immediately there was a change. He then washed and clothed her. Furthermore, He entered into a covenant with her: "***yea, I swear unto thee and thou becamest mine***" [Eze.16:8]. He caused her to multiply as the buds of the field. She was adorned with jewelry: Bracelets upon her wrists, a chain for her neck, and earrings for her ears. She became beautiful with the comeliness which He put upon her; bedecked with gold and silver, arrayed in fine linen, and silk, and brodered work. Jerusalem was brought up out of shame and dishonor and made famous. She was the capitol city of the kingdom of the chosen people of the Lord. A golden crown was put upon her head. Her renown went forth. The nations heard of her beauty and prosperity.

The above is a striking allegory of Jehovah's mercy to His people. The city represents them. It refers in a striking manner to Jerusalem's place as the city of the great king Solomon. She was at the zenith of her fame at that period. God is describing her beauty and renown, that she, as well as all people, would realize her iniquity in departing from her Benefactor. All these details are mentioned to show us His grace toward her. There is no word of gratitude from her toward Him.

Now, this is an illustration, the most perfect in Scripture we might say, of the grace bestowed not only upon Jerusalem but upon all mankind. "***Thy father, an***

Amorite thy mother a Hittite,” reminds us forcibly of David’s confession concerning himself, which applies to all of us:

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.” [Psa.51:5]

We were all as that babe, perishing in the field, the world, without hope and without God—helpless and undone. The Lord must speak that word **Live** into our hearts in the power of the Spirit, and we, though spiritually dead, hear His voice and live. The washing with water, the anointing with oil, type of the Spirit, the precious words denoting His ownership, “thou becamest mine,” all apply to the sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. Also the clothing, the beautifying and crowning, all illustrates what the marvelous grace of God has provided for every trusting soul. Our salvation from its beginning to its end is altogether of grace; hence, we never have any cause to boast except in the One who has done all these things for us.

THE 3RD PART: JERUSALEM’S APOSTATIZED CONDITION

“But thou didst trust in thine own beauty and played the harlot because of thy renown and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.” [Eze.16:15]

In this second part of the realistic parable, we have the root cause of all failure and every fall. “Thou didst trust in thine own beauty,” or wisdom, or strength, etc. Here all departure from God may be traced—a leaning upon oneself instead of the Lord. We shortly play the harlot when this is the case. Pride produces independence. Jerusalem was proud of her renown; but she did not acknowledge the Giver of the greatness. Instead of worshipping him in His appointed way, Israel established the “high places: and imitated Canaan’s false worship. The wickedness of the Amorite and Hittite, the original owners of Canaan, were reproduced in Jerusalem. Their little babes were sacrificed to Moloch, the terrible god of the Canaanites [Eze.16:20-21]. All the love and grace bestowed upon them by Jehovah were forgotten. They left the Light for darkness, the Good for evil. And the Lord upbraided them.

“In all thine abominations and thy whoredoms, thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth when thou wast naked and bare and was polluted in thy blood.” [Eze.16:22]

He reminds them of their helpless condition and the grace bestowed upon them, which they appear to have forgotten. He endeavors to awaken them to a sense of their utter ingratitude by reciting to them their sinful departure from Him and their running after other lords and lovers. He accuses Jerusalem of seeking the idol-gods of Egypt, Assyria, and Chaldea and courting them. So great became her abominations that the daughters of the Philistines were ashamed of her lewd ways. That worship of false deities was linked with the basest and grossest immoralities. The most shameful and vilest things of the flesh were practiced. In the estimation of Jehovah, the one-time faithful city became as a harlot for He addresses her as such: **“O harlot, hear the Word of the Lord” [Eze.16:35]**. The same evil condition is manifest in the end of this age. Yea, it is worse. The professed witness for God, The Church, has departed from the Lord in heart, if not in name. At the present time, the apostasy of Christendom overshadows that of Jerusalem; but what will it be in the final

period when the Antichrist will demand and receive the worship of both Jerusalem and Rome.

THE 4TH PART: JUDGMENT ANNOUNCED

"Thus saith the Lord God, Because thy filthiness was poured out and thy nakedness discovered thru thy whoredoms with thy lovers...behold therefore I will gather all thy lovers with whom thou hast taken pleasure and all of them that thou hast loved...and I will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness and I will judge thee as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy." [Eze.16:36-38]

Here we learn that Jerusalem is no more the beloved city. The Word of the Lord is now addressed to her as the "**harlot**." She has committed spiritual fornication, which in the sight of the Lord is much more heinous than physical fornication. Physical fornication is a sin against man, spiritual fornication is against God. It is the dreadful sin of Christendom today. They have left the Lord, their Head and Husband, and are joined to others. As all the abominations of the heathen are said to be found in Jerusalem, so may the same be said of Rome and her daughters, who answer to Jerusalem. Her doom was to be as that of women who break wedlock...stoning.

Stoning, according to The Law, was the judgment of women who break wedlock [Lev.20:10]. That was the reason that the scribes and Pharisees brought the woman to Jesus, who had been taken in such an act of sin, for Him to pronounce judgment upon her. He had been showing grace and talking grace and they desired that He put Himself on record as saying that it was not necessary to keep Moses' Law; but His wisdom was unsearchable. He said, "**He that is without sin let him cast the first stone**" [Joh.8:7]. He was not doing away with The Law of God. He was simply applying it to all men, as He wrote on the ground. It brings the sentence of death to all humanity: "**There is no difference ... All have sinned**" [Rom.3:22-23]. And, the sentence of death to all is written in the dust out of which man was taken: "**Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return**" [Gen.3:19].

But to return to our subject. Jerusalem, as representative of the people of the Lord, was judged as a woman who had proven false to her husband; and so shall be the doom of The Church [Rev.18]. The judgment would be complete; the proof of which was that she would cease playing the harlot: "**Thou shalt also give no hire any more**" [Eze.16:41].

"And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters." [Eze.16:46]

Samaria, and her daughters, is mentioned as the elder sister of Jerusalem, and Sodom and her daughters as Jerusalem's younger sister. Their corruption was great, it is added; but Jerusalem's perfidy is worse.

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters." [Eze.16:48]

Jerusalem had more light and was of a more religious character than Sodom; hence, her sin is said to be greater. It is always the case. High profession and privileges call for greater responsibilities and failure is greater in such cases; as is also judgment. Jesus expressed the above in His scathing arraignment of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum cities which had been visited by Him and had seen His mighty works but were not converted [Mat.11]. Those allied cities were no doubt ***“the daughters of Jerusalem,”*** mentioned by the Prophet as being guilty with the mother. In the antitype, we know the Protestant sects answer to the daughters of Jerusalem. They are the offspring of the Mother Church, Rome, and in their last state are as depraved and apostatized as is she [Rev.3:16]. How terrible!

THE 5TH PART: JERUSALEM’S RESTORED CONDITION

“Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.” [Eze.16:60]

The 16th Chapter ends with comforting words of assurance to Jerusalem. She will have a restoration to a far greater estate than she formerly enjoyed. Even Samaria and Sodom are promised a restoration; but that does not signify that the wicked dead of those cities will be raised to enjoy the rejuvenation. We are informed that ***“they are suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”*** [Jud.1:7]. How do the present-day restitutionists apply that Scripture? The national restoration of Israel and Judah as well as many other peoples are promised. Moab, Ammon, Assyria, and Egypt have such assurance; but how the Lord will accomplish that we cannot say. We must leave those difficulties, as well as other seeming impossibilities, with Him; but of this we are sure, there will be no resurrection of the wicked dead except for judgment [Rev.20:12].

Jerusalem’s blessing is close at hand. Just a little while and those wondrous promises will have become history. Jehovah will make a new covenant with Jerusalem. She will receive Samaria and Sodom, not as sisters, but as daughters. They will be added to her in the coming days of blessing; but it will not be done by means of The Law covenant, but by Jehovah’s covenant of grace. He promises sure mercies to her. ***“I will establish my covenant with thee and thou shalt know that I am the Lord”*** [Eze.16:62]. Her mouth will be closed then. No more boasts of self-righteousness will be heard from Israel. They will lay their hand upon their mouth when it comes to telling of their own works; but their mouth will be opened to rejoice in the Lord and His goodness toward them, of which fact Ezekiel, as well as all the other prophets, assure.

“In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: we have a strong city. Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.” [Isa.26:1]

<h2>PARABLE OF THE 2 EAGLES AND THE CEDAR [EZE. 17]</h2>
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“Son of man, put forth a riddle and speak a parable unto the house of Israel, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colors, came to Lebanon and took the highest branch of

the cedar. He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.” [Eze.17:2-6]

In the above parable, we again are shown the sin of Jerusalem and the treacherous character of the last king, Zedekiah. In Zedekiah, we have a hint of the false king of the end. This parable, like the former one, ends with the restoration promise which will be fulfilled when God exalts the branch of David, which is Christ. A King shall reign in righteousness and blessing will be assured to Jerusalem. The parable is most interesting and the riddle easily solved.

The great eagle mentioned first is plainly Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.

- Jeremiah mentions his speed as that of the eagle:

“For thus saith the Lord, Behold, he shall fly as an eagle and shall spread his wings over Moab.” [Jer.48:40]

“Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle and spread his wings over Bozrah.” [Jer.49:22]

- Daniel describes the Babylonian Empire as rising up out of the sea in the form of a lion with eagle’s wing [Dan.1:1-2].

Nebuchadnezzar was the world ruler for that time. He was so constituted by Jehovah. Jeremiah announced him as such [Jer.27:5], and Daniel addressed him as **“king of kings”** for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength, and glory” [Dan.2:37]. Now, Ezekiel describes him as the eagle, the kingly bird, with strong and long wings; denoting both the great power and vast dominion which were his by Divine Authority. The words, **“full of feathers,”** instruct us concerning the multitude of his subjects, while the **“divers colors”** picture the different nations of his empire.

The eagle **“came to Lebanon and took the highest branch of the cedar. He cropped off the top of his young twigs and carried it into a land of traffic. He set it in a city of merchants.”** The cedar of Lebanon strikingly symbolizes the royal house of David, which Nebuchadnezzar, the eagle, conquered. The top of the cedar’s young twigs aptly describes the carrying away of Jehoiachin, the second of the trio of kings of the transition period of the 70 year’s captivity in Babylon...the city of merchants. Then Mattaniah, the youngest son of Josiah, was made king over Judah, and his name was changed to Zedekiah. Ezekiel described this action,

“He took also of the seed of the land and planted it in a fruitful field. He placed it by great waters and set it as a willow tree.” [Eze.17:5]

Zedekiah would have done well for himself, the city, and the people if he had continued in submission to Nebuchadnezzar, who had thus exalted him. He

was placed like the willow, a lowly tree, beside great waters. That is, he was dependent upon the waters, even Babylon, for his increase and prosperity. His roots were under him. He would grow and flourish if he was content to abide as the spreading vine of low stature; but alas, he rebelled.

The other eagle mentioned in the parable was Hophra, king of Egypt. Zedekiah foolishly turned to him for help. He bent his roots toward him and that was his undoing. It was not only rebellion against the king of Babylon, but it was rebellion against God. He had given Nebuchadnezzar authority over Jerusalem and the Jews, as well as all lands and all people. He is a most marvelous type of Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords who shall shortly be seated upon His throne of Universal Empire. He will have authority from God, and all kings must acknowledge His rulership and come under His sway. To do otherwise will be to destroy themselves and bring their country into disrepute and danger, even as was the case at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's exaltation. We say this first ruler of Gentile times is a striking figure of Christ, the First and Last Ruler of Jewish times. The shadow is a forcible reminder of the Substance which is slowly making its appearance upon the horizon of the morning.

INTERPRETATION OF PARABLE

"Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? Tell them, Behold the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem and hath taken the king thereof and the princes thereof and led them with him to Babylon." [Eze.17:12]

We have the Divine Interpretation and application of the parable given by the Lord to Ezekiel. After the statement that the king of Babylon had come to Jerusalem and taken the king's seed and made a covenant with him, his perfidy is related. It was especially criminal because it was the breaking of a solemn contract. Zedekiah had entered into a binding covenant with Nebuchadnezzar. He had sworn by God to abide by his oath [2Ch.36:13]. Ambassadors from Moab, Tyre, and Sidon came to Jerusalem to confer with Zedekiah; no doubt with a view to a combined federation against Nebuchadnezzar [Jer.37:5-7]. He sent ambassadors into Egypt and no doubt expected great help from that quarter. The joy in Jerusalem was great over that event for the people expected that allied combination to deliver them from the power of Nebuchadnezzar. But, no indeed! They only delivered themselves up to destruction as the sequel proved, though there was a slight respite. The Chaldean army retired for a short time and the Jews thought they were free from that yoke; but Babylonian captivity was the will and purpose of God for them and there was no changing of His blueprint. Men may change their minds, but God's Word must be fulfilled regardless of what is in the way. Hence, shortly the Egyptian was called home and the Chaldeans resumed the siege [Jer.39:1]. Zedekiah's doom was announced by Ezekiel, the Prophet of God, and nothing could stay that judgment.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; as I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him and he shall be taken in my snare and I will bring him to Babylon and I will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me." [Eze.17:19-20]

These words prove that the man (Zedekiah) was but a figure of a greater and a more guilty king; for, though he did break his covenant and his oath with Nebuchadnezzar, yet the record does not show him willfully wicked. He saved Jeremiah's life [Jer.38:10-13]. He appears to have had respect for the Prophet; but he was a weakling in the hands of more pronounced, dominating, wicked, rebellious men. They were his nemesis; he was unduly influenced by them. He lived in torments "between the devil and the deep blue sea," as it no doubt seemed to him. The man he figures is the usurping king of the end time who will refuse to yield the reins of government to the Lord Jesus Christ. He will insist on the throne of empires and the doom will fall upon him, a greater judgment than fell upon Zedekiah. Zedekiah tried to escape from Jerusalem when he saw there was no hope for the city; but he and his family were taken captive and carried to the headquarters of Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. There he was arraigned and sentenced. His sons were slain before his eyes, which was the last sight that he ever gazed upon. His eyes were then put out and he was bound with chains and carried to Babylon where he died a prisoner [Jer.52:11]. Nebuchadnezzar was used of God to punish a faithless Jew; but in the beginning of the Jewish times the tables are going to be turned. A faithful covenant-keeping Jew will mete out the punishment to faithless, covenant-breaking Gentiles [Rev.19:19-20, 2Th.2:8].

RESTORATION PROMISE

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.."
[Eze.17:22-24]

Israel is again in view here in these blessed promises. Her hope of restoration and blessing is sure. The continuation of the allegory of the parable reveals the fact that the end of Israel is peace.

The cedar is the house of David, through whom the Messiah of Israel was to come.

Christ is the promised "**tender one** (young shoot or twig)" which will be planted by God upon an eminent place in the mountain of the height of Israel. We read of this tender young twig in the book of Isaiah,

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots." [Isa.11:1]

"He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant and as a root out of the dry ground."
[Isa.53:2]

The "**high mountain**" refers to Mount Zion. The Kingdom of Messiah is pictured in these closing verses.

"All the trees of the field" (the nations) shall know that Jehovah has reinstated His people into His love and favor.

"The high tree," the king of the usurping empire of the end time, will have to come down.

The Gentile world power, **"the green tree"** will be dried up.

Israel, **"the low tree,"** will be exalted. **"The dry tree,"** will be filled with sap and expand and flourish and refresh the whole earth. The barren nation will come into her place as the fruitful tree of destiny under whose shadow all nations shall rejoice. The Lord will do the impossible. The hated, accursed people, a hiss and byword in the world, will be the toast and the boast of all peoples. Someone may say, "I do not believe that." Well, your unbelief will not hinder its fulfillment. The Lord has spoken it...He will do it. He even says, **"I the LORD...have done it,"** because it is so real to Him.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS JUSTIFIED [EZE. 18]

"The Word of the Lord came to me again saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge?" [Eze.18:1-2]

Ezekiel is again the recipient of God's favor. He is given another message. Remember it is the Word of the Lord to the nation Israel. They were not owning their guilt or God's justice in their chastisement. They were blaming their fathers for their punishment. They said, **"The way of the Lord is not equal"** [Eze.18:25]. He answers them and insists that His ways are just and right; but that they are not able to discern the fact. It is an interesting controversy. The Lord reasons with them. He says, that they must not say, **"The children's teeth are set on edge"** because the fathers ate wild grapes. Jeremiah also mentions this proverb in his prophecy and adds briefly what Ezekiel gives us more fully, **"But everyman shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes his teeth shall be set on edge"** [Jer.31:29].

Through Ezekiel, the Lord continues to declare His righteous dealing with Israel as well as all men.

"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sinneth it shall die." [Eze.18:4]

Here is the principle upon which He deals under The Law. Men are responsible for their own sins. He will judge the individual, the father or son, according to his own conduct. He is sovereign in every case. He is the Creator and He will so judge all. If the sins of the fathers fall upon the children, it is because the children follow the wicked way of their fathers. The person that sins shall be punished for his own sins; that is as relating to the individual. However, when it comes to Jehovah's national dealing with the people of Israel, then there is a difference... this is not the question here.

"But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,

neither hath defiled his neighbor's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD."

[Eze.18:5-9]

There are 14 negative and 2 positive conditions contained in these verses relative to the obtainment of life.

The little word **IF** begins 4 paragraphs in this section **[Eze.18:5, 10, 14, 21]**. The Law has an **IF** to its blessings. Jehovah is declaring the conditions whereby men may be just under The Law. Obedience was the basis of even the earthly prosperity of Israel. In fact, the Old Testament speaks more of their blessings upon the earth than in heaven; for they were an earthly people. The state after death is rather shrouded in mystery, or at least somewhat veiled. The resurrection of the dead was known in Old Testament times; but the doctrine of that fact is not found. Hence, we say that the life promised for obedience to The Law appears to have to do with Israel's natural life and prosperity in the land, as well as their eternal life. However, this much is clear, The Law exacted obedience both negatively and positively. In Ezekiel 18:6. false worship is the theme. Eating upon the mountains, the high places, was forbidden, because that was fellowshiping the worship of idols. This prohibition refers to the 1st table of The Law where God demands the worship of His people. "***Thou shalt have no other gods before me,***" was there written. The grossest lusts of the flesh were connected with idolatrous practices, hence, these sins are mentioned in connection with others against the neighbor, which refers to the 2nd table of the Law. Ezekiel is declaring that the man, who had done all that The Law demanded and abstained from all that was forbidden, was pronounced just. He therefore, "***shall surely live.***" But note the opposite case,

"If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood and that doeth the like of any of these things...he shall not live. He shall surely die." [Eze.18:10, 13]

The question here is this:

Shall the son of a righteous father live if he is wicked? Will the merits of his father save him?

The Divine Answer is:

Nay! He shall not live, he shall surely die! He would not even live out his allotted time on earth much less get eternal life.

"If he beget a son that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done and considereth and doeth not such like...he shall not die for the iniquity of his father. He shall surely live." [Eze.18:14, 17]

Here is another case considered so that the people who had used the proverb of the sour grapes might be completely answered and admonished.

A wicked father has a son who does not follow him in his sinful ways. Shall the son die for his wicked father? There were many examples of this fact in their own history. We have the record of several wicked kings whose sons were models of righteousness and piety.

- Take the example of Hezekiah, that God-fearing exemplary reformer. He was the son of Ahaz, a wicked king.
- Josiah one of the best kings of Judah, was the son of Amon, a rebellious idolator and grandson of Manasseh the worst king of Judah.

In such a case the inspired answer comes, "The son will not die for the iniquity of the father." That message was to silence them and refute their reasonings as to the children suffering for their father's sin. They desired to excuse themselves and lay the guilt at their father's door. But the Lord refutes all such reasonings.

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed and keep all the statutes and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live. He shall not die."
[Eze.18:21]

The people accused the Lord of injustice and Jehovah answered them with patience and gentleness; but He denied the accusation. He insists that the wicked man will live if he turns from his wickedness, and the just man will die if he turns from his righteousness. But that no man will die for the sins of others, neither will he live because of the righteousness of others. That reasoning of Jehovah was to a people in relation to Him through the covenant of The Law, which says, in substance, "Do, and thou shalt live." He judges **"the house of Israel, every one according to his ways."** Hence, He exhorts,

"Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you your transgressions...and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" [Eze.18:30-31]

The Law commands man to do the impossible. God will let him find out, by his own experience, how weak and helpless, ruined and sinful, he is. The Law tells man to cast away his transgression and renew a right spirit within him. How can a man do that? It is utterly beyond him. David realized that he was unable to fulfill The Law's demands; hence, he threw himself upon the mercy of God and found it an ocean Divine. He became a man after God's own heart. God did for him what he could not do for himself. He created a right spirit within him [Psa.51]. All that God demands of man under The Law, He bestows in His grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, and then we can be all that He requires. In Chapter 36, we hear Jehovah making this very statement. He promises to give Israel **"a new heart."** He no longer tells them, **"Make you a new heart."** When that fulfillment comes, they will have learned how unable they are to establish a righteousness of their own or give to God what He requires.

A LAMENTABLE DIRGE [EZE. 19]

"Moreover, take you up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, And say, What is thy mother? A lioness. She lay down among lions. She nourished her whelps among young lions." [Eze.19:1-2]

Jehovah is here heard voicing His grief over the destruction of the dynasty of David. Those words of sorrow and regret were put into the mouth of Ezekiel. They are not his words, as expositors would lead us to think, but the words of the very same One who later wept over the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Through the Prophet, He is lamenting over the fate of 2 of the kings of Judah, called lion's "*whelps*" and "*princes*" by Ezekiel. There appears to be some connection between the two.

- They were both taken captive, but to different countries and died in the land of their exile.
- Also they both reigned 3 months.
- The one, **JEHOAHAZ**, was the son of the good king Josiah; but he did not follow in his father's footsteps, though he did not have much chance to make a record good or evil. Just prior to the Times of the Gentiles, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, came up to Jerusalem and took him captive to the land of the Nile. He put his younger brother Eliakim, on the throne as subject to himself and changed his name to Jehoiakim. Shortly after, Nebuchadnezzar was stirred to go up and take the dominion over Judah. He was given the scepter in the will of God. Jehoiakim became his servant and reigned 8 years subject to him.
- At the death of Jehoiakim, **JEHOIACHIN**, his son, was made king; but his sway was short-lived. In 3 months, he was taken captive to Babylon. He is the 2nd prince to whom the lamentation refers. His brief reign ended Judah's dynasty; for though Zedekiah reigned 11 years after the exile of Jehoiachin, yet, he was a usurper. Jehovah had given the domination of Judah to Nebuchadnezzar.

The "*lioness*," the mother to whom Jehovah refers in the dirge, is primarily Judah. He speaks of her and her young lions, viewing them from their place as his people. Prophecy declared "*Judah is a lion's whelp*" [Gen.49:9]. Balaam, the false prophet, who was made to declare the truth at one point in his career, says, "*Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion and lift up himself as a young lion*" [Num.23:24]. Christ will fulfill this prophecy at His 2nd Advent when He appears in glory and power to take possession of His Kingdom, as "*the Lion of the tribe of Judah*" [Rev.5:5].

Also, the "*lioness*" refers to the wife of Josiah whom history declares was a great woman. She was the mother of Jehoahaz and the grandmother of Jehoiachin. Ezekiel 19, in its sorrowful lamentation, is an illustration of the facts convincingly stated in Ezekiel 18: That a good father may possess an evil son. He cannot transmit his piety to his offspring; but, he does not bear the responsibility before God for his son's evil conduct. Each man stands for

himself before God. He must bear the results of his own iniquity unless he accepts Christ, as we are instructed by the Gospel of God in the New Testament.

This lamentation of Israel's own fall by Jehovah is written in the Hebrew in the form of a poem. It has 2 parts. The English translation does not do it justice. It is sublime and beautiful. We have already had the 1st part of the rhythmical dirge. The 2nd will follow.

"Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters. She was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters." [Eze.19:10]

Israel, not Judah, is figured by the vine in many portions of the Scriptures. Israel refers to the whole of the 12 tribes, or at least 10 of them. Judah stands for 2 tribes. Many were the blessings enjoyed by the nation. She was even like a vine planted by the waters, always green and growing, "**full of branches.**" The period emphasized here, in the eulogy of her [Eze.19:11], is during the reign of David and Solomon. Those were her halcyon days when she was noted among the nations as the mighty one whom Jehovah blessed. She had strong rods for the backs of those who refused to acknowledge her scepter. Her stature was exalted among the thick branches. Her tributaries owned her headship and authority. She was supreme for a little while; but alas, she was lifted up and Jehovah was perforce obliged to abase her. Observe her fall,

"She was plucked up in fury. She was cast down to the ground and the east wind dried up her fruit. Her strong rods were broken." [Eze.19:12]

How perfect is the description of the circumstances! At the moment of her exaltation, Israel began to decline: "**Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall**" [Pro.16:18]. "**For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased**" [Luk.14:11]. Jehovah came in and she was plucked up. He allowed the "**east wind**" (Babylon) [Eze.17:10, 12] to blow upon her pride and wither her fruit. They spoiled the vine. Her exile in Chaldea is pictured in Verse 13: "**Now she is planted in a wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.**" This fiery judgment was caused by the attitude of her kings. They were not obedient to the commandments of the Lord and they caused the people to err. She has no strong scepter to rule. Thus ends the sorrowful elegy of Jehovah over the princes of the land. None of Judah has ever sat upon the throne of David since that time. No marvel that Jehovah lamented. He knew the long years that lay between the fall of the tabernacle of David and its setting up [Acts.15:16]. The people did not know. But the prophets all agree that Jehovah shall build it again and set up His King upon the throne.

The Lion of the tribe of Judah shall come in power and take the scepter and assert His right to reign over the house of David. A gala day shall yet dawn for the oppressed people when times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. He who is the True Vine, who has grown out of the Root of David, will be manifested and the Jews, the stock of Abraham, will be grafted into the fruitage and fatness of that Vine and their branches will run over the wall of Judah, and all nations will enjoy the wine of the land of Canaan. They will be the means of blessing to the dry and thirsty world. That day is hastening to its dawning. In the meantime, Ezekiel predicts some

more gloom for his people as the following chapters prove; for, as we have said before, these prophecies have not yet been fulfilled in their widest sense.

FINAL MESSAGES TO JERUSALEM BEFORE ITS FALL [EZE.20-24]

In these chapters, the Prophet predicts further and more furious judgment upon the nation of Israel and upon the land.

- The first, **CHAPTER 20**, is the calling of the nation before the court of Jehovah. He shows them why judgment is to be pronounced against them.
- Then in **CHAPTER 21**, the sentence given has no uncertain sound, the sword of the Lord shall be drawn out against them.
- The next message is another accusation of the people and Jerusalem, **CHAPTER 22**. The corruption of all classes, priests, prophets, princes, and the mass of the people, is described.
- In **CHAPTER 23**, the wickedness and vileness of Samaria and Judah is uncovered and commented upon. In a fashion, it corresponds with Chapter 19.
- **CHAPTER 24**, the last prophecy of this section, is a most pregnant message. It was spoken on the day when the siege of Jerusalem began (598 B.C.). It was also the day on which Ezekiel's wife died; hence, we are assured that it is of marvelous significance as relating to the end time. The answer to that date is 1931, which is not far away. Jehovah will probably show Himself in some marvelous manner for the Jews in that year. It will signify a crisis time for them. We will examine each of these chapters in detail.

THE NATION'S ARRAIGNMENT [EZE.20]

"And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month that certain of the elders came to enquire of the Lord and sat before me." Then came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, Son of man, speak unto the elders and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; are ye come to enquire of Me? As I live, saith the Lord, I will not be enquired of by you." [Eze.20:1-2]

The nation's sin in Egypt is the first item in the catalogue of their misdemeanors. Jehovah is bringing them upon the carpet, as men say, to answer to Him. This was at the time when the elders came to enquire the why of His judgment of the people and the land. He says that He will not be enquired of by them; but He will rather enquire of them. And then, He reviews their sins and shows them the why of the judgment that is falling and which will fall harder. He read those elders' hearts and knew that they were not honest in their enquiry. It was only a sham; for there was no real repentance. If any man, at any time will come (contrite in heart) to the Lord and enquire of Him, He will hearken and answer his query; but, men cannot

put on airs with Him. They cannot come as the superior and ask Him the why and wherefore of His doings; for the Lord is Sovereign. He is under no obligation to man to answer his unbelieving, impudent questions; but if any man comes as a suppliant, beseeching His favor, he will not come in vain. Hence, we know from God's answer that those men were not broken or contrite. They were rather demanding in their enquiries. So the Lord tells them that He will not be enquired of by them.

"Wilt thou judge them?" He says to the Prophet. ***"Declare unto them the abominations of their fathers"*** [Eze.20:4]. Ezekiel stands here as Christ. He is addressed as ***"Son of man,"*** and is commanded to set before the people their sins and pronounce judgment upon them. The Prophet is addressed twice more in this section as the ***"Son of man"*** which emphasizes it as a most important part of his prophecy. Ezekiel lays out before them all their sins and shows them their guilt that they may realize that the Lord has cause for the judgment which He has brought upon them.

We believe this chapter has a correspondence with the present year, 1929 A.D. In some special manner, Jehovah is answering His ancient people as to their rebellion and disobedience, even if we cannot see it. Christ is the Judge, appointed and anointed by God, to judge all men. We believe He is on that judgment seat at this very time. That day of Judgment has commenced already. Christendom is being judged as a false wife and will shortly meet the doom of such. ***"She shall be utterly burned with fire"*** [Rev.18:8]. But the Jews also are being shown their sins and are judged accordingly, by the Judge [Act.17:31].

The meeting, which was held in April of 1929 A.D., for the furtherance of the Sanhedrin assemblage, is no doubt the answer to those elders coming to Ezekiel in that day to enquire the why of things. These elders of the year 1929 A.D. may not be honest in their hearts either. They may be hypocritical in their enquiry as to the reasons for the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. They may really desire to justify the sentence of death which the Sanhedrin of that far-off day affixed; but God may answer them in His own way. Also, there are other pregnant happenings of this year as to the Jew. The trouble between them and the Arabs is very significant. It may lead to some most auspicious event as regards them. The site of their temple may come into their hands through some events that are in progress now. God is for this people of destiny, though He may not be visibly working. Nevertheless, He is back of every move in their direction and all that happens to them is for their ultimate blessing even if it otherwise appear.

OUTLINE OF EZEKIEL 20

VERSES 1-9 The first 9 verses declare the history of the people in Egypt.

VERSES 10-17 The 2nd part reviews the conduct of the first generation of Israel in the wilderness.

VERSES 27-32 The 3rd part calls attention to their sins in the land; and the disobedience is voiced as more pronounced because of the greater blessings. The last verse of this catalogue of iniquity proves that in their heart was the desire to be like the heathen round about them. They wanted gods

of wood and stone, and we can readily see why that was the case. Gods of wood and stone do not convict of sin, nor judge, nor punish sinners. They did not want the true and living God who exacted obedience; but their wants in this respect were not considered. Jehovah was their God as they would soon realize and which the next section-informs us.

VERSES 33-44 They are told that God will rule over them, whether they want Him, or not.

“As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.”

[Eze.20:33-34]

Consider these words. Their very chastisements are the witness that God has not cast them off forever. He declares that He brings them out from all the places where they have been scattered; and, after that, signal proof that He is sovereign in their destiny, He says they shall again pass under the rod. That is, after He has gathered them back to their land, He will purge out from among them the rebels and transgressors. Although this last punishment shall be in Palestine, it will be as though in the wilderness, because they will not acknowledge Jehovah Jesus as their King. They will accept another who shall come in his own name, the false one. That will stir up the anger of the Lord against the rebellious nation, which will bring The Tribulation.

Now we know that these last verses apply to the people at the end time; hence, we are assuredly correct in our interpretation of the prophecy of Ezekiel. The fulfillment of these restoration promises is right at hand. The Jewish people will be brought back, accepted, and blessed in their own land, regardless of all men and wicked spirits who are set against them to hinder such a consummation. Jehovah has made them a curse to the whole world; likewise He will make them a blessing.

And then the Jews will loathe themselves for all their wicked ways. Poor people, they will learn their own unrighteousness, and find their only hope in God, even as we are doing in our day. **“Ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have wrought for you,”** Jehovah tells them. Then great deliverance from the world, and later from all the nations gathered against Jerusalem for the battle of Armageddon, will be the unanswerable proof to them that God is for them. Never again can they doubt His choice of them and His love for them; and they will magnify the Lord forever.

*“Moreover, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the south and drop thy word toward the south and prophesy...Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee and it shall devour every green tree in thee and every tree. The flaming fire shall not be quenched; and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I, the Lord, have kindled it...Then said I, Ah, Lord God! they say of me. Doth he not speak parables?” **[Eze.20:45-49]***

Yes, it is a parable. The forest refers to Judea. The fiery judgment is again predicted—a judgment which will sweep through the land of Palestine like a

forest fire sweeps everything before it and which cannot be quenched until everything is consumed. Ezekiel is obedient and faithfully delivers the message, or if not he is delivering it today among all nations. He is a “Talkie” on the stage of the world today, telling of events relating to the Jews, which shall be fulfilled.

One more dreadful judgment shall sweep over them at the very same time that Jehovah judges all nations, and that is the last time they will ever come under the rod. There will be a remnant left that will repent of their evil ways and, through those few, the Lord will people Palestine and bless the earth. The Prophet faithfully delivered the message; but the people refused to understand. They said, “**Doth he not speak parables?**” The people rejected the Word then, and they are rejecting it today. The word of warning and repentance falls on unhearing ears even as in Ezekiel’s day; but that does not stop the Lord from speaking His Word, nor from fulfilling the same. Ezekiel is given another message of hastening judgment.

THE SONG OF THE SWORD [EZE.21]

THE 1ST PART OF THE SWORD SONG

“And the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem and drop thy word toward the holy places and prophesy against the land of Israel...Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I am against thee and I will draw forth my sword out of his sheath and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.”
[Eze.21:1-3]

Here we seem to feel the pent up anger of the Lord as we read this further message of impending judgment. Critics feel the power of the utterances and insist that the Prophet is speaking, and is carried away with “maddened fury and wild excitement” into a denunciation of the nation of Israel. But we know that this is not the case. It is not the Prophet who gives way to his feelings, but the Lord Himself, as the very first verse instructs.

Oh, what a night of horrors and of sorrows is coming upon Jerusalem, the land of Palestine, and also upon the whole world. When Jehovah says He is against the land and the nation, there is surely trouble ahead. When God draws out His sword from its sheath, what hope has the man or the people He is against and whom He has yearned over? At last, He will forget mercy in the frenzy of His righteous wrath. Listen to His words to Ezekiel:

“Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked; therefore, shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh from the south to the north: That all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath. It shall not return any more. Sigh, therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins, and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.” [Eze.21:4-6]

It was a prophecy of a wide-spread judgment, including Jerusalem, Judea, and all Gentile nations; for this refers to the end time. It was not at all fulfilled in the Babylonish invasion of Palestine. We marvel that Bible expositors see so little in this great prophetic book. That sword song will have its complete fulfillment shortly. “**All flesh**” (the world) will feel the keen edge of Jehovah’s sword; but, they will not know the cause of the carnage. Men think that they

are going to make wars to cease, and they mean it; but it is written otherwise. The sword is going to go through the land. The Lord hath a controversy with the people and ***“by fire and his sword, will He plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord will be many”*** [Isa.46:16].

The Prophet is commanded to sigh, as though in pain before the people's eyes. They saw the deep inward sorrow of his soul. He was showing the feeling of the Man of sorrows over the judgment which was inevitable. God must punish the rebellious and defiant. Ezekiel sighs and sighs again, and Jehovah instructs him to tell the people the cause of his pain and foreboding. ***“Because it cometh; and my heart shall melt and all hands shall faint and all knees shall be weak as water”*** [Eze.21:7]. It was sure and certain and the Prophet was exercised about his message. He believed the Word of the Lord; hence, he was acting like it. When preachers feel their message, they make folks feel it. If they believe that the Lord is coming, they preach and write like it and the people feel the power of the Truth. Likewise, when men know that judgment is coming upon this world, because men are impenitent and wicked, what can they do but tell it? They feel their message, and cry and sigh before the Lord; praying that men will repent and believe the Gospel.

We have some understanding of the Prophet's feeling. His was no dry-eyed, formal ministry, but a ministry of tears. It was not time to rejoice; but a time to weep and sigh for the sorrows of others. Likewise today, in the case of those who are in fellowship and sympathy with the Lord in His purposes of mercy and judgment; and yet are also in sympathy with poor fallen humanity of which we are a part and would be still, except for the grace of God. Oh, our hearts are bursting with sadness and with sighing for the pains and sorrows of humanity. We would surely dry every tear and assuage every wound if we could; but we cannot do it. We can only witness to the Truth, and pray that some will hear and heed the message.

Ezekiel was called to show forth in his actions the dreadful days that were just ahead for Judah and Jerusalem; and we are called upon to show out the same behavior in the end time. Sometimes we are asked,

“Why do you pray so much?”

“Why do you cry when you pray and sigh like you were in trouble?”

“What is the cause of your tears?”

The enquirers are surprised that we are so exercised about these things that are still future. They cannot understand that we take these prophecies so much to heart. They do not know that it is the Holy Spirit who makes us feel the import of these writings. Yet, on the other hand, we marvel that there is so little of the sighing and crying among us who profess to believe that these dreadful days are coming upon the world. They are coming; there is no doubt about it. Listen to some more of the song of the sword. Remember it is Jehovah who is singing and not Ezekiel. Ezekiel is just the writer of the words.

“Again the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Prophecy. Thus saith the Lord: A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished. It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter. It is furbished that it may glitter. Should we then make mirth?”
[Eze.21:8-10]

Jehovah declares the sword is ready for slaughter. There is no mistaking the language. It is for the nations today to heed. They are already prepared for war and they shall have abundant opportunity to use the armaments. The sword is ready. It is sharpened and it is polished. We see the signs of war, even though men prepare for peace at the same time they are preparing for war. While we are writing on this very chapter, the press is declaring the prospects for national friendship and good feeling that has been established by the coming together of Ramsey McDonald of England and President Hoover of the United States. They had a little conference all by themselves while they smoked the pipe of peace and buried the hatchet like 2 good Indians. But that sword which hangs before our eyes speaks louder than their words of fealty. Whom shall we believe? God or men? We say, God; hence, we know that their words cannot hinder war.

The Prophet asks: ***“Is it the time for mirth?”*** This has no reference to the joy of the Lord, but to worldly enjoyment and indifference to the things that are coming to pass. It is time for the saints to get filled with the Spirit, walk in the light of the Lord, and be ready to rise at the 1st trumpet blast and escape the slaughter of the sword. It is time for them to trim their lamps and let nothing becloud their vision or hinder their testimony. Jesus said that the world would be merry-making in the time of these judgments. As it was in the days of Noah ***“They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until that Noah entered into the ark...So shall the coming of the Son of Man be”*** [Mat.24:37-38]. It is the same character that Paul tells us will be evidenced by the religious, as well as the irreligious masses of the last days, ***“lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God”*** [2Ti.3:1-2]. While the sword is drawn, sharpened, and polished, they are dancing around the golden calf, making merry and forgetting God and the judgment that is hanging over them; but, the weeping will come.

The Prophet acts out the crying and howling of the people. He is commanded to smite upon his thigh and clap his hands together in view of the coming terrors. Solemnly, the Lord declares, ***“I will also smite my hands together and I will satisfy my fury”*** [Eze.21:17]. Hence, we see that Ezekiel demonstrates the feelings of the Lord as well as that of the people.

THE 2ND PART OF THE SWORD SONG

“The Word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways that the king of Babylon may come: both shall come forth out of one land, and choose thou a place, choose it at the head of the way to the city. Appoint a way that the sword may come to Rabbath of the Ammonites and to Judah in Jerusalem, the defended, for the King of Babylon at the departing of the way, at the head of two ways to use divination. He made his arrows bright; he consulted with images. He looked in the liver.” [Eze.21:18-21]

The 1st part of the sword song describes the actions and tells us the name of the chosen instrument which has been called to use the sharpened and polished death-dealing weapon. It is Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. He is seen in the vision of the Prophet as using divination in deciding which way to go, whether in the direction of Jerusalem and Judah, or Rabbath and the Ammonites. He appears to stand at the head of 2 ways, ready to avenge himself on these 2 peoples, and waits for a sign as to which road to take.

“He shook his arrows to and fro” is a better translation of the phrase, **“he made his arrows bright.”** It was a custom in those heathen countries, and is yet, to use enchantments, sorceries, witchcraft, etc., that they might be guided in their undertakings. The King took 2 arrows and wrote upon one the name of one city and upon the other the name of the other city. These were then shaken in the quiver and one drawn out, which was the designated city. In this case, Nebuchadnezzar used images (or teraphim), which he consulted and **“looked in the liver.”** The meaning of this peculiar phase is that they killed a sheep and looked at its liver which, they imagined by the different lines or tracings, gave them directions as to the way they should go. In this instance it appeared to direct the King of Babylon according to the will of God. He was the chosen instrument of Jehovah; hence, he got the correct leading whether others did or did not. He pulled out the arrow which bore the name “Jerusalem;” hence, the siege of that city began.

When the leaders of the Jews heard of Nebuchadnezzar’s divination, they branded it as a false sign. They still hoped that all his efforts would fail and the city would not be taken; but the hand of God was guiding all. His prophets had declared the end from the beginning; and so it must be. It was His will to destroy the city by the hand of the King of Babylon to whom He had given the dominion; nothing could stay His hand. It is marvelous to see how sure are Jehovah’s judgments. Here was Nebuchadnezzar, somewhat undecided as to the way he would take; but Jehovah was not undecided. He decided for the King and sent him in a hurry.

But the above has much greater significance for us today than that marvelous occurrence. We have here a prophecy that is still future of which the former event was but a little type or pattern. Nebuchadnezzar figures Christ, in many respects. We see it more and more as we study the prophetic books of that time. He was given worldwide dominion by the edict of God. All those rebelling against him, as the Jews did, were guilty of rebellion against God. He was a chosen instrument to show forth the power and sovereignty of God and he was made to acknowledge it [Dan.4]. Of course in that experience he does not figure Christ, but rather the Gentile nations of the end time who shall be made to own the sovereignty of God in the matter of the rulership of the world which His own hands have made. They too, as Nebuchadnezzar, will praise and honor Him that liveth forever,

“Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among all the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him “What doest thou?”
[Dan.4:34-35]

Nebuchadnezzar is a most striking figure of Christ, not only by resemblance, as we have noted, but also by way of contrast. His reign tolled the bell for the dynasty of David. The Jews were set aside and Gentile domination began which has continued unto this day. Christ’s reign will toll the bell for Gentile rule and signal the rise of Jewish dominion for the world. The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, will be set up again and David’s Son and heir will have the throne. All nations were commanded to yield to Nebuchadnezzar when God gave him the kingdoms of the world [Jer.27:6-8].

Likewise, in the case of Christ, God will insist that all men everywhere shall fall down and worship at His feet and acknowledge that He is King to the glory of God the Father [Phi.2:11]. In due time, He will appear to assume dictatorship and sovereignty over all nations and there will be no consulting of amulets of any kind. God's Word will decide the moment when Jesus Christ shall rise up to take the throne of empires. In the meantime, another will come in his own name, even as Jesus intimated [Joh.5:43], the usurping king, the wicked counterfeit of the end time. Ezekiel speaks directly to him in this prophecy, though it is apparently said to Zedekiah, who was holding the place of ruler in Jerusalem in defiance of God and His ruler Nebuchadnezzar.

"And thou wicked, profane prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity will have an end. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem and take off the crown. Exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until He come whose right it is, and I will give it to Him."
[Eze.21:25-27]

Is that not a marvelous prophecy? There can be no question that the words had a slight fulfillment in the case of Zedekiah; yet it looks far beyond him to the coming wicked king, the usurper of the throne. Note the striking language of the revised version of Ezekiel 21:25,

"And thou, O, deadly wounded, wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day is come in the time of the iniquity of the end," or punishment or judgment of the end.

There can be no mistaking of those words. They refer to the Antichrist, the counterfeit king of the last day. We read of him receiving a deadly wound which is healed, and that astounding miracle will make all the world to wonder after the beast [Rev.13:3]. The prophecy undoubtedly refers to the time of the Great Tribulation when the transgressors have come to the full [Dan.8:23].

The translation of Verse 26 is also different in the revised version. The word **diadem** should be **MITRE**, referring to the headdress of the high priest. This too is very suggestive as though the counterfeit ruler wears both the crown of the king and the mitre of the priest assuming the offices of Christ as Priest and King. The pope is this counterfeit today. He wears a crown and a mitre.

We believe there will be another, though he may not usurp both characters. In fact there are 2 men of the end time, the king and false prophet, who appear to fit the picture. However whether 1 or 2, the fulfillment of the prophecy will come. The overturning times are near. Thrice Jehovah states, "**I will overturn.**" Even so will the perplexities of nations continue and the removing of crowns until the Christ has come, whose right it is to reign. The saints wait for Him to come and catch them up to heaven. The Jews wait for Him to gather them home to their heaven in Palestine. The world waits for Him to come and bless the earth with His refreshing presence.

Then follows a prophecy of judgment upon Ammon. The sword will fall upon these people. This is the last stanza of the song of the sword. The chapter ends with judgment which undoubtedly refers to the last days; for the same words are used: "*In the time of the iniquity of the end*" [Eze.21:29 RV] The Ammonites no doubt refer to the religious folks of the last days who claim the

name of Christ, but those who will be in league with the Antichrist. We noted in the beginning of Chapter 20, that Nebuchadnezzar had some difficulty in determining which city he should first overthrow, Rabbath or Jerusalem. He was directed toward the Jewish capital instead of the Ammonitish one. We believe that the overthrow of Rabbath has its answer in the week of judgment. This is based on the fact that Christ will abase the king of Jerusalem before any other king. He will arise to the help of His Jewish people before He fulfills any of His other purposes. The False King (the Antichrist) and False Prophet will be cast immediately into the lake of fire and afterwards He will deal with the nations religious and otherwise [Rev.19:20]. Thus Jeremiah 25:27 will be fulfilled: ***“Thus saith the Lord...Drink ye and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send.”***

JUDGMENT OF THE BLOODY CITY [EZE.22]

“Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Now thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? Yes, thou shalt show her all her abominations. Then say thou; Thus saith the Lord. The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come. She maketh idols against herself to defile herself.” [Eze.22:1-4]

Before the sword song is actually carried into effect, the city is again shown her wickedness that she may know why judgment is pronounced against her. She is called ***“the bloody city”*** on account of all the blood that has been shed in her midst. It was once a faithful city, as Jehovah laments, a city full of judgment and righteousness; but now, alas, she has become a harlot, and murderers lodge within. Prophets and the righteous have been killed in her midst. The Lord Jesus Himself so arraigned the city prior to His own rejection and death. The people laid that still greater sin to the charge of Jerusalem after His scathing words of judgment and actually fulfilled His prophecy.

“Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city; that upon you, may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.” [Mat.23:34-36]

The judgment of Jerusalem after the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, happened within 1 generation, which is 33 years; therefore, in the end time we may look for the same consummation within the same period of time. All the things that are written of the coming of Christ, all the happenings of that crucial time, the judgment of Jerusalem, the nations, and the world; and more, all the blessings prophesied for that period will be fulfilled within 33 years. Hence, as we know the beginning of the epoch, the date of the first flurry of World War I in 1914, we need not be ignorant of the time when they will end. 33 years from 1914 brings us to 1947, and this too is one of Ezekiel's dates. It is the answer to the 25th year of his captivity [Eze.40:1]. It signaled the 14th year after the city of Jerusalem was smitten. The year 1947 will signal the day of its rising.

But to return to our chapter. Jerusalem is called “*the bloody city*” because of the blood that has been shed there. It will be so again. Blood will flow because of their rejection of Christ. The leaders of that day dared to exclaim, “*His blood be upon us and our children.*” And so it has been ever since. They have been as Cain, homeless wanderers among the nations. **THE WANDERING JEW** can truly be applied to them as individuals and as a nation. According to the accusations of the Prophet, or rather the accusations of Jehovah Himself, they were guilty of all the sins in the catalogue. Therefore, punishment came upon them; and it will come again.

“And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross. All they are brass and tin and iron and lead in the midst of the furnace. They are even the dross of silver...Therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace to blow the fire upon it to melt it, so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury and I will leave you there and melt you.” [Eze.22:18-20]

Jerusalem is here likened to the melting pot, the fiery furnace where Jehovah will punish His people. It was there where they rejected and condemned the Righteous Branch of Jehovah, denied and crucified Him; hence, there they will suffer in the last, the Great Tribulation, which is soon to fall upon the people. The Prophet declares that they will be gathered for that very purpose, which prophecy is being fulfilled today. They are being gathered as wood for the fire. When referring to the chastisement of Jehovah’s people, a furnace is for 2 purposes: Refining and destruction. In this message, the thought is of punishment. As a whole, Israel is seen as dross; but there will be a remnant in the midst that will be as the silver, refined by the fire of persecution and tribulation [Mal.3:1, 3].

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof. They have devoured souls. They have taken the treasure and precious things...Her priests have violated my law and have profaned my holy things. They have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey to shed blood and destroy souls to get dishonest gain.” [Eze.22:23-27]

The **PROPHETS**, **PRIESTS**, and **PRINCES**, leaders of the people, are arraigned before Jehovah as the curses of the land and city. They were the cause of the corruption of the people.

The **PROPHETS** are the first accused. They were called and set apart as Jehovah’s messengers, chosen to stand before Him and bear His words to the people. But instead of doing so, they were giving the people a vision of their own heart, and not a message out of the mouth of the Lord, saying, “The Lord hath said, ye shall have peace, when there was not peace” [Jer.23]. Thus they were acting as the destroyers of the people rather than the deliverers.

The **PRIESTS** were failing also in their appointed office. “*They have put no difference between the holy and the common, neither have they caused men to discern*

between the unclean and the clean” [Eze.22:26]. The priestly vision was obscured because their heart was not true.

The **PRINCES** also are accused. They like the prophets are described as *“ravening the prey” [Eze.22:27]*, because they were seeking gain. The people followed the corrupt example set before them—like priests; like people. They oppressed the poor and needy in the land.

The people were having no direct word from the Lord through **THE PROPHETS**; no teaching of the separation between clean and unclean from **THE PRIESTS**; no example of righteousness, incorruptibility and impartial judgment from **THE PRINCES**. In the midst of all these conditions, we are shown the heart of God,

“I sought for a man among them that should make up the fence and stand in the gap before me; but I found none.” [Eze.22:30]

The prophets might build up a wall of their own material (of untempered mortar); but, the Lord would not own such a protection, but would break it down, as He plainly states [Eze.13:4]. The spiritual building and untempered mortar depicted here are much in evidence in the midst of Christendom today. The modernistic trend in religion, the preaching and lecturing which abounds on every hand, is simply whitewashing the people. It is daubing with untempered mortar to say to a world of rebellious sinners, “There is peace,” for there is no peace to such folks.

The words of these false prophets give temporary comfort; but lead men to rely upon false foundations for salvation. They build a counterfeit structure with their lying messages, glossing over men’s sins and deceiving the people. Only the Word of God can build the wall which will stand the onslaughts of the enemy. The counterfeit will not stand. Jehovah looked for a man to stand in the gap and fill up the breach, so that He would not destroy the city. That is, He looked for a mediator to interpose himself between the people and His deserved wrath; but He found none. This will be the condition at the judgment of the world. While God has been propitiated toward all men by the death of Christ, yet the Jews, as a nation, have rejected that Sacrifice most shamefully. Hence, He will not stand in the gap neither fill up the hedge until they have been chastised. The uttermost tribulation, which has been prophesied, must come; but that day will be shortened by the mercy of God, or no flesh should be saved [Mat.24:22].

AHOLAH AND AHOLIBAH [EZE.23]

“The Word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother, and they committed whoredoms in Egypt...in their youth. And the names of them were Aholah, the elder, and Aholibah, her sister. They were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah and Jerusalem is Aholibah.” [Eze.23:1-4]

Again the Prophet speaks a parable to illustrate the duplicity of Samaria and Jerusalem. Samaria refers to Israel and Jerusalem refers to Judah. The national fellowship with Assyria and Chaldea is viewed by the Lord as whoredom. There is a similarity between this message and that given in Ezekiel 16, with this difference—a later time is portrayed here. The

separation of the Kingdom into Samaria and Jerusalem, as they are called, is prominent and their national defilement is lamented.

The 2 women figure Samaria and Jerusalem, the capital cities of the 2 Kingdoms, Israel and Judah. They were daughters of the same mother—the Israelitish nation—hence, were sisters. They proved their relationship by their wicked conduct, even as Jehovah intimates. **Aholah** (“*her tent*”) represents Samaria. **Aholibah** (“*my tent is in her*”) figures Jerusalem, which aptly illustrates the fact that she had been the true sanctuary of the Lord. Samaria, on the contrary, had a worship of her own. Israel, the 10 tribes, left Jerusalem the place where God had put His Name and set up a false system in Samaria [1Ki.12]. Yet both of these cities claimed relationship with Jehovah, regardless of their idolatry and unfaithfulness. This is abhorrent to the Lord as He plainly intimates in the following,

“And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine, and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrian, her neighbors.” [Eze.23:5]

Samaria is first accused and judged. Her wickedness began in a more pronounced way when Jereboam divided the nation, the 10 from the 2 tribes, and disrupted the Kingdom. They departed, in heart, from the Lord and depended upon Egypt and Assyria. Hosea described their condition, saying, **“Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart. They call to Egypt. They go to Assyria”** [Hos.7:11]. The Lord knew their way. He delivered them into the hand of the nation upon whom they doted and that was the very one that was used to punish them. That is the manner of Jehovah. He allows our own foolishness to chastise us.

“Wherefore, I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians upon whom she doted. These discovered her nakedness. They took her sons and daughters and slew her with the sword and she became famous among women: for they have executed judgment upon her.” [Eze.23:9-10]

We find this history recorded in 2 Kings. Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, came up against Hoshea, King of Israel, and he became his servant. Later, Hoshea conspired against Assyria, sending for help, not to the Lord but to Egypt; for which treachery Shalmaneser led the people of Samaria to Assyria and imprisoned the king [2Ki.17].

“And when her sister Aholibah saw this, she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than....her sister in her whoredoms. She doted upon the Assyrians, her neighbors, captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men.” [Eze.23:11-12]

In His message through Ezekiel, Jehovah is relating to us the thoughts of the hearts of the people. The wickedness mentioned was not physical evil, or fleshly attraction, not whoredom in the natural. It was a desire and asking after fellowship with other nations to which the Lord objected. His people went to those other nations for help. They looked to them because they admired the perfection of the strength of their armies and the power of their organizations. The captains and rulers looked big and great. They were impressed by the magnitude of their regimental cohorts and they desired to

be like them. They felt honored and important when they were in their company.

The same thing is manifested among the religious folk today. The true people of God are snared by the big folk, big things, big crowds, etc. Organizations of all kinds, religious rallies and roaring reverberations, recitations and reformations take the place of Gospel repentance and regeneration. Regeneration is too slow and old-fashioned. Up-to-date meetings and business men's ideas and ideals are yielded to in every case. The Word of God, with its exhortations, admonitions, and instructions, is ruled out. The separation of The Church from the world is a thing of the past. The influence of the world is not only felt among the people of God; but it is ruling. This is the condition that Jehovah abhors. It is what He names spiritual adultery. The Church is false to her Lord, her Husband, even as was the nation of Israel; she too will be judged for her sin. She is a Harlot, as He terms her [Rev.17].

"Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side." [Eze.23:22]

Jehovah allows His people's own ways to chastise them. Aholah, (Samaria) was punished by Assyria whom she admired and sought after, because of their national strength and power, and now her sister Aholibah, (Jerusalem) meets the same fate. She has not been warned by the example set before her., but rather imitates the unfaithfulness and foolishness of her sister. In fact she appears to be worse than Samaria. Her lovers are legion according to the accusations of the Lord. Jerusalem was enjoying even greater privileges and blessings; therefore, her wickedness and apostasy was greater.

When Ahaz, King of Judah, was pressed by Syria and Israel, he sent to Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria for help from his enemies, with these words, "***I am thy servant and thy son; come up and save me***" [2Ki.16:5-8]. And he took of the silver and gold in the house of the Lord and presented it to the Assyrian king. Isaiah, the Prophet, had come with a message of comfort and strength from the Lord; but his words were not believed by King Ahaz [Isa.7]. He went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser and he saw there an altar which he admired. He sent the fashion of it to Urijah, the priest, who copied it with all the workmanship thereof. This strange altar was set up in Jerusalem in defiance of the Word of the Lord [2Ki.16:10-20].

Can you not see how the wrath of Jehovah was stirred to the boiling point? Not content with unbelief in the Word of the Lord, they go further and openly flaunt a false altar in the place where the Lord had put His Name. No marvel that they were punished by the hands of the very ones they loved,

"Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee...I will bring them against thee on every side. The Babylonians and all the Chaldeans and all the Assyrians...they shall come with chariots, wagons and wheels with an assembly of people which shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about...And they shall judge thee according to their judgment." [Eze.23:23-24]

In His wrath, the holy and righteous God moved those nations, whom His people admired, to come up and heap upon them all the punishment they desired. He not only allowed the chastisement, He called for it. Jerusalem had walked in all the ways of her wicked sister, Samaria; yea, she had even outdone her, according to the Divine Estimate. Therefore, she was appointed to drink the same cup: for though she had seen the punishment which Jehovah administered to the northern kingdom, yet she continued in her evil course. So it is at the present time. Nations reap what they have sown and other nations go right on without taking warning. They continue in their self-willed rebellious course, according to the will of Satan, rejecting the Word of God and are guilty of the same wickedness as the nations which have drunk and are drinking the cup of Divine Displeasure. Then, the Lord gives to Ezekiel a final rehearsal of their sins and the punishment meted out.

"The Lord said moreover unto me, Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? Yea, declare unto them their abominations that they have committed. Adultery and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery. They have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them." [Eze.23:36-37]

The above recapitulation of the sins of the Lord's people takes us to the end of Chapter 23. Jehovah wants them and all people to know why those sisters were punished. Sometimes the chastisements which the Lord inflicts are a mystery to His people; but there is no riddle in the case of Israel or Judah. They deliberately left Him for other lovers, other gods, which they worshipped and to whom they sacrificed their children. He witnessed against them. Again, we desire to emphasize the fact to which we have called attention before, that we have a pattern here of the punishment that shall fall upon Christendom, and upon the Jews during the 7 years of judgment.

"For thus saith the Lord God: I will bring up a company upon them...and they shall stone them with stones and dispatch them with their swords. They shall slay their sons and their daughters and burn up their houses with fire." [Eze.23:46-47]

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" [Gal.6:7], and so shall the nations.

Therefore, this narrative has more instruction for us than even its relation to Israel and Judah. These women, Aholah and Aholibah, are more than representatives of Samaria and Jerusalem. They are striking figures of the 2 divisions of Christendom—Catholicism and Protestantism.

- Catholicism left the true center of worship—Christ as the sole means of salvation—and set up another altar. She made sacraments, penances, the church, and Mary's prayers as a means of propitiating God; and, she continues to depend upon their efficacy instead of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary. This answers to the apostasy of the 10 tribes—leaving Jerusalem and building their altar in Samaria—separating from the 2 tribes [1Ki.12].
- The Reformation dates the time of the divisions of the visible Church. Protestantism, as the new movement was called, became a reality in the world. The outward unity was lost from that time. Men arose who declared the Truth of the Gospel. The Scriptures had fallen into their

hands and they read them. They saw that Jesus was the Savior, and they heralded the fact in no uncertain manner. Hence, there was a great turning to God. The remnant, 2 tribes as it were, began to build again upon the foundation which Paul laid in the beginning of the age: ***“Jesus Christ and Him crucified”*** [1Co.3:11]. God was pleased with those protesters against error and evil and backed them up with mighty power.

Catholicism had never had a revival. There has never been any manifestation of the conviction of the Holy Spirit in their midst since the separation. It appears that God gave them up as a whole; although individuals have met the Lord and been saved.

On the contrary, Protestantism has had many revivals. God has worked mightily again and again in their midst. The present revival began 22 or 23 years ago,. A mighty wave of conviction by the power of the Spirit came upon Protestantism. It quickly spread around the world. Thousands were saved. God thundered in Pentecostal fashion, sending signs and wonders to confirm the preaching of the Word; but, alas, Protestantism, as a whole, refused to hear and heed the voice and conviction of the Spirit. They refused to acknowledge their need of repentance, refused to accept the witness of those who had repented and were filled with the Spirit, though these had the signs following them. The ministers, the leaders of the people, would not humble themselves. The greater number held fast to their integrity, as they would say, and their church (or sect) followed their example. They ridiculed the power of the Holy Spirit, and mocked the speaking in tongues, belittling it in every possible way. The marvelous healings and miracles were scorned. The honest-hearted, true saints of God were called “fanatics,” “nuts,” “false witnesses,” or in other words, “liars.” The descendants of folks that had been persecuted, afflicted, tormented, and mocked at for the Truth in their day of revival now turned and treated these revived saints in the same manner. Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, brethren of all the different cliques and classes, with one accordness turned away from the latter day revival. Some individuals in these sects received the Revivalist and were blessed; but as a whole, Protestantism did not know the day of their visitation, even as Judah when Christ came. She has followed the example of their elder sister, Aholah, and is going on into the prophesied darkness of the end time.

It is the truth, deny it who will. Light rejected brings darkness as Scripture witnesses [Joh.12:35] and is evident before our eyes. The apostasy in Protestantism has spread rapidly since the Latter Rain and the attendant revival has been rejected. Aholibah is almost ready to be spued out of the mouth of the Lord, even as Aholah was rejected. The mass of profession without any possession is sickening to the Lord. The sisters are so very much alike today they can hardly be distinguished the one from the other. They are both ready for the caldron. The fire is smoldering. Jehovah’s wrath is at the boiling point and will come down upon the false witness for Christ. Oh, that men would flee from the wrath to come even in this world, as well as eternity!

This chapter records a most important and impressive message in more ways than one. In the first place, it is the final message of this series as well as the final message of Jehovah to His people before the fall of Jerusalem. It informs us of the very date of the siege of the city by the Chaldean army.

“Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it: Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones. Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein. Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it.”
[Eze.24:1-6]

The fact that Ezekiel is commanded to write the date of the occurrence makes it doubly emphatic. It has great significance as relating to the end time, as have all these dates of Ezekiel. In his dates, the Prophet always reckoned from the 1st year of his captivity. It was the same year of Jehoiachin's exile (598 B.C). The fatal siege of Jerusalem, which had been so long announced, at last arrived. It sealed its doom. But the marvelous part about it is that Ezekiel received the information directly from the Lord before the actual happening, and he was at least 500 miles from the city. Talk about wireless, radio, etc. What do you call that for quick service? Higher criticism and infidel scoffers are dumb in the face of such definite statements of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The Prophet gives us a parable and then a sign that his words were true.

- The boiling “**pot** (or caldron)” is the symbol of Jerusalem. The guilty people themselves are the contents of the pot.
- The “**choice bones**” and “**choice of the flock**” represent the princes, the leaders. They were to be consumed in the doom that was coming on the city.
- The “**scum**” is symbolic of the sinfulness of the people.
- The “**woe**” was pronounced against Jerusalem on account of the scum. It was to be burned with fire. Jehovah says, “*I have set her blood upon the top of a rock that it should not be covered*” [Eze.24:8-9 RV].

Oh, the language is unmistakably plain. It describes a terrible carnage. If God is so unsparing in His anger when it is only stirred up a little, what will it be when His anger is vented in full measure? The wrath of an offended God is in question. He has been rejected by the people whom He loved and provisionally cleansed from their defilement and filthiness. Ezekiel 24:13 makes this clear,

"In thy filthiness is lewdness because I have purged thee and thou was not purged. Thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee."

Here is marvelous proof that these prophecies all relate to end time events. Where was Judah's wickedness purged? At Calvary, all readily answer. But what did Ezekiel know of that cleansing stream where all sin and filthiness were judged, atoned for, and cleansed in the Person of Christ? Nothing whatsoever; but the Spirit of God was not ignorant of that Mount of Propitiation, even in that far off time...He inspired the Prophet. Ezekiel is speaking from the standpoint of the rejection of Christ and His sacrificial work and is looking down to the end where their rejection of Him is the great point at issue. They are to be brought back to Jerusalem, to the city which they love, where also the Lord was crucified, and there He will punish them. The city which witnessed their sin will also witness their judgment.

As we noted in Ezekiel 11:3, they will think that they are safe in Jerusalem. They said, "***This city is the caldron and we be the flesh.***" They meant to say, that as the flesh is preserved in the pot (or caldron), so we were secure in Jerusalem. But now the Prophet is instructed to tell them that the city is their caldron sure enough, but in another sense. They had deceived themselves when they thought they were safe there. His fury was to be spent upon them in that "***bloody city.***" There is no **MAYBE** about it either. Note the finality of His words:

"I the Lord, have spoken. It shall come to pass. I will do it. I will not go back; neither will I spare, neither will I repent. According to thy ways and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God." [Eze.24:14]

Here are solemn words. Men may not hear, nor heed what has been written. They ignore these prophecies to their own eternal ruin. God's Word shall most certainly come to pass regardless of all men's dreams to the contrary.

It is with the fulfillment of Scripture in the end time that we are especially interested. We who are living now and have our spiritual eyes open can see prophecy actually coming to pass. Since the year 1914, the foretold happenings have been phenomenal. We are amazed at how quickly things come to pass when once the due time has arrived. There is nothing slow about God when He begins to work. He always is right there when the clock strikes the hour. The umpire may call "strike out" or "foul ball" all he desires; however, when His time arrives, the Lord goes right on with the game. He never strikes out; but lands a sure winner in every instance. Likewise, all those who play ball with Him, those who are really on His side in the game, they will win the pennant not only this year, or next year; but eternal is the victory they will gain.

We say that prophecy is being fulfilled in a marvelous manner. Ezekiel's dates are found to be really up-to-date, as it were. They are pertinent and pregnant of present day activities among the nations especially as regards Jerusalem and the Jews. Hence, the date emphasized in this chapter, the 9th year of the Prophet's captivity (598 B.C.), will have a corresponding fulfillment in 1931 in reverse order. The answer to that date has to do with Jerusalem's emancipation (or deliverance) from Gentile rule in a more decisive way than hitherto. The Lord Jesus Christ, the antitype of

Nebuchadnezzar, will set Himself in some particular manner and assert His right to that city of destiny. We cannot definitely state just what steps He will take, or just how His besiegement of Jerusalem will be carried out, but we can outline our convictions on the subject.

As the Jewish people lost their dominion, we might say, at that date in Ezekiel's time (although the absolute carrying away of the people was 2 years later), the reversal would be that they will regain the city in 1931 in a more absolute sense than hitherto. That probably will be the year that the Jewish State will be formed of which Jerusalem will be the capital city. This momentous event will signify that the tabernacle of David is set up and that Christ, King of the Jews, is on His throne. The people will be given another chance to accept Him, and if they do so, all will be well; but if not, all will be ill. He will be obliged to put down by force all the authority and power of the enemy.

The allied nations will be coming into power at that time. The revival of the Roman Empire (the United States of Europe as it will be called) is an expected consummation even now. It will surely appear at the same time that the Jewish Nation takes its place among the other nations of the world. These are 2 predicted events that must appear side by side. The coming of the one necessitates the coming of the other; but they cannot both continue. The one rises, the revival of Rome, to go down and rise no more; the other comes up, the Jewish Nation, to go down no more.

We are seeing both of these miracles, the usurping Empire and Christ's Kingdom coming into view before our eyes. How can anyone doubt the finale as prophesied in the Writings of Truth [Dan.2:31-45 and 7:7-14]? But the Jews will suffer terribly in the conflict for the supremacy of the world. They will be the battle ground; for in Palestine the last great war will be fought.

THE DEATH OF EZEKIEL'S WIFE

"Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn, nor weep; neither shall thy tears run down. Forebear to cry; make no mourning for the dead. Bind the tire of thine head upon thee and put thy shoes upon thy feet and cover not thy lips and eat not the bread of men. So I spoke unto the people in the morning, and at even my wife died and I did in the morning as I was commanded."

[Eze.24:15-18]

Herein is a marvelous prophecy veiled in the apparently heartless taking away of Ezekiel's wife. It is the 2nd message recorded in Chapter 24. It amplifies the 1st prophecy, giving us (in figure) some interesting as well as fundamental data of Jehovah's love, yet faithful dealings with His people. The Lord shows us a moving picture with a living actor on the stage. Ezekiel himself plays the leading role in the act. His wife dies. She, called "**the desire of his eyes**," is the type of Israel, Jehovah's wife who was to die to Him. The Prophet's actions—denied even the solace of tears or mourning in the least particular—are of a representative character.

In this object lesson, we are taught how deeply the faithful prophets and saints entered into the things of the Lord and how poignantly they suffered.

We learn that the greater the part we play in the work of the Lord, the more responsible the place we occupy, the greater are the sufferings we undergo. Ezekiel had to obey God regardless of his personal feelings; and he did...he was a sign. Death had dissolved the marriage tie and taken from the Prophet his beloved wife even as the relationship between Jehovah and Jerusalem was now to be completely severed. There was no wild lamentation or expression of sorrow in Ezekiel's case because he was, in a sense, representative of the Lord and also of the people.

THE QUESTION AND ANSWER

"And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? Then I answered them...Thus saith the Lord God; behold I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency, the desire of your eyes and that which your soul pitieth and your sons and your daughters whom you have left shall fall by the sword and ye shall do as I have done. Ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. And your tires shall be upon your head and your shoes upon your feet. Ye shall not mourn, nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities and mourn one toward another. Thus, Ezekiel is unto you a sign; according to all that he hath done, shall ye do; and when this cometh to pass, ye shall know that I am the Lord God." [Eze.24:19-25]

We have another proof here that the Prophet is speaking to the people of the end time more than even those folks of his time. The folks of his time were the captives by the river Chebar in Babylon. They were not in Jerusalem and would not suffer in its destruction: for they were already carried away. The people directly concerned were not aware of Ezekiel's actions or prophecy.

It is true that the captives loved their homeland and had hopes of returning there; hence the prophecy could refer to them in measure, but the language tells far more than that. It emphatically speaks of the last destruction which shall fall upon the beloved city. Jehovah will once more, for a short time, give up His sanctuary to be profaned by the Gentiles. The usurping king, the Antichrist and his armies, will again surround Jerusalem and take possession of it after the people have been gathered back and have become a nation. The people will again have a rude awakening because they will reject their Messiah the 2nd time: ❶ They rejected Him in the day of His humiliation, and ❷ they will reject Him in the day of His glory; and judgment will follow.

Some may say that the Jews will not know that they are refusing the Messiah. Well, that may be so as to sight; but they have the Scriptures and the Lord holds them responsible to read and heed these writings and not be ignorant of the signs of the times. He is coming according as it is written, even as He did aforetime and the people ought to know the day of their visitation. The very fact that their land has come into their possession without a shot being fired in its deliverance, or any money being paid for its fertile fields, is sign enough. Who but Jehovah could have done such a stupendous thing? Later, when the temple site is given them and they can worship according to the ritual of Moses...Who will have accomplished that miracle? Why do they not see? Who but Jehovah can bring things to pass in that fashion? But their eyes are blinded, especially is this the case with the leaders, the great men among the Jews. They all depend upon the nations whom they praise for giving them the land of their desire, forgetting that God promised it to

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and that it belongs to their descendants by the 2 immutable things of the Lord—His Word and His oath—whereby He could not fail to give it to them when the due time arrived [Heb.6:18].

“That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.” [Eze.24:26-27]

Ezekiel is given another word at this time. He is informed that he shall hear of the fall of Jerusalem by one who shall escape. The marvelous wisdom of the prophetic Word baffles all finite comprehension. Jehovah will see that 1 man escapes the ruin and comes immediately to report to the Prophet. He will then hear with his own ears that his prophecy came to pass. In that day, he is told, his **“mouth shall be opened.”** He will speak to the man with the message, **“and he shall be no more dumb.”**

JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS [EZE.25-32]

“The Word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites and prophesy...and say, Hear the Word of the Lord God. Thus saith the Lord God, because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary when it was profaned and against the land of Israel when it was desolate and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, Behold therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the East for a possession,” [Eze.25:1-4]

With Chapter 25, we have the beginning of a new section. Ezekiel is here made to prophesy against 7 nations, representative of all the world. It is inconceivable that God should chastise His own people, the Jews, and not punish the other rebellious people. As we learn here, as well as in other portions of the Scripture, He will judge all nations. These 7 nations here mentioned are divided into 2 groups of 4 and 3. The first 4 (Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistine) are named in Ezekiel 25. They were the immediate neighbors of Israel. Their guilt is laid bare and their overthrow is predicted. These judgments have had a fulfillment. Other nations who are their descendants, or who answer to them in the will or purpose of God, will come into the judgment predicted here. We are assured that the fulfillment of these chapters relate to future events, even as all Ezekiel's prophecies have a present, or future relation.

THE JUDGMENT OF AMMON

The Prophet received a former message concerning Ammon [Eze.21:28-32]. These people had a base, in the beginning, being descendants of Lot by his youngest daughter. They are generally associated with Moab, the offspring of Lot's eldest daughter [Gen.19:30-38]. Thus, they both claimed relationship with Israel, the descendants of Abraham; for according to the flesh they were their kin. The Lord introduces Himself to them in 1 prophecy as **“the God of Israel”** [Jer.48:1]. This was significant; for to none of the other nations does He speak in this manner of Himself.

Typically both Ammon and Moab represent the great mass of Christendom who have a profession of Christianity without any possession—a name to live and are dead. In Scripture they are called “**bastards and not sons**” [Heb.12:8]; even as it could be said of these sons of Lot. Today, their name is Legion; or “Lots” we might say and make a play on words. Ammon, of whom Ezekiel speaks, has the further figurative meaning of being more than mere professors of religion; rather, those that are against the Truth. They represent the higher critic, or Modernist, who, not content to merely reject the Scriptures, would snatch them away from others. Ammon was a raider of Israel’s land. They were a warring people and preyed upon others. As the rolling stone, they gathered no moss; but were restless, predatory, and nomadic. From the first they were enemies of Israel, though Moses sought to be friendly and commanded the people, “**distress them not**” [Deu.2:19]. All this is interesting when viewed in the figurative sense, and so referring to end-time people, especially religious folk. The true Christian does not bother them. They distress them not, but rather let them alone.

The Ammonite mocked Israel when they went into captivity. They were glad at their city’s destruction, and Jehovah took notice of this fact. He punished them. They were taken captive by the men of the East (the Arabs). The Arabs were to set up their palaces (or tents) in Ammon’s land and take possession of it. This prophecy has been absolutely fulfilled. The Arabians wander through what was once Ammon’s possession, and yet a greater fulfillment awaits.

MOAB’S JUDGMENT

“Thus saith the Lord God: because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold the house of Israel is like unto all the heathen: therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, unto the men of the East...and I will give them in possession. I will execute judgment upon Moab and they shall know that I am the Lord.” [Eze.25:8-11]

As we noted, Moab was closely allied with Ammon. Their country lay to the east of the Dead Sea. They also sneered and exulted over Israel and mockingly declared, “**The house of Israel is like unto all the heathen.**” They were proud and arrogant. Jeremiah has given us a lengthy account of them and their judgment [Jer.48]. Woes are pronounced upon the nation from which there was not escape. They had been permitted to dwell in careless ease and pride for a long time, but finally the Lord refused to tolerate their abominations further. “**Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall**” [Pro.16:18]. These descendants of Lot refused to humble themselves, hence, they must be humbled. Balaam’s prophecy was at last fulfilled. He said the Lord shall “**smite the corners of Moab**” [Num.24:17]. But this will have another fulfillment; for these people, as well as Ammon, represent the latter day church member.

“Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him and his scent is not changed.” [Jer.48:11]

The above verse expresses the condition of these professors of religion most perfectly. They have not been awakened to see their need of a Savior; but simply join The Church because it is respectable and a good example. They have no dealings with God and are never chastened as sons are chastened of the Lord [Heb.12:5-12]; hence, they are self-righteous and self-sufficient. They have not been born again; they are not a new creation. They see and enjoy the world even as sinners; for they are sinners, though religious ones. Therefore, the Lord has a controversy with them and their judgment is sure and certain.

THE JUDGMENT OF EDMON

Edmon were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. They were also connected with Israel by even a closer tie of relationship than Moab and Ammon. Their deeds were more wicked and defiant than the others. Especially was this case as regards their attitude toward Israel who was taught to treat them kindly: ***“Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother”*** [Deu.23:7]. They did not return the kindness but rather otherwise—offended and revenged themselves upon them. Amos reviewed this policy of theirs in these words: ***“He did pursue his brother with the sword and did cast off all pity and his anger did war perpetually and he kept his wrath forever”*** [Amo.1:11].

In his little (or short) prophecy, Obadiah is altogether concerned with Edmon and his attitude to Jacob and the punishment that is going to be meted out to him. We read,

“How are the things of Esau searched out! For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee and thou shalt be cut off forever. For thou shouldest not have looked on in the day that he became a stranger, neither shouldest thou have rejoiced in the day of their destruction.” [Oba.1:6-11]

Edmon’s judgment is to be executed by Israel.

“The house of Jacob shall be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame and the house of Esau for stubble and they shall kindle in them and devour them and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it.” [Oba.1:18]

This prophecy has had a fulfillment as we know; but there awaits another when all flesh, for which Edmon stands, shall come under the rod of the Lord.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE PHILISTINE

“Thus saith the Lord God: Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart to destroy it for the old hatred, therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines and I will cut off the Cherethims and destroy the remnant of the seacoast. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes and they shall know that I am the Lord when I shall lay vengeance upon them.” [Eze.25:15-17]

The Philistine dwelt on the west border of Canaan. Originally of Egypt, their genealogy is recorded in Genesis 10. He is the offspring of **Ham** (“the black one” or “sunburnt”). He represents God’s view of man as turned away from

him. He allows a black man to arise upon the stage of the world to strikingly portray those of the old creation who have had the light of the Gospel, but have not received it. Hence, it has darkened him. The brighter the light, the more penetrating its rays, the darker he becomes when he turns from it. The Pharisee of Christ's day, the religious, self-righteous, self-sufficient Jew who rejected Him, is an apt illustration of the Philistine. We see him in modern days as the unregenerate church member, who has been made a Christian, as he would say, by having a little water sprinkled upon him. He claims a right to the things of faith, holding Israel's land as it were, by the might of force and priority. The Roman Catholic vividly portrays him, saying theirs is the first church and they were always Christians, because they became members of the church in its infancy.

The Philistine was always the bitter enemy of the children of Israel. The books of Samuel tell us much of their encroachments upon the land of Canaan. The prophets tell us of the vengeance of the Lord against them, and their ultimate destruction. The natural Philistines have apparently disappeared, but the antitypical are still with us, and God has a controversy with them. He will settle old scores shortly. All these enemies, different phases of religious and irreligious flesh, are coming into judgment. The tares are being gathered for the burning, while at the same time the wheat is being gathered for glory.

With the prophecy concerning the Philistine the 1st part of this section devoted to the judgment of the nations ends. The next chapters, Ezekiel 26-28, contain the prophesied judgment against Tyrus and Zidon, cities of Phoenicia. These are most interesting, as they contain much instruction for the last days as well as shedding light on former days. We have some marvelous typical pictures in this section.

PROPHECY CONCERNING TYRUS [EZE.26]

"And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people, she is turned unto me. I shall be replenished now that she is laid waste. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee as the sea causeth the waves to come up." [Eze.26:1-3]

Here we have the predicted overthrow of another people; but the city alone is named because it boasted against Jerusalem. Observe this fact: The attitude of these nations toward Jerusalem and the Jews determined Jehovah's attitude toward them. It was a **TIT FOR TAT** affair. Those that mocked and rejoiced at the calamity of Israel had cause shortly to shed tears over their own. "**God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.**"

Tyrus (meaning "rock") was true to her name. It was an impregnable and impenetrable Phoenician city, partly built upon an island in the Mediterranean Sea and partly on the mainland. The mainland was the more ancient part and is mentioned in Joshua 19:29 and there called "**the strong city.**" It stretched along the shore 7 miles and it was there that the majority of the population dwelt. Tyre had a northern harbor 900 feet long protected by walls; also a southern harbor formed by a great sea wall. The harbors could be closed.

They were connected by a canal. ***“Tyre did build herself a stronghold”*** [Zec.9:3]. A double wall 150 feet high beside the sea secured the island part of Tyre. “Her merchants were princes and her traffickers the honorable of the earth” [Isa.23:7-8]. All the ancient cities of the world brought their choicest and best things and laid them at the feet of her who appeared in the description as a queen enthroned on ivory, covered with ***“blue and purple from the isles of Elishah”*** [Eze.27:7]. Her beauty was perfect.

Tyrus became prominent during the reigns of David and Solomon, playing an important part in the commercial, political, and religious life of Israel. Hiram, King of Tyre sent cedar trees to Jerusalem, as well as workmen, who built David a house [2Sa.5:11]. Tyrus also aided in the construction of the temple and the palace under Solomon’s reign [1Ki.5:1-12]. The men of Tyre were great mariners, masters of the sea, and founded many colonies.

Israel never had war with Tyre and the friendship was cemented by the marriage of King Ahab to Jezebel the wicked daughter of Ethbaal, King of Tyre. She was the mother of idolatry among Israel. Tyre sent messengers to King Zedekiah probably seeking to form an alliance against Nebuchadnezzar, the King of nations for his day [Jer.27:3]. She was a proud and wicked city and defied God in her arrogant rebellion. Then, to fill up her cup of iniquity, she sinned against Jerusalem and its people as we read in the Scriptures. All the prophets testify against her. Amos speaks of her sins and her judgment, also Joel. Jeremiah and Isaiah predict her downfall; but it is Ezekiel who gives us the complete description of her greatness and grandeur, her resources, her far-reaching influences, her luxuries and wealth, as well as the details of her judgment and her ruin [Eze.26-27]. He also introduces us to the last King of Tyre [Eze.28].

The exultation of Tyre at Jerusalem’s overthrow appears strange after their friendship of years; but the throwing down of Solomon’s altars to Ashtoreth, the Tyrians’ goddess of heaven, which for 350 years had been a pledge of goodwill between Jerusalem and Tyre, was probably the cause [2Ki.23]. The jealousy of Jerusalem’s commercial place as the “gate” of the inland traffic, was also a cause of her rejoicing at their fall. ***“Aha, she is broken that was the gates of people,”*** expresses the situation. But Jehovah was looking on and it is written: ***“He that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished”*** [Pro.17:5]. Hence, we read Jehovah’s arraignment of her,

“Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.” [Eze.26:3]

Then are added predictions of her becoming a spoil to the nations and a fishing place for all people. She was to become as the top of a rock, bare and despoiled of all her honors and fame. But this great judgment was not all carried out at once. Nebuchadnezzar came and besieged the city on the mainland, and after 13 years it fell into his hands; but the part on the island escaped. It was protected by a fleet.

“Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it.” [Eze.29:18]

The people had removed everything of value to the island; hence, Nebuchadnezzar was not paid for his trouble, so God gave him Egypt for his compensation.

Then came 70 years of quiet, predicted by Isaiah [Isa.23:15], when Tyre was apparently forgotten by God and man. It seemed as if Ezekiel's prophecy never would have a complete fulfillment; for it was about 240 years until the overthrow of Tyrus was accomplished. Alexander the Great, the famous conqueror of Greece came against the city built on an island. The city was taken after 7 months by a crafty scheme of the part of Alexander. The stones, timber and very dust of the city which was destroyed were laid into the sea to erect a massive piece of masonry by which the other part of the city could be entered by the soldiery. Thus the Word of the Lord was fulfilled: ***"And they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water"*** [Eze.26:12]. The end of Tyrus had come. ***"and thou shalt be no more; tho' thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God"*** [Eze.26:21]. So complete and perfect was her overthrow accomplished that even the exact site of that once renowned city cannot be determined.

Alexander the Great fulfilled another prophecy concerning Tyrus. Years before he came on his mission to destroy that proud city, Zechariah announced the complete annihilation of the wicked city,

Tyrus did build herself a stronghold and heaped up silver as the dust and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold the Lord will cast her out and He will smite her power in the sea and she shall be devoured with fire." [Zec.9:3-4]

Alexander the Great was used of the Lord to fulfill the above. He burnt the city and literally brought it to ashes.

As we study these prophecies of Ezekiel, we are continually confronted with an array of evidence that is absolutely convincing to anyone, who desires to know, of the fulfillment of Scripture. Oft times it appears as if visions were vain and prophecy forgotten by Jehovah because of the long delay in their coming to pass; but it is not so. God never forgets His Word; but He has not been in a hurry heretofore. His purposes have a due time for their fulfillment. But when the clock strikes the hour, He wastes no time in deliberation. Today is His busy time. He is in a hurry; for so many of His purposes are crowding in for fulfillment. The end of one age is upon us as well as the beginning of another.

THE TYPICAL APPLICATION

We have enjoyed the history of the strong city, Tyrus; also. the fulfillment of her destruction as announced. The minute details of the accomplishment of all that was written of her is interesting; but there is a further fulfillment, a typical one, of this record. Undoubtedly, Tyrus shadows religious Rome which we have portrayed in Revelation 17-18. Ezekiel 27 verifies this statement most marvelously. Before we take up its study, we desire to note the exact date on which Ezekiel receives the prophecy concerning Tyrus. It is the 11th year of his captivity (587 B.C.) which answers to 1933 in this end of time. How significant when viewed in relation to Rome, called Babylon in Revelation! We cannot be mistaken. These dates of Ezekiel are more and

more seen as blazing sign posts. We can tell almost with certainty when events of importance are to take place by investigating the data that the Holy Spirit has left for us. Some of these dates have already found a fulfillment in the present generation which proves that they all signal some important happening in relation to the Jews and national affairs.

In fact, the evidence is conclusive that Ezekiel was a Prophet in his recording of these dates, as well as the events on the certain years, months, and days.

In fact, we expect religious Babylon, Rome and her daughters, to be at the height of her glory in 1933. She will get astride the scarlet-colored beast and ride him to conquest that year, in what we learn of these chapters here, which proves Tyrus is more than a mere political city of commerce.

“Thus saith the Lord to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at thy fall when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones and lay away their robes and put off their broidered garments. They shall clothe themselves with trembling and sit upon the ground and shall be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee and say to thee, How art thou destroyed that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which was strong, in the sea, she and her inhabitants? For thus saith the Lord when I shall make thee a desolate city...when I shall bring up the deep upon thee and great waters shall cover thee. When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth...with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living.” [Eze.26:15-20]

Now we know these statements are not said to the city of Tyrus primarily. They are simply addressed to her as the figure of the great city, Babylon, that has made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication. The next chapter further elucidates and proves the typical application.

LAMENTATION FOR TYRUS [EZE.27]

“The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Now thou Son of man take up a lamentation for Tyrus and say, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art a merchant of the people for many isles. Thus saith the Lord; O Tyrus thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty.” [Eze.27:1-3]

There is unmistakable proof in Chapter 27 that Tyrus is a figurative city. She is shown here as a monster ship of beautiful mechanism, made of material from all cities and all countries, rowing in great waters, and gathering precious things from every place. Merchants, mariners and men of war are seen vying with one another to do her homage and enriching her with every conceivable gift. Gold, silver, brass, iron, lead, and tin were traded for her wares. The world is figuratively seen here giving to Rome and buying from her, which religiously is easily read. In fact, it is astounding when we get the understanding. Gems of priceless worth, emeralds, coral, agate, were bought at their fairs, as also was fine linen, broidered work, with purple and scarlet silks; and for a present, horns of ebony and ivory [Eze.27:12-24].

Her eminency and importance as well as her beauty are celebrated. She is magnificent according to the description. The ships of Tarshish sang of her

and she was replenished and made glorious in the midst of the seas. She appeared invincible; but, alas, an end came to all of her astounding wealth and honors. We read of the final doom.

“Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters. The east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas. Thy riches, thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners and thy pilots...shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin. And all that handle the oar, the mariners and all the pilots of the sea shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land, and shall cause their voice to be heard against thee and shall cry bitterly and shall cast dust upon their heads. They shall wallow themselves in the ashes and make themselves utterly bald for thee and gird them with sackcloth and weep for thee. In their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like she that was destroyed in the midst of the sea?” [Eze.27:26-36].

Is the correspondence not wonderful? If still unconvinced, look at Revelation 18:10-24. Here we have the fall of religious Babylon, the antitypical Tyrus. The merchants are there, singing a dirge and lamenting over her fall, **“for no man buyeth their merchandise anymore.”** All the humbug, sorceries, and witchcraft are viewed in the light and seen in their true value. **“The kings of the earth who have committed fornication with her shall bewail and lament for her when they shall see the smoke of her burning; standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come.”** All her beauty, renown, and riches are viewed vanishing away. Merchandise of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet and all rare woods and perfume, vessels of ivory, brass, iron and marble are lamented over, even as was the case of Tyrus, the typical city.

This description of these 2 cities, Tyrus and Babylon, fit religious Rome exactly. She is the ship that is in all waters. The people who claim to be a part of her are in every part of the world. They are enriched by her spiritual blessings she claims and so teaches; hence, she insists that they enrich her materially. The Vatican, the home of the popes, consists of the papal palace, the court and garden, the library, and museum. Immense treasures from all the world (precious, priceless things of fine arts—sculpture, painting, etc.) are stored there, the workmanship of famous and renowned men; with rare and coveted jewels, golden chests of apparel, laces, silken tapestries, rugs, and ancient renowned pieces of furniture. The museum is the greatest in the world; also the library. The wealth of the Vatican cannot be estimated; no one knows the worth of these rare treasures, but it is fabulous. And, as Tyrus passed away in her pride and self-glorying, so will this religious system (which Tyrus figures) pass away under the judgment-stroke of God.

The instrument of the chastisement of Tyrus in the first instance was Nebuchadnezzar, noted here as the **“east wind”**; but, the Lord Jesus Christ will be the avenger of the last days. He is the antitype of that world-renowned man; monarch of the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles. He will come from heaven, the king from the north, a King of king with His armies on white horses and with chariots [Eze.26:7].

“The Word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God, because thine heart is lifted up and thou hast said I am a God, I sit in the seat of God in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God...Behold therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit and thou shalt die the death of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.” [Eze.28:1-8]

The present chapter, the concluding one of these 3 that relate to Tyrus, is mainly devoted to its proud ruler, also called prince and king. But this ruler is figurative of another and more impressive personality, a prophetic character of mighty import.

We will look at the shadow (or type) first.

The prince of Tyrus to whom Ezekiel refers was Ithobalus, called in Phoenician annals, Ithobaal II, being the 2nd of this name. The description of his character informs us that he was the consummation of the pride and wealth of the city over which he was ruler. He became puffed up with pride because of his exalted place and claimed that he was a god and occupied the seat of God. He made great boasts of wisdom and cunning even as the language here teaches, claiming to be greater in this respect than Daniel, we infer. He heaped up riches by trafficking in all manner of business and because of his wealth became still more lifted up. He boasted foolishly in arrogant pride and brought down upon himself the wrath of God.

The Prophet announces his doom. The Lord God will bring nations against him and his city, ***“because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God.”*** Instead of living forever, as a god should, he is fated to die a sudden and violent death—the death of the uncircumcised, referring to the vile and sinful, the wicked who are separated from God, not only in this life, but banished from Him forever. The description so far fits that of the prince of Tyrus, ruler of an earthly dynasty; but it also describes another who has not yet come. We refer to the False Prophet, called the 2nd Beast [Rev.13 and 19], the hireling shepherd [Joh.10] the wicked one [2Th.2]. Daniel tells us of him: ***“In the latter time...when the transgressors are come to the full a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up”*** [Dan.8]. Some Bible expositors call this coming one the Antichrist, but we believe the Antichrist is the first beast [Rev.13].

“Moreover the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God. Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God. Every precious stone was thy covering the sardius, topaz, diamond, beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire, emerald, carbuncle, and gold. The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes were prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth and I have set thee so. Thou was upon the holy mountain of God. Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways until iniquity was found in thee.” [Eze.28:11-16]

Oh, what a description! It is superb and glorious and informs us of the surpassing exaltation of the man, the King of Tyrus, mentioned here. But he is more than a man. Such language could never be said of any mere human being. None of these verses could be applied to the heathen King of Tyrus. The description fits the angel called Lucifer who was, and probably still is, the most beautiful creature of God; but he fell from that lofty place because of sin and has become the enemy of God. Satan is here portrayed in his original exaltation and in his fall he is identified with the King of Tyrus; because Satan was the power that was behind the Tyrian throne; for Satan is the god of this world. He controls all the world powers to some extent. Hence, we can readily see how it is that these words are addressed to the earthly ruler of Tyrus, and especially as we know that he is a type of the 2nd Beast, that wicked prophet, who will work hand-in-glove with the 1st Beast...Satan energizing both of them.

The description given Satan as an **UNFALLEN BEING** shows that he was a marvelous creature. We learn that Michael, the angel of power, still recognizes in him somewhat of the grandeur of his unfallen state; for he did not bring a railing accusation against him when he was resisting the resurrection of Moses; but said, ***"The Lord rebuke thee"*** [Jud.1:9]. We thus learn that he has not yet been despoiled of his beauty or power; also, that he is greater than Michael.

As Lucifer, ***"he was in the garden of God and every precious stone was his covering."*** He was the perfection of light, like God, though only a creature. He was ***"the anointed cherub,"*** the divinely chosen, exalted being which was set in the very throne of God, ***"walking up and down in the midst of the stones of fire."*** He dwelt in the fiery presence of a holy and righteous God. He possessed a place of dignity and excellency that none of the other spirit creation could claim, being ***"upon the holy mountain of God."*** These words could never apply to any human of the natural creation, neither can the following: ***"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created till unrighteousness was found in thee"*** [Eze.28:13-15].

But sad, sad finale, unrighteousness was found in him. He aspired to be as God. We read of him in this connection in Isaiah 14 where he is figured there as the King of Babylon; but it is the same personality as seen in Ezekiel. Listen to the language of the self-centered ego,

"I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven. I will sit also upon the mountain of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High" [Isa.14:13-14]

Now, we know this was the heart utterance of Lucifer. It could not be a mere man talking thus; and it was sin. Lucifer wanted the place of the throne of God. He wanted to be as God, the Father, and as Christ, in the throne of God as Creator and as Redeemer. The one above the stars; the other in the sides of the north. It was thus he fell.

But we believe it has also a reference to the Antichrist. He also will aspire to be as God. ***"He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God"*** [2Th.2:4]. It is the throne of Christ, the God-Man, that he will possess. He will usurp that place on earth and will hold the Lord's scepter for 3½ years. Satan

as cast down [Rev.12] from his place in the heavenlies, will fill and energize that man of sin. Christ will be compelled to wrest the dominion from him by power.

But to return to Satan...the hand behind the man's throne. His sentence of judgment has not yet been executed. He is still in the heavenlies. He still has access to the presence of God as we read in Job 1; but he surely has ceased to be the covering cherub of the stones of fire. Oh, what a sad fall for one so majestic and mighty—cast down so low. It is written here, in Ezekiel 28, that God will bring him down. Jehovah addresses him saying,

"I will cast thee to the ground. I will lay thee before kings that they may behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee. Thou shalt be a terror and never shalt thou be any more." [Eze.28:17-19]

The above declares the end of Satan upon the earth, as the usurper and god of this world, the prince of darkness and the power of the air, but we have to go elsewhere to learn his later destiny. In Revelation (John's book of coming events), we learn that after Satan is cast out to the earth, he is bound in hell during the 1,000-year reign of Christ. Afterwards, he is loosed for a little season and he shall go out to deceive the nations and gather them to battle against the city of Jerusalem; but his success will be short lived. God will send fire down out of heaven and devour the lawless hosts of Satan. These wicked men are all slain, while Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where The Beast and False Prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever [Rev.20:3, 7-10].

How any Christian can seek to explain away the truth of eternal judgment with such Scripture before his eyes is as difficult to conceive as why Satan will again arise to fight against God and His people after he has been cast down to hell and chained there against his will by the power of God. But it only proves that Satan's hatred of God is continued and that he is not conquered. No, he never will be; but will remain that old serpent, the devil, forever.

PROPHECY AGAINST ZIDON

"And the Word of the lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Zidon and prophesy and say: Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, Zidon, and I will be glorified in the midst of thee and they shall know that I am the Lord when I execute judgment in her and shall be sanctified in her." [Eze.28:20-22]

Here is a new departure in Chapter 28. After the description of the prince of Tyrus and his egregious defeat and downfall from his exalted and honored place, we read of judgment upon Zidon, another city of Phoenicia. It is suggestive because of the connection it holds. It is the 6th of the people mentioned in this portion as deserving of judgment because of their attitude toward Israel. Zidon, a fishing town, was another city of importance. It was 20 miles north of Tyrus and was originally a more prominent and prosperous city. It stood on the northern slope of a promontory which projected several hundred yards into the sea. ZIDONIANS was another name for Canaanites.

The names of Tyrus and Zidon are often used interchangeably in Scripture. Many times they are spoken of together, being closely associated. Jesus

traveled to their coasts and many at that time were healed [Mat.15:21, Mar.3:8]. It was there that the Syrophonecian woman found Him and would not let Him go until He had healed her daughter [Mar.7:24-31]. Paul touched at Zidon on his voyage from Caesarea to Rome and was allowed to go unto his friends and refresh himself [Act.27:3]. Tyre and Zidon's doom shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment than that of those who witnessed the works of Christ and yet repented not [Mat.11:21]. These 2 cities figure latter day nations who have had the light of salvation; hence, their judgment will be far greater than those ancient people.

Zidon was a pricking thorn in the sides of Israel [Eze.28:24]. She sinned against the people of Jehovah, and judgment came upon her. The present-day nations shall likewise come into judgment for the same reason. We read of their judgment when Christ, the King of Nations appears. Their attitude toward His people is the determining factor [Mat.25:31-36].

The last 2 verses of Chapter 28 are a prophecy relating to Israel's restoration.

"Thus saith the Lord God: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein and shall build houses and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about." [Eze.28:25-26]

These words are unmistakably plain; they need little comment. At the very time of the restoration of Israel and their blessing in their land, will come the judgment of all those nations that oppressed and sought their downfall. These 2 events travel together. ❶ The Jews will be chastised first because of their attitude toward their Messiah and then ❷ all other peoples will be punished or blessed according to their attitude to the Jews.

We are looking with interest to the gathering to Palestine of this ancient people at this very time. These prophecies of Ezekiel are taking form even now as to fulfillment. There are only a few short years before the seed of Abraham will be in possession of the land promised to them by the living God. We are in fullest and heartiest sympathy with His purposes in their behalf.

PROPHECIES AGAINST EGYPT [EZE.29]

"In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. Speak and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of her rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own and I have made it for myself." [Eze.29:1-3]

This is a most interesting prophecy and of even a greater signification than the preceding, if possible. They almost stagger one when once their meaning is clear. The marvels of Scripture are beyond finite man to conceive. Truly only the Spirit of God is able for these **DEEP THINGS**. We praise Him that He condescends to reveal them to the contrite and humble.

In the first place, we would note the fact that in this prophecy against Egypt, we are given another morsel to chew. It was the 10th year of the Prophet's exile (588 B.C.) which is emphasized as the time of this prediction. Of what interest would that be to us if there is not something in these dates? But there is, as we have shown. The year 588 B.C. reflects forward to 1932 A.D., the year in the end-time. Now, we must learn what Egypt figures in this connection; then we will have the solution to the problem. We will first look at prophecy from the standpoint of Ezekiel's day. There are 4 chapters devoted to Egypt's downfall as judged by Jehovah; hence, we realize the figurative meaning is of great importance.

The king of Egypt, who is addressed by the Prophet, was Pharaoh-Hophra (in Greek his name is APRIES). His grandfather was Pharaoh-Necho, who defeated the good king Josiah at Megiddo [2Ch.35:20-27]. This has typical significance; for Megiddo is the place where the last great battle of the ages is scheduled to be fought. It was from Pharaoh-Hophra that Zedekiah expected help in the time of the besiegement of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. In its beginning, they were successful. The Chaldean army was forced to retire [Jer.35:5-7]. But, the relief was only temporary. Later, they returned and the Egyptian army evacuated the field. Jeremiah announced the doom of Pharaoh-Hophra, associating it with Zedekiah's judgment,

"Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will give Pharaoh-Hophra, King of Egypt, into the hands of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah, King of Judah, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon his enemy and that sought his life." [Jer.44:30]

The allusion to Pharaoh-Hophra, as "**the great dragon that lieth in the midst of her rivers**," is most suggestive. He boasted in his pride and arrogance of the River Nile, which made him independent of God, saying, "**My river is mine own and I have made it myself.**" His comparison to a sea monster, which probably meant the crocodile, is not without significance. The crocodile was worshipped by the Egyptians and symbolized power and pride. The word **Dragon** also reminds us of Satan who is pointed out to us 12 times in the book of Revelation as "**the dragon.**" In our study of Tyrus, we noted the typical meaning of the King. In their independence of God, the world worships the devil, here symbolized by these kings.

Satan was the master behind the scene, and now we see him as the mighty one of Egypt. Pharaoh-Hophra, as well as all other kings, are simply puppets in his hands...he controls them all. The dragon was worshipped in many heathen lands and is today the emblem of China. And, the same spirit is in all of them—the spirit of pride, self-will, and conquest. We saw it in the King of Tyrus vaunting himself in self-exultation and blasphemy; and here the King of Egypt is characterized by the same spirit of pride and exultation. His words betray him. He had made the river for himself. Sure he had. "Himself" was his god. He thus defied and denied God and His power. Hence, the Prophet announces the judgment which will not only hit him, but all those other inhabitants of the land who are linked up with him, as well as all those who depend upon him for help.

The description of the impending doom is marvelous and striking in its language. It is the voice of God,

"I will put hooks in thy jaws and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick to thy scales. And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers. Thou shalt fall upon the open fields. Thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered. I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of heaven. And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel." [Eze.29:4-6]

The sin of Israel is also mentioned. They turned to Egypt for help, to the very land and people that oppressed their fathers; and they found disappointment and sorrow. Egypt broke as a staff under the load and made them to suffer: **"Rent their shoulder and made all their loins to be at a stand"** [Eze.29:7]. It was a turning to the flesh for help instead of to God, which invariably brought hurt and shame.

Then the explanation of the prophecy follows; and, we see again that the desolations of Egypt were not without a cause. Their independence of God brought His judgment upon them. Their river and their pride in it were a constant challenge to the Lord; hence, He judged the wicked people and all those allied with them. The fish of the river, which were caught in the scales of the dragon, refer to all the inhabitants of the land around Egypt that were confederate with her. They too came under the judgment rod of Jehovah,

"Behold, therefore I am against thee and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass thru it, nor foot of beast thru it; neither shall it be inhabited forty years." [Eze.29:10-11]

According to secular history (Herodotus), the above prophecy was not fulfilled. Critics insist that Egypt did not pass through the 40-year desolation, and have a restoration later, which is also predicted here [Eze.29:13-16]. They claim that Amasis, the successor of Hophra, followed him upon the throne immediately and had a most flourishing and prosperous reign. But when we study Ezekiel's prophecy carefully, we learn that he did not predict the destruction of Egypt during the reign of Pharaoh-Hophra. His prophecy, relating to Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of the land was given at the same time; but, it was not to take place until "the **seven and twentieth year**" of Ezekiel's exile [Eze.29:17], which was 17 years after the announced doom of Pharaoh-Hophra and Egypt. The Prophet does not state that Pharaoh-Hophra shall be slain by Nebuchadnezzar, nor does Jeremiah predict this either. He simply states the fact that Jehovah says He will give Pharaoh-Hophra into the hands of those that seek his life [Jer.44:30]. The Egyptians themselves slew him, having revolted and set up Amasis as king.

The 40 years of desolations, during which the Egyptians are said to be dispersed in other countries, are difficult to locate. It appears that this prediction has not been fulfilled; for the reason that, in its widest significance, it is still future. It will come to pass when Israel is again a nation in their land. Egypt here is typical as are all these nations and all these happenings. Yet, Egypt had such a period of 40 years of devastation, though the exact history may not be known. History does not prove prophecy correct, but the reverse; prophecy proves history true. After Egypt's judgment by Jehovah, that proud, boastful country declined steadily and the Word of God was fulfilled until it

became the basest of kingdoms. It began its downward course after Nebuchadnezzar's victory when he was given the land for his labor.

"And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald and every shoulder was peeled; yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus for the service that he had rendered. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God. Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He shall take her multitude and take her spoil and take her prey, and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God."
[Eze.29:17-20]

We intimated previously that the above prophecy was dated 17 years after the general predicted judgment of Egypt. It is a matter of history mentioned by Josephus, the Jewish historian, that the above event happened in the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar. Nothing is said in this place of desolation, or abasement, for years; hence, critics may imagine that Ezekiel was mistaken in his former prophecy. But he was not the aggressor in the predictions. He was only the voice or the writer, as the case might be. Jehovah was the Inspirer, the Author of the prophecy and He is never mistaken...He does what He says. If we do not understand the writings, or there appears some contradiction, it is because we are dull or there is more in the message than is on the surface. More in the message is the case here. Nebuchadnezzar is a typical character, as well as Egypt, and the taking of the country is typical also. We will see more of this later.

THE JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT [EZE.30]

"The Word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Howl ye, woe worth the day! (or as the Revised Version gives it: "Wail ye! Alas, for the day!) For the day is near, a cloudy day. It shall be the time of the heathen. And the sword shall come upon Egypt and great pain shall be in Ethiopia when the slain shall fall in Egypt and they shall take away her multitude and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia and Libya and Lydia and all the mingled people and Chub and the men, or horde of the land that are in league, shall fall with them by the sword." [Eze.30:1-5]

Chapter 30 appears, in a sense, to be a repetition of Chapter 29; but it is not so. Here we are given a prophecy concerning **ALL THE NATIONS THAT WERE IN A LEAGUE WITH EGYPT**. It is a marvelous, far-reaching prophecy that is thrilling in its scope and meaning. We have the Great **DAY OF THE LORD** figured. Although Egypt and the other nations mentioned may have felt something of the poured out wrath of God; but, it was only an infinitesimal part of what is coming later in the Day of the Lord. All former judgments of nations which sinned against the Lord and His people are simply a prophetic forecast of the **DAY OF THE LORD**. All that we read here is of marvelous import when seen in its figurative setting as relating to that time.

In Egypt, and the nations confederate with her, we have the type of the Roman Empire in its revival which is due shortly. The date in Chapter 30 gives us the year when it shall be upon the scene: *"And it came to pass in the*

eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying... [Eze.30:20]. According to the time measurements given before, the answer to that 11th year of Ezekiel's captivity brings us to the year 1933. Hence, it is then that we may expect the great European confederacy of nations to be an actuality. The United States of Europe will no doubt be its name; but it will smell no sweeter to Jehovah because of this. The League of Nations will be a usurpation of Christ's throne and the curse of God will rest upon it.

Listen to these weighty words. The very language precludes the idea that they refer to that literal land of Egypt which cannot mobilize an ordinary army, much less a multitude of warriors.

"Thus saith the Lord; they also that uphold Egypt shall fall, and the pride of her power shall fall...I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land and they shall draw the sword against Egypt and fill the land with the slain. I will make the rivers dry and sell the land into the hand of the wicked." [Eze.30:6-12]

These predictions are on the way to fulfillment even as we write. Nebuchadnezzar represents Christ in great respect, in the writings of Ezekiel and Jeremiah. God gave him absolute dominion over all nations. It was woe to that people who did not own his scepter and yield to him. Even Jehovah's own people, the Jews, were given into his hand for the specified time, and Zedekiah was severely punished because he refused allegiance to him. How much more will God demand allegiance from nations, when Christ's day has come. But He will have to fight for His dominion even as did Nebuchadnezzar. The "**terrible ones**" will be with Him in that day. No doubt the "**terrible ones**" speak of all the mighty legions of the redeemed, the armies of heaven, that will accompany Him in battle array [Rev.19]. The rivers that will be made dry are no doubt figures of all religious systems that will fail; for the wicked, the Antichrist, will have all things in control until Christ makes His appearance.

The confederacy of the nations, as ruled over by separate kings, will not continue more than 3½ years. The Lord will "**sell the land into the hand of the wicked.**" One man, the Antichrist, will get absolute control of those united states. He will assume the authority of a despot and then it is woe to the world. He will rule with the rod of wickedness. He will not only command obedience and allegiance, but also worship. He will set himself up as God and demand worship [2Th.2:2]. It will be the usurpation of Christ's Kingdom and rule. Christ will be seated at that time on His throne in the heavens; for it will be "**the Day of the Lord**" when the counterfeit kingdom will be set up in opposition on the earth. Two kings insisting on holding the scepter over the earth at the same time cannot both continue. One will surely fall before the other. The stronger will prevail. Hence, in this case...war will begin.

The Lord on the throne above will pour out His wrath upon the earth. Judgments of every description will be sent upon an unrepentant, Christ-rejecting world. Then will ensue the most dire destructive period of all time. The predictions of the prophets are unanimous as to the terribleness of "**the Day of the Lord**" (read Isa.2:10-22; Isa.3:6-13; Joe.1:15; Joe.2:1; Joe.3:14;

Amo.5:18-20; Oba.1:15; Zep.1:7, 14; Zec.14:14; and Mal.4:5). That period is a marked epoch in Scripture. It is pointed out as the most spectacular, miraculous, and marvelous of all epochs of time. It includes all that period, when the fight is on for the kingdom on earth and culminates with the visible appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the heavens.

That period is mentioned in the New Testament in 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:2, and 2 Peter 3:10. It will end “**man’s day**,” when Satan has really ruled the world, and it will usher in the glad Millennial day when a King shall reign in righteousness and blessings shall be upon the earth. No false religions will then deceive and mock the unwary. See also Revelation.

Listen to the words of the destruction that is to fall upon all that is not of God,

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No. And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily. The young men of Aven and of Pibeseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.” [Eze.30:13-18].

THE VICTORY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR

“And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it to make it strong to hold the sword...And I will strengthen the arm of the king of Babylon and I will put my sword in his hand...and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt.” [Eze.30:20-26]

Previously, we noted the significance of the date marked out, “**the eleventh year**,” as also the fact of the typical setting of Nebuchadnezzar. The nations of the earth, figured by Egypt and those allied with her, are all to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ [Rev.11:15]. Their power will be broken down. No bandage will suffice to make it strong again to hold the sword. No surgeon will be able to bind up the broken bones. It will be a break beyond remedy or skill. Jeremiah also announced this overthrow of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar [Jer.46:13-17], referring also to the **DAY OF THE LORD** when Christ will take possession of the purchased inheritance. We are surely nearing the time of the fulfillment of these prophecies when it can be so clearly seen that they refer to coming events, not past ones.

THE RENOWN OF EGYPT AND ITS FALL [EZE.31]

“And it came to pass in the eleventh year in the third month in the first day of the month that the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man speak unto

*Pharaoh, king of Egypt and to his multitude, Whom art thou like in thy greatness?
Behold the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches and a shadowing
shroud and of a high stature and his top was among the high branches.”*
[Eze.31:1-3]

We have the 11th year of Ezekiel's captivity mentioned again; but the prediction here is 2 months later. In its typical import, it refers to the rising of the Roman Empire. The answer to 587 B.C., the 11th year, is 1933 A.D. which is exactly 19 years from the beginning of World War I. It tallies with the interim between the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles (606 B.C.) and the consummation (587 B.C.). There are 4 chapters devoted to Egypt and Pharaoh which is most significant; proving its typical character. Egypt was not such a great empire as that so much space would be allotted to her. Four is the world number; hence, these chapters give us a 4-fold portrayal of the world powers and their downfall in the last days. The Prophet is told to ask a question of Pharaoh and his multitude: ***“Whom art thou like in thy greatness?”*** Then there follows a superb description of the Assyrian power which was no longer in existence when Ezekiel wrote, but is used as a warning to Egypt. Pharaoh was to take notice of the fact, that regardless of all the Assyrian's greatness he perished at the Word of the Lord. The same fate awaits all who dare trifle with Jehovah, or lift up themselves against Him.

Chapter 31 may be divided into 3 parts which make its understanding easier:

- 1st part, Verses 1-9; the eminence of the Assyrian.
- 2nd part, Verses 10-14; The fall of the kingdom.
- 3rd part, Verses 15-18: The result of her fall.

The Assyrian is compared to ***“the Cedar in Lebanon,”*** a majestic figure of beauty and grandeur. Its height and wide-spreading branches, as well as its superior place among the trees of the wood, make it a fitting symbol of that once far-reaching, powerful dynasty. The Cedar is often employed in Scripture as the type of the righteous and of Israel: ***“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree. He shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon”*** [Psa.92:12]. Also, ***“His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon”*** [Hos.14:6]. But Ezekiel compares human might and national greatness to the Cedar as boastful, arrogant, and proud; therefore, doomed to abasement. As Isaiah declares,

“For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lifted up, and he shall be brought low. And upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up and upon all the oaks of Bashan.” [Isa.2:13]

Ezekiel's description of the Assyrian kingdom has much in common with the language of Daniel relative to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. He saw a great tree and all the fowls of heaven dwelt in its branches [Dan.4:12]. Also we read, in our Lord's discourse of the mysteries of heaven, of a tree in which ***“all the birds of the air came and lodged in the branches”*** [Mat.13:32]. The fowls refer to the different people who were associated with Assyria, Egypt, and the King of Babylon, while these powers were at the zenith of their renown. In the mustard-tree parable, the birds represent the unclean masses of the people, the professors of religion with all these different evil doctrines, that find shelter

in the folds of Christendom. The lesson is: God will overthrow all even as He did the Assyrian. He puts before the people of the world one of the most eminent, importantly majestic, national powers and commands all to note its abasement because of pride. They are to learn from the example, the pattern that ***“pride goeth before destruction”*** [Pro.16:18]. There is one sure principle with God in every age: ***“He that exalteth himself shall be abased, or humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”*** [Luk.18:14].

THE TYPICAL APPLICATION

In the above portrayal of the majestic Cedar sketched for us by the Master Hand of Jehovah, we have the figure of the Roman Empire in its first phase. The Assyrian is used to depict its former greatness even as Egypt symbolizes its last phase. The Lord would show the powers of the world that though they spread themselves as the Cedar and fill the earth, as it were, with their imperial rule and autocratic power, yet they will come down. All the peoples of the world may consolidate, confederate, conglomerate, and consummate their plans to hold the scepter on the earth; yet, Jehovah declares He will blow on all their vaunted greatness and down their kingdom will fall.

As judgment fell upon the Roman Empire that appeared invulnerable, likewise will it fall upon its revival of the end. The tree may shoot up its great branches high above all the other trees, the waters (religious sects in Christendom) may make him great, and the deep (all power of hell) may set him on high; but, God will cut him down.

He tells us of the vast domain of the kingdom, the united power of all nations and all religions, backed up by the power of Satan besides, that we may realize the futility of daring to lift up ourselves against the Sovereign of the universe. He declares the decree to the world, that He has ***“set His Son upon His holy hill of Zion”*** [Psa.2] and challenges the world powers to dare usurp His throne. They will accept the challenge and bring down upon themselves, and all their multitude, the wrath of an offended, angry God.

EGYPT OVERTHROWN AND ITS RESULTS

“Thus saith the Lord God; in the day that he went down to the grave I caused a mourning. I covered the deep for him and I restrained the floods thereof and the great waters were stayed and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made the nations to shake at the sound of the fall when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit; and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth...Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.”
[Eze.31:15-18]

We are given a glimpse of the future consternation of the nations at the defeat of the united world power. In its beginning, it will appear so powerful and invincible, so invulnerable on every side, that its total collapse will surely surprise the world. ***“All the trees of the wood fainted”***; the individual nations will be filled with terror. They will shake with fear when such an empire is brought to naught in a moment. The word **hell** is SHEOL not the lake of fire. It is the word used for the unknown regions. It is not the word for **grave**. The grave receives the bodies, but the spirit of man departs into sheol when it leaves the

body. It is into sheol it is written that, “***the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God***” [Psa.9:17]. They will there wait until 1,000 years are past, when they will come up before the Great White Throne and be judged according to their works, and go away into the lake of fire [Rev.20:11-15].

The fate of Assyria as well as Egypt was a surprise and shock to the nations of their day. How much more the Roman Empire that was a terror to the world in its former times, and will be again. They will all be comforted when they see the mightiest empire of the ages, the united nations of the earth, fall when the Lord arises to terribly shake the earth. Pharaoh, typical of the emperor (the Antichrist and all his multitude), will join the ranks of the defeated and despoiled in the lower parts of the earth. Oh, what a fall! Oh, what an end to all human greatness, glory, and prosperity! The other great ones that have been in sheol for centuries will be glad to see these great ones of the earth come down and join their ranks. The language here proves that the spirits of the departed are not in an unconscious state; but are aware of what has come to pass.

LAMENTATION OVER PHARAOH [EZE.32]

“And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man take up a lamentation for Pharaoh, king of Egypt and say unto him, Thou art like a young lion of the nations and thou art as a whale in the seas and thou camest forth with thy rivers and troubledst the waters with thy feet and fouledst their rivers. Thus saith the Lord God, I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people and they shall bring thee up in my net. I will leave thee upon the land. I will cast thee forth upon the open field and I will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee and I will fill the beasts of the earth with thee.” [Eze.32:1-2]

This final message to Pharaoh, which ends this section, was given to the Prophet in the 12th year of his captivity (586 B.C.), to which 1934 A.D. answers. It came to him in the 12th month, hence, was almost 2 years after the previous prophecy which was given him in the 11th year, but in the 3rd month, 1½ years after the fall of Jerusalem. It is written in the form of a lamentation and may be divided into 3 parts:

1. The Prophet is commanded to wail for Pharaoh.
2. He is to announce another judgment against him.
3. He is to wail again; but this last time the lamentation is for the multitude of Egypt that go down to sheol. It is a striking allegory and vividly portrays the feelings of astonishment and awe of the inhabitants who have already descended therein.

Pharaoh is personally addressed in this last prophecy of him. He figures the Antichrist, the great one of the nations. We are assured that there has never been such a man of power upon the scene of the world, with the exception of Christ, who compares with this superman, the super-6 of the nations.

He is named like “***a young lion of the nations and ... as a whale in the seas.***” The Revised Version says, “*Monster in the seas,*” but neither one is the correct

translation. It is the same word in Hebrew that is rendered **crocodile** (**dragon** in the margin) in Ezekiel 29:3. Pharaoh had troubled and stirred up the evil in the people, even as the crocodile the waters in which he moves, is the meaning here; and yet the analogy is more striking still when we see the crocodile, or dragon, as referring to Satan. He is the power energizing all the Pharaoh's in the past and will be especially the filling and moving power of the typical Pharaoh of the future. But the typical Pharaoh of the future will have an end regardless of his might. His evil course will be stopped. The Prophet announces his doom:

"Thus saith the Lord God, I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people and they shall bring thee up in my net. I will leave thee upon the land. I will cast thee forth upon the open field and I will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee and I will fill the beasts of the earth with thee."
[Eze.32:3-4]

A net will be spread over him by a company of many people who will forcibly take him out of his kingdom, even as the crocodile was forced out of the water by the power of man. Pharaoh was to be cast upon the open field and all the fowls of heaven and all the beasts of the earth were to be called to feed upon him. The whole land was to be watered, as it were, with the blood of the monster of the deep.

Then there follows a symbolical description of the dreadful earth-signs which will accompany the judgment of the Antichrist and the multitude of people that are with him in that hour of dire judgment. It is the notable **DAY OF THE LORD** which is here so vividly portrayed; for the literal country of Egypt is only a symbol of the world viewed here as lying in the lap of the wicked one. The literal darkening of the sun and moon and stars are also figurative of the spiritual darkness that will envelope all people.

- Joel tells us of that same dark day when Jehovah shall show wonders in heaven and in the earth, "***blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before that great and terrible day of the Lord shall come***" [Joe.2:30-31].
- The Lord refers to that dark day when He tells us "***The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven and the power of heaven shall be shaken***" [Mat.24:29].
- Peter also tells us of that notable **DAY OF THE LORD**, quoting Joel [Act.2:19-20].

God is surely going to deal roughly with this wicked world. Grace has been shown for almost 2 millenniums but the people have not profited; rather, they have become worse and worse in their impenitence. The nations, the final rulers of the Times of the Gentiles in their God-defying and blasphemous assumption of authority, are laying up for themselves a harvest of woe which will be poured out upon them to the uttermost. The manner of His dealing with Egypt is nothing compared to the way that He intends to deal with the world.

His overthrow of Pharaoh and His hosts in the Red Sea are typical of the overthrow of the Antichrist and His armies when they seek to despoil and destroy the children of Israel in Palestine. Judgment will come to pass just as surely as it has been written. There is no more frequent prophecy in Scripture. More space has been given to that period of judgment than any other. It is a most significant, important era. It marks a transition time and signals the beginning of the age of the ages (as seen in **Isa.19:17-18**, **Amo.8:9**, **Joe.3:15**, and **Rev.19:17-18**). That notable **DAY OF THE LORD**, when He will debase all the high things of the world and defeat Satan, the god of this little earth ball, is rapidly approaching. We almost can hear even now the rumblings and thunderings of that terrible time.

THE SWORD OF THE MIGHTY

"For thus saith the Lord God; The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee. By the sword of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, the terrible of the nations, all of them and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed. I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters, neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them. Then will I make their waters deep and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord God...Then shall they know that I am the Lord."
[Eze.32:11-16]

The sword of the Lord which was to fall upon Egypt was Nebuchadnezzar [Eze.29-30]; but, we have also seen that he was only a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will appear and fight against the confederated nations of the world at the very beginning of His Day... the **DAY OF THE LORD**. He must put down all rule, authority, and power at the outset of His triumphant career that men may realize He is sovereign and will brook no interference nor rival. He will manifest His might that the nations may fear. The end will come for all that is of man; his works will all be burned up. The sword of the mighty God will not be sheathed until the world has been conquered.

The prophets are unanimous in their report of the victorious march of the King of kings. He has waited long to show Himself, brooked insult, rebellion, and anarchy against His authority; but, when once He is risen up there will be no more of that in the people that are left. The stone which Daniel interprets for us as the King of heaven will fall upon that united empire and give it one destructive blow...all its boasted pomp and glory will pass away. The kingdoms of this world will all be overthrown and Christ's Kingdom will be set up. Then shall the world know that God is God, His King is King, and His Word shall all be fulfilled. Then the latter part of this prophecy will come to pass.

THE FUNERAL MARCH TO SHEOL

"It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth day of the month that the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt and cast them down, even her and the daughters of the famous nations unto the nether parts of the earth with them that go down unto the pit. Whom dost thou pass in beauty? Go down and be laid with the uncircumcised. They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword...Asshur is there and all her company...all of them slain...There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of the

uncircumcised slain by the sword. There is Meshech, Tubal and all her multitude. Her graves are round about him, all of them slain...though they caused their terror in the land of the living. There is Edom, her kings and all her princes which with their might are laid by them that were slain by the sword...There be the princes of the north, all of them and all the Zidonians which are going down with the slain. With their terror they are ashamed of their might and they lie uncircumcised with them that are slain by the sword and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit. Pharaoh shall see them and shall be comforted over all his multitude, even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord God.” [Eze.32:17-32]

This 3rd part of the prophecy of Chapter 32 came to the Prophet in the 12th year, but 2 weeks later than the former message. He was made to utter these solemn and impressive words over the multitude of Egypt and all the nations joined to her, who had all been overthrown. We are here given a glimpse into the unseen regions, the lowest hell, and there the nations are viewed lying, helpless and undone, stripped of all their pride and pomp. Their bodies are in the pit, the grave, and their souls in sheol. The irony of the solemn message is unsurpassed. **“Whom dost thou surpass in beauty?”** is asked. **“Go down proud king with thy multitude and find thy place with the uncircumcised,”** the heathen, in other words. What did he find when he came there? Asshur (or Assyria) is named first. She was **“as terror in the land of the living”** but all her power has vanished. Elam, Meshech, and Tubal are named as being there. Edom and the Zidonians, proud people of the land, are mentioned as being in existence. Once they were great nations, but now they lie with the uncircumcised in weakness and disgrace, abased to the uttermost.

In Ezekiel 31:16, we noticed the departed nations are quoted as being comforted at the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, while in the present prophecy the tables are turned. Pharaoh is apparently comforted when he views all the former great nations in the same sad plight as himself. It is as though the saying is true with them all, “Misery loves company.” The wicked often say, when admonished about their destination on the road to hell, “Well, I’ll have plenty of company?” Yes, it is true; there will be much people there. The marvel of the message is that they are conscious.

The Prophet Isaiah gives us a similar account of the nations in sheol who are conscious. He is describing the King of Babylon’s descent into the lower regions and the consternation it provokes,

“Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming. It stirreth up the dead for thee, all the chieftains of the earth. It has raised up from their thrones all the king of the nations. All they shall speak and say to thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomps are brought down to the grave the noise of thy viols. The worm is spread under thee and the worms over thee.” [Isa.14:9-11]

These are solemn facts, proving the conscious and eternal existence of man. Somewhere he lives on and on, forever.

But while Ezekiel is prophesying about the sad fall of the multitude of Egypt, he is again speaking symbolically...this is a prediction of the future. There is nothing in history that tells us of any wholesale wiping out of Pharaoh and his hosts as well as other nations leagued with him. We are given a final view of

the end of the multitude of nations who will come up against Jerusalem and endeavor to take possession of the city of the great King. There will be a battle in the valley of Megiddo, the greatest battle that has ever been fought. It will make all other conflicts seem as child's play. All the great battles of the past that we find recorded in Scripture point to that final one. It will really be a conflict between the devil and Christ. Satan will be making his last effort to overthrow the King of kings and Lord of lords. He will put up a great fight. Armies of all nations will be gathered together. God challenges them to come up. He dares all the power of the world united with all the power of Satan to defeat His Son and pull Him off His throne. Oh, what a day of horrors is before the poor deluded world. All the prophets have warned of it. Habakkuk, in his day felt the terror that the wrath of the outraged God inspired when he had a vision of His coming down from His throne, angry with the nations. He prayed to rest in that day. Listen to his words,

"When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones and I trembled in myself that I might rest in the day of trouble. When He cometh up unto the people He will invade them with His troops." [Hab.3:16]

No language is able to convey what that **DAY OF THE LORD** will signify to this doomed world. Men will not believe us when we tell of the judgments. The ministers are declaring man is improving. All that he does is eulogized. He is set up as God. The portrait the devil sketches for him and his greatness is beautiful and flatters him. He refuses to heed the one the Lord has painted of him and his doings in His Word. He is enamored of himself and is blind and deaf to all the true messengers can say. Satan hath truly blinded the minds of them that believe not. They are apparently secure in their self-will and independence of God and more blasphemous in their presumption with every passing year.

In this very month and year, January 1930, there is a great Naval Meet of national leaders in London, seeking a way to the peace of the world. It is a most momentous time in the history of all men. Nations do not know what they are doing by their concentrated efforts to avoid war, on the one hand, and their preparation for it, on the other. But the devil knows. He is back of these peace measures, endeavoring to make void the Word of God; for the Book declares in no uncertain way that there shall be war. Jeremiah is one of the loud speakers on the subject, and his descriptions of the present condition in the world is superb and realistic. He announces the fact of war, saying that "***the nations shall drink of the wine cup of the fury of the Lord,***" regardless of whether they desire to, or not. In fact, the inference is that some may desire to escape the sword; but they cannot do so. Jeremiah affirms that...

- they "***shall certainly drink***" [Jer.25:28].
- "***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***" [Jer.25:33].

This has never been fulfilled, though many have sought to make it fit into the war of 1914-1918; but it does not fit. Yet, if the allied nations had known the day and the hour dispensationally, and had yielded up the sovereignty of the world to the Lord Jesus Christ; if they had humbled themselves before Him

and acknowledged that they had come short, and then called for God's Anointed to take His place at the Head of nations, the next war would be averted. The Lord gave them the opportunity to surrender the scepter; but they refused to repent and yield to God's ultimatum; hence, the next war is His judgment upon the world for rejecting Christ. Religiously and nationally, the world is saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Therefore, judgment is inevitable.

THE END IS AT HAND
WE HEAR OF WARS IN COUNTRIES FAR,
ORDAINED OF HEAVEN. SET NOT A BAR
OF PRAY'R AGAINST THE WILL OF GOD.
HIS PURPOSES ARE WROUGHT ON ANGRY SOD.
THE TRUTH MUST EVER STAND.

THE END IS AT HAND.
THE ANTICHRIST MAY SOON ARISE—
A MAN OF PEACE—IN BLIND DISGUISE,
A COVENANT WITH JACOB MAKE,
THE NATIONS WIN, A TREATY QUICKLY BREAK:
THE GAZE OF ALL COMMAND.

A. S. COPLECY

EZEKIEL'S DATES REVIEWED

We close this significant 1st Division of Ezekiel's prophecy by showing the relation between his 10 dates and certain important dates clustering around the 2nd Advent of Christ. Of necessity, we must observe 2 dates proper to his career which lead up to it.

2,520 years are the duration of the Time of the Gentiles. The enthronement of Nebuchadnezzar marked the beginning of those 2,520 years. But since there are 4 dates relating to the beginning of his dominion, prophetic students disagree as to the exact year of that beginning. A careful study of the word shows that Nebuchadnezzar's dominion over the Jews had a graduated commencement of 19 years, embracing the 4 dates just intimated. Hence, the full inauguration of "*the times of the Gentiles*" [Luk.21:24] covers 19 years.

The 70 year's captivity of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar occurred in 4 relays (or deportations) and covers the same 19 years. Those 70 years ended in a similar manner. From the time that Ezra first went up to Jerusalem until the Jews were entirely free and the house of the Lord was finished, was about 19 years (see **Ezr.1-6**). Likewise, we should expect a corresponding gradation in their deliverance at the end. If the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles covered a period of 19 years; why shall not their closing cover a similar period? Indeed, this is just what is taking place, which explains the seeming delay of their end, and of the coming of the **DAY OF THE LORD**. As the captivity of the Jews was in 4 distinct deportations of increasing severity; so their release will be in 4 stages of increasing liberty. For every one of the dates relating to Nebuchadnezzar's dealings with the Jews, a corresponding date clusters about the 2nd Advent of Christ. The latter date answers to the former

and complements it, but in reverse order. Note the following dates at both ends of the Gentile times and the happenings under each.

1ST (606 B.C.) Nebuchadnezzar began to reign and laid his **1st siege** against Jerusalem. Jehoiakim surrendered to him [2Ki.24:1]. It marked the beginning of the first 19 years of Gentile dominion and of the 70 years of Jewish captivity. Daniel was taken captive [Dan.1:1]; 1914 A.D. answers to that date, measuring 2,520 years from it. This is marked by the opening of World War I, Jehovah's first step toward freeing His ancient people. The Lord was due to begin His reign (see Rev.10:1-6). The Times of the Gentiles began to close.

2ND (603 B.C.) Jehoiakim rebelled **AGAINST** Nebuchadnezzar. The **2nd siege** was laid against Jerusalem [2Ki.24:1-3]. It was much severer than the first, and by the direct commandment of the Lord; 1917 A.D. answers to that date. On Palm Sunday, the Jews met in New York to appoint a "congress" to regain possession of Palestine...5 days later, President Wilson declared war on Germany. On Good Friday, the Jewish and Christian calendars coincided, being the 1st day of the Jewish Passover, the 14th day of the month. Both of these set times commemorate Christ's death—one the type, the other the fulfillment. On November 2, 1917, General Allenby captured Jerusalem from the Turks. That date was the Feast of Lights (dedication). The release of the Jews was the Divine Purpose of that war, which soon after suddenly closed.

3RD (598 B.C.) This marked Nebuchadnezzar's **3rd seige** against the Holy City [2Ki.24:6-13, 17]. Jehoiakim died. Jehoiachin (called also Coniah [Jer.22:24]) reigned 3 months and was taken captive. Zedekiah was put on Judah's throne, but later rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar [2Ch.36:13]. That year was a very important date; for then Ezekiel was carried captive to Babylon (compare Eze.1:2 with 33:21 and 40:1). The value of that year is expressed by the fact that in 2 of these citations, Ezekiel calls it "**the year of our captivity**," and in both of them mentions the smiting of the city Jerusalem. This is very significant, especially when we note the happenings which answer thereto: 2,520 years later, namely 1922 A.D. In 1922, the British Mandate over Palestine was officially proclaimed, which recognized the rights of the Jewish people to return to Palestine and reconstruct their national home there. Sir Herbert Samuel was appointed First High Commissioner of Palestine, September 11, 1922. That presaged the reversal of the smiting and treading down of Jerusalem. If Ezekiel were here today, he would shout, "That was the year of our official freedom!"

4TH (593 B.C.) Ezekiel began to prophecy¹. God gave him a vision of the closing days of this age, the purposes of God being fulfilled and His will being done. 2,520 years from that year brings us to 1927 A.D., a momentous year. A special awakening among the Jews marks this year. That year, we began a special study of this book which has disclosed to us these marvelous things.

¹ See our notes in this study book on Ezekiel 1 (compare Eze.1:2 with 2Ki.24:10-12).

5TH (592 B.C.), EZE.8-19 ²Ezekiel addressed the Jewish elders. Ezekiel 10-11 give a vision of the glory departing by degrees from Jerusalem; 1928 A.D. answers to that date. Visions of the return of the glory are now appearing by degrees. God is preparing them to receive the glory.

6TH (591 B.C.), EZE.20-23 ³Again, the elders appeared before Ezekiel to presumably ask him concerning God's will; but God refused to be inquired of by them. 1929 A.D. answers to that year in which the Jews took steps to form a Sanhedrin of 70 men. One of its first acts was to review the life and trial of Jesus Christ, as if to inquire of Jehovah in that manner. As in the beginning, the Lord will not reveal Himself to them but to the common people. They will receive Him gladly.

7TH (589 B.C.), EZE.24-25 ⁴That was a very pronounced date. Nebuchadnezzar made his **4th and final siege** against Jerusalem [2Ki.25]. God said, "***The king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day,***" that is, the 10th day of the 10th month of the year 589 B.C. The captivity of the Jews was fully settled. 1931 A.D. answers thereto. We expect it to be a very eventful year. We may look for the nations to complete their negotiations concerning the World Empire that year, and prepare to "***set themselves*** (having taken counsel together), ***against the Lord and against his anointed***" [Psa.2:2]. May we not expect also that the Lord will indicate somehow that He has set Himself against them and in defense of the Jews? Let us watch prayerfully His movings among men and His stately steppings in the Word.

8TH (588 B.C.), EZE.29-30 ⁵Egypt is judged. Especially observe that in that year, God bid the Prophet to say, "***In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth,***" and that "***the day is near, even the day of the Lord.***" Now, the corresponding date at this end is 1932 A.D. Will not the saints that year, or at least the Jews whom Ezekiel represents, have some very special and deep conviction or revelation of Christ's soon appearing? Read what was revealed to Anna and Simeon in Luke 2. Ezekiel 29:17 must be considered later. Who dare say, that the rapture of the 1st Rank may not occur that year? "***Let us watch and be sober***" [1Th.5:6].

9TH (587 B.C.), EZE.26, 28, 31 ⁶Perhaps none of the Prophet's dates is more vital than this one. He records the judgment of Tyrus and the prince of Tyrus and Assyria. The indescribable beauty and unique wisdom of Lucifer are portrayed under that date. Is that not significant, seeing that in about 2,520 years from that date, Michael and his angels will engage in battle against Lucifer (the great dragon) and hurl

² See our notes in this study book on **Visions Concerning Jerusalem—Eze.8-11.**

³ See our notes in this study book from **Outline of Eze.20 to Parable of the Boiling Pot—Eze.24.**

⁴ See our notes in this study book from **Parable of the Boiling Pot—Eze.24 to Prophecy Concerning Tyrus—Eze.26.**

⁵ See our notes in this study book from **Prophecies Against Egypt—Eze.29 to The Victory of Nebuchadnezzar.**

⁶ See our notes in this study book for Eze.26, 28, and 31.

him to the earth? [Rev.12]. More and more we marvel at the exact time of Ezekiel's utterances. They are profoundly full of meaning. The Jews' captivity by Nebuchadnezzar was consummated that year. The siege, which began in the 10th month of the year 589 B.C., continued to the 5th month of 587 B.C., or 19 months. The city was broken up, the walls were broken down, and the house of the Lord and the other houses were burned [Jer.39:1, Jer.52:4-14].

1932 A.D. is the meaningful date that answers to 587 B.C. What shall we say? The year 587 B.C. climaxed the beginning of Gentile dominion over the Jews, or the inauguration of the Times of the Gentiles, which cover a period of 2,520 years. Those introductory days extended from 606 B.C. to 587 B.C., that is, 19 years, or from Nebuchadnezzar's enthronement to the burning of Jerusalem. For 19 years Israel was going down and being conquered. For 19 years Gentile dominion was coming up and into full authority. Now look at the reversal. Already 16 years of the end time have sped by and fled; only 3 more remain. For 16 years, the Jews have been coming up and in, while the Gentiles have been preparing themselves, by their unbelief and rebellion, to be put out. Thank God! The Times of the Gentiles are due to end in about 1933, and Jesus Christ is due to reign as absolute Monarch that year. And, in that year the nations will quite likely proclaim "**peace and safety**" [1Th.5:3]. All national dominion from that time on will be in absolute usurpation and rebellion. The overcoming saints should hope to be caught away with Jesus before the year 1933. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

10TH (586 B.C.), EZE.32 ⁷Judgment of Pharaoh and of different countries is recorded; 1934 A.D. answers to that date. The world may expect war [Rev.8]. The "**peace and safety**" proclamation will no doubt be followed by "**sudden destruction**" [Rev.9, 1Th.5:3]. The people will be getting ready rapidly for the devilish reign of Antichrist, which will be due to begin in 1936, if our figures are correct. Oh, what a dark day is at the door.

11TH (573 B.C.), EZE.40 The Prophet measures Jerusalem; 1947 A.D. is the counterpart thereof. The New Jerusalem on earth will be seen as complete and glorious. Jehovah declares, saying,

"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."
[Isa.65:19]

"And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." [Isa.66:23]

12TH (571 B.C.) Consult Ezekiel 29:17; the year 1949 A.D. will answer to it. Prosperity will not only be good, but it will reign. There will be unlimited plenty on every hand [Eze.29:21]. "**And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine and the hills shall flow with milk,**

⁷ See our notes in this study book for Eze.32.

and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord and shall water the valley of Shittim [Joe.3:18]. Glory to God for the hope!

Ezekiel 32 ends the 1st Division of the book of Ezekiel. It also marks the last of his predictions of judgment against Israel; for at that date the fall of Jerusalem was accomplished. According to the typical application, the restoration of the nation of destiny (Israel) is due; and this is what we have in the 2nd Division. It is almost entirely concerned with the nation of Israel, their city, their temple, and their land.

MOTORING TO GLORY

OUT OF THE HEAT OF THE CITY STREET,
OUT OF ITS DEFILING AIR,
WE'LL MOUNT AND SOAR TO THE HEAVENLY SHORE
IN OUR AIRPLANE NEW AND FAIR,
TO THE LAND OF DAY WHERE THE SAINTS ARE GAY,
IN THAT PEACEFUL, PURE ABODE.
FREE FROM SIN AND STRIFE
BY RIVER OF LIFE,
WE WILL MOTOR ON THE GOLDEN ROAD.

OUR SPEEDING BOAT ON THE AIR WILL FLOAT,
BY THE WORD OF GOD MOST TRUE.
OUR HEART IS LIGHT WITH THE HOPE OF THE FLIGHT
WHEN WE BID THIS OLD WORLD ADIEU.
AND NO DANGER SCARE WILL MEET US UP THERE,
AS OUR PILOT CALLS, "ARISE."
AWAY FROM THE DIN,
WE'LL UPWARD SPIN,
TO THE CITY OF GOD IN THE SKIES.

THERE'LL BE NO STOP IN THAT GLORY HOP—
E'EN AS THE LIGHTNING WE'LL SPEED.
A RECORD GREAT WILL BE MARKED ON THE SLATE,
THAT NO ONE WILL EVER EXCEED.
OH, THAT GOLDEN PLANE WITH ITS WINGS OF FLAME,
WILL ASCEND AND ROAR AND WIN.
WITH ITS HOLY FREIGHT,
IT WILL REACH THE GATE
OF JEHOVAH'S CE-LESTIAL INN.

INTRODUCTION TO DIVISION 2 [EZE.33]

"Again the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon the land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts and set him for their watchman and if he seeth the sword come upon the land he blow the trumpet and warn the people, then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning and the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, but took not warning...So thou, O Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, thou shalt hear the Word at my mouth and warn them from me." [Eze.33:1-7]

Ezekiel 33 introduces us to the 2nd Division. The 1st Division opened with a similar introduction [Eze.3:16-21] where Ezekiel is commissioned to be a watchman to the house of Israel, even as here. This is most significant, more so than is on the surface. In the natural, the watchman's duty was to blow the trumpet if there was any danger impending. The different nations employed such watchmen. They were to give the alarm in case of danger or disaster. If the people did not heed their trumpet blast, the watchmen were not to blame. Israel had such sentinels; we read the description of their trumpets in Numbers 10. When they were at war with their enemies, those trumpet blowers were on duty continuously. Isaiah gives us a glimpse of those watchmen; ***"For thus saith the Lord unto me, Go, set a watchman; let him declare what he seeth."*** Also we read, ***"He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said; The morning cometh and also the night. If you will enquire, enquire ye. Return, come"*** [Isa.21:6, 11-12].

In spiritual matters, Ezekiel was to be to Israel what those watchmen were to the nations in the natural things. He was commissioned by Jehovah to warn the people of the impending judgments which were sure to follow because of their disloyalty and disobedience. Israel did not heed his words in his lifetime. Hence, the foretold destruction came upon the land and people. But that did not end his tenure of office as watchman. He is still warning Israel and the nations of judgments which are just ahead. He is sounding the alarm and his sphere of service embraces the world. His voice is as a trumpet calling to all men, warning them to repent. He is a watchman upon the walls of Jerusalem, as well as the cities of the Gentiles, revealing, by his dates, the end and the fall of the kingdoms of this world. All people everywhere are called to hear his words and believe them. They are responsible to heed the warning and awaken from their dream that all is well; otherwise, the destruction will come and find them unprepared.

"Therefore O thou Son of man speak unto the house of Israel, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say to them, As I live, saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye; turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" [Eze.33:10-11]

Jehovah's principles are unchanged. The Prophet had voiced these Divine Decrees previously [Eze.18:25-29]. To all who question His ways, He answers as He did before...He will deal with all in justice and individually. As a whole, the nation of Israel was indicted and under the curse of God because they failed under the covenant of The Law; but, the individual could turn to the Lord at any time in repentance and find forgiveness. He had no pleasure in the death of the wicked then, any more than He has today. Rather, He had pleasure in his turning and being saved. ***"When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness and do that which is lawful and right he shall live thereby"*** [Eze.33:18-19]. The people were complaining, even as before, that the way of the Lord was not equal; while it was their ways that were not just and honest. But the end had come. Words had failed to change them, warnings had no effect, judgment was inevitable. Jerusalem had fallen, even according to the Word of the Lord.

“And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity in the tenth month in the fifth day of the month that one who had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.” [Eze.33:21]

The Prophet hears the news of the fulfillment of his predictions. Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. It had happened a year and a half previously [2Ki.24:4]. But now it is announced by one who had escaped. In Ezekiel 24:29, the promise had been given to Ezekiel that when this announcement came, he would have his mouth opened and be no more dumb. *“In that day...thou shalt be a sign unto them and they shall know that I am the Lord.”* This dumbness could not signify that he did not open his mouth at all; for he prophesied to the nations [Eze.24-28]. It must have meant that he was silent toward Israel. Now that the messenger had come, he is no longer dumb but prophesies concerning them again. He says, *“The hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening (afore he that was escaped came) and had opened my mouth...And I was no more dumb”* [Eze.33:22].

He is commanded to rebuke *“them that inhabit the wastes of the land of Israel,”* probably referring to the remnant left in the land after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar’s army. They appeared to exhibit a strange self-confidence which the circumstances did not warrant. They were depending upon Abraham’s place in the favor of God, reasoning thus, *“Abraham was one and he inherited the land; but we are many. The land is given to us for an inheritance”* [Eze.33:24]. They desired the favor which Abraham enjoyed with God; but they lacked his faith and righteous character. They did not repent and turn to God, but lived on as they were in their self-willed, idolatrous ways. We have the history of this remnant and their end in 2 Kings 25:22-25. The Lord refused to allow them to possess the land in that rebellious, self-satisfied state. He inquires, *“Shall ye possess the land?”* Then, He answers His own question, *“As I live, surely they that are in the waste places shall fall by the sword and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured and they that be in the strongholds and caves shall die of the pestilence”* [Eze.33:26-27].

Methinks that, as to all these prophecies of Ezekiel, this has a further reference to the great week of Daniel 9:27. Before the land of Palestine is ready for the restoration and blessing of the Lord, it will have another devastation. The terrible battle of Armageddon will be fought upon that land of promise. The people that are going back today are not, as a whole, repentant; but are self-complacent and self-righteous. Even after the Great Tribulation, with its unmistakable judgment, there may be some folks who will still justify themselves and their doings. Those cannot inherit Palestine. Though they be hidden in the strongholds and caves of the land, the judgment of God will overtake them. The pestilence will find them there even if they escape the sword.

“Also thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you and hear what is the Word that cometh forth from the Lord.” [Eze.33:30]

This refers to the exiles. It shows the state of their hearts. There was no faith among them even though the announced predictions concerning the land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem had come to pass. They listened to the

Prophet's words without taking them home to themselves. With their lips they professed to enjoy them, no doubt speaking complimentary about them, but they continued in their evil ways. It is the same today. Religion abounds to such a degree that everybody appears to be a Christian. The people, almost without exception, belong to a church and at the same time are not changed in their hearts. They enjoy the world and its pleasures while pretending to listen to the Word of God. To a great extent, the preachers are to blame for the deplorable condition. Many of them quiet the people's fears and still the conviction of the Holy Spirit that is upon them, by telling them to go to a good show and enjoy themselves. We know the above is true for a fact. It is surely as Jehovah said to the Prophet:

- ***“They come unto thee, and they sit before thee as my people and they will hear my words: but they will not do them, for with their mouth, they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear the words, but they do them not” [Eze.33:31-32].***
- ***“Faith without works is dead” [Jam.2:20].***

What marvelous insight into the hearts these words reveal. The people admired the Prophet and were interested in his predictions; but that was as far as it went. He entertained them even as a lovely song; but they were not turned away from sin. That is an abomination to God. When men listen to His word, He desires that they repent of their sins. Merely to admire the sermon and remain in their wicked condition was an affront to Him. Many do that with our words today. They come and listen and declare that they like to hear us; but they do not show any change in their lives. Change in their lives is what counts. It is the proof that our words called forth more than admiration, which is what we desire, even as did Ezekiel. And Jehovah says to us also: ***“When this cometh to pass (lo it will come), then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them” [Eze.33:33].*** Amen! It is so. God will justify us, and our writings will be found to be the Truth when we have been caught away, if not before.

When the Lord reveals the Word that the prophets have given, He expects men to believe the revelations. They cannot, dare not, hide behind the excuse which is so prevalent at present. “Well, I do not know who is right; there are so many interpretations of the prophetic book.” We ought to be in such a spiritual condition that we would know who has the true interpretation, or at least pray until we did. Someone is right. These different interpretations and interpreters cannot all be correct; neither can they all be wrong.

SHEPHERDS, FALSE AND TRUE [EZE.34]

“And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of Man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat and ye clothe you with the wool. Ye kill them that are fed; but ye feed not the flock.” [Eze.34:1-3]

In Chapter 34, we have a description of the setting aside of the false shepherds and the setting up of the true shepherds. It is the first great prophecy after the destruction of Jerusalem. Those shepherds of Israel were the kings, the rulers of the nation. When they ruled in the fear of God, as subject to Him, the people were similarly obedient. God held the rulers responsible. Jeremiah was given a message of like character against false pastors (or shepherds) that destroyed and scattered the sheep,

"Ye have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not visited them. Behold I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord God." [Jer.23:2]

Those shepherds were called to protect the sheep, to guard and to direct them by their example, according to the will of God. They were to provide for them and see that they were fed. That is, they were to rule with kindness and in the fear of God; but the opposite was their conduct...they ruled with force and cruelty. There was no alleviation of the pain of the diseased, no healing of the wounded, no strengthening of the weak, no going after and bringing back those that had wandered or were driven away. Hard-hearted, covetous, and selfish they sought their own comfort, riches, and health, and cared not for the flock of Jehovah. They looked upon the people as simply chattels for their own use. They feared not God, nor believed His Word, nor loved His flock. Hence, as we read,

"They (the sheep) were scattered, because there was no shepherd. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." [Eze.34:5-6]

They became meat for all the beasts of the field where they were scattered. Jehovah declared that the rulers were responsible. The people suffered because of the leader's departure from Him; hence, their punishment was greater. Such is the verdict of the Word of God. The condition of the people was sad.

When the True Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, came to seek His sheep which were lost, they did not know Him. He went out seeking them. When He found one, He laid it upon His shoulders, the place of safety, certainty, and enjoyment, and came back rejoicing. But as a whole, the nation of Israel rejected Him...the Good Shepherd was smitten. Then was fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy, "**Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Smite the Shepherd and my sheep shall be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones**" [Zec.13:7]. The religious leaders, the false shepherds of Christ's day (there were no kings, for the Gentiles had dominion) delivered the Good Shepherd into the hands of the Roman governors, who condemned Him to death. The Good Shepherd, the Fellow of the Lord, gave His life for the sheep. Because they did not know Him they were again scattered, and for 19 hundred years have been wandering among all the nations of the earth. But it will not always be so; for even now the Great Shepherd is interceding for His sheep [Heb.13:20]. Shortly, as the Chief Shepherd, He will arise and deliver His flock from the hands of every false shepherd, and reward every faithful under-shepherd who conscientiously serves His people.

“Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the Word of the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock; but the shepherds fed themselves and fed not my flock. Behold I am against the shepherds...I will require the flock at their hands and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth that they may not be meat for them.”

[Eze.34:7-10]

The false shepherds, who are especially in view at this place, are the wicked leaders of Tribulation fame who will usurp authority over Israel. The unfaithful ministers of Christendom have a large part in this decreed judgment; but these words are especially addressed to the false kings, the self-appointed (or man-appointed) rulers of the 7 years of usurpation. The 2 men, designated as “**beasts**” in Revelation 13, are the nemesis of Israel. They are false guides which lead her astray. The Good Shepherd’s voice will reach only a few at that time even as in the time of His 1st Advent. The few will follow Him while the majority will follow the counterfeit. The Lord warned of these false shepherds, calling one “**a thief**,” a “**hireling**” shepherd, and the other “**a wolf**” [Joh.10:10-12]. At another time He said, “**I am come** (the Good Shepherd) **in my Father’s name and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name** (the hireling shepherd), **him you will receive**” [Joh.5:43].

We say these words refer, in their fullest sense, to the rulers over Israel in the week (or 7 years) of Daniel 9:27, which is yet to be fulfilled. The 2 counterfeit kings, the wolf and thief, will pounce upon Jehovah’s flock as wild beasts of the field. Zechariah 11 mentions these false shepherds. The False Prophet is emphatically marked out in the closing verses of Zechariah 11: “**For lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young ones, nor heal that which is broken, nor feed that which standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock. The sword shall be upon his arm and upon his right eye. His arm shall be clean dried up and his right eye shall be utterly darkened**” [Zec.11:16-17].

This foolish shepherd, also called an idol shepherd, is in contrast with the Good Shepherd. He does not heal, nor comfort, nor feed the flock; but he eats the flesh and the fat. The instruments in his hand are for destruction rather than construction. It appears from these citations that the false shepherd, the king of the Jews, will sell out to the Gentile king, the Antichrist. He will not protect the flock of Jehovah, but will betray them into the enemy’s hand. Thus, he will fulfill Jesus’ words, “**He leaveth the sheep and fleeth and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep**” [Joh.10:12]. It is at this point that the True Shepherd will arise to the help of His sheep. He announces His course of action,

“For I will deliver my flock from their mouth that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God. Behold I, even I will both search for my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock among the sheep which are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.” **[Eze.34:10-12]**

The latter phrase is proof that our interpretation of this chapter is correct. Allusion to the cloudy and dark day is of frequent occurrence in the prophetic

books and invariably refers to that important period of 7 years which we have found belongs to the next age (the Millennial Age) and not to the present one. After the great battle of Armageddon, allowed of God as judgment upon the whole world, the True Shepherd (Christ) will bring His people (Israel) back to the land of their fathers. There they shall lie in a good fold, as He declares,

"I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."
[Eze.34:14-16]

Observe the 2 classes in that last verse; the one **"lost, broken and sick"** will be gathered, delivered and blessed; while the other class, **"fat and strong"** will be destroyed. Verse 17 continues the contrast: **"And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats."** The inference is that the flock is composed of sheep and goats; but He does not lay claim to the goats except by way of judging them. He adds, concerning them,

"Seemeth it a small thing unto you that you have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of the pastures? And to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?..Therefore, thus saith the Lord God unto them, Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder and pushed all the diseased with your horns till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore, will I save my flock and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle." [Eze.34:17-22]

These Scriptures have not yet been fulfilled. The fat and the strong are the apostate leaders who will be among His people at the end of their troubles. Before He occupies the throne of His glory, when He separates the assembled nations as the Shepherd divides the sheep from the goats, He will judge between His people Israel. The unbelieving part will be cut off in the Great Tribulation; but a God-fearing remnant, who will endure to the end, shall be saved [Mat.24:13]. The God-fearing remnant are the sheep that He will gather from whence they have been scattered and bring them to the land of Palestine and fulfill to them the following glorious promises:

"I will set up one Shepherd over them and He will feed them, even my Servant David. He shall feed them and He shall be their shepherd. And I, the Lord will be their God and my servant David, a prince among them. I, the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods." [Eze.34:23-25]

What refreshing, comforting promises! We have reached the climax of this 34th Chapter. The One through whom all the blessings, mentioned by Ezekiel, shall be made good to them is announced. **"I will set up one Shepherd."** He will be the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep. He will feed them and lead them by the still waters and into the green pastures.

Some have said these words refer to Zerubbabel, the governor over Judah when the people returned from Babylon after the 70 year's captivity; but that cannot be. This Scripture has never been fulfilled. It refers altogether to the restoration of the nation of Israel, after the 7 years of judgment.

Another class of interpreters agrees with this last statement, but insists that the "**one shepherd**" applies to David. They take the words literally, claiming that he will be raised from the dead and made king over Israel. But this too is the wrong interpretation. The "**one shepherd**," under whose rule and loving shepherding Israel will grow as calves in the stall, is David's Son and David's Lord as well. There are many proofs of this fact. In several instances, Jeremiah speaks of Christ as David (David's name is used in a figurative sense). For instance, "**They shall serve the Lord their God and David their King whom I will raise up unto them**" [Jer.30:10]. Also we read: "**Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch and a King shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and justice in the earth**" [Jer.23:5]. Hosea also refers to the Messiah as "**David the King**" [Hos.3:5]. Hence, we rightly infer that Ezekiel's prophecy of the Shepherd King relates to Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, who has been brought again from the dead "**through the blood of the everlasting covenant**" [Heb.13:20]. He (the Lion of the tribe of Judah) shall save the remnant of the house of Israel out of the mouth of the wolf (the Antichrist) and receive from His Father the throne of David and reign over the earth.

Then the covenant of peace will follow. Who can make this effectual and lasting but Christ? That which the nations are endeavoring to do continually by all the peace pacts and armament agreements, He will do with His Word and power. He will speak peace, and there will be a great calm; for the peace will be a reality in the hearts of the people. Then, all the power of Satan will be stilled; for he will be chained in hell for 1,000 years. The evil, or wild beasts literally, or Gentile world powers, shall be no more. "**The wolf and the lamb shall feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox**" [Isa.65:25]. Men, even children can sleep in the woods. Peace and safety shall be a reality with no destruction to follow. They will be fruitful and prosperous; for as the promise here says, "**There shall be showers of blessing**" [Eze.34:26]. The hymn which we sometimes sing will be both a material and spiritual fact. The promise will first be fulfilled to Israel and then to the world. Peter's words refer to these showers, "**Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord**" [Act.3:20]. There will be material rain in abundance as well as the spiritual downpour. The Holy Spirit, the other Comforter, will fall upon the people and refresh the heritage of the Lord after Christ, the Great Shepherd King, has arisen to their help. The groaning creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption (which has come upon all the animal kingdom with the fall of Adam) when the human race is again at the helm of affairs in the earth.

"And I will raise up a plant of renown and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen anymore." [Eze.34:29]

There has been some curiosity and speculation regarding this "**plant of renown**"; but we cannot see any reason for the speculation. It is plainly Christ that fits the description. Who but He could be this green and growing plant that will satisfy the hunger of all? Isaiah described Him in the days of His humiliation as "**a tender plant and a root out of a dry ground**" [Isa.53:2]. But in the days of His

glory, He will be a “**plant of renown**.” The title marks Him as the tree of life, whom our first parents neglected in the garden in Eden, choosing to eat instead the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thus bringing death upon all. But the “**plant of renown**” will bring life to all the world. Even physical life will depend upon Christ; and, the children of Israel will be the first to enjoy Christ and the life with its attendant blessings which He will bring. Thus shall they know that the Lord is with them and that they are His people even as He says, “**Ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture are men and I am your God, saith the Lord God**” [Eze.34:31].

THE JUDGMENT OF MT. SEIR [EZE.35]

We have another digression here. The Prophet apparently detours from the main line of truth; he runs on to a sidetrack, as we would say. But we may be sure that this is no accident. The Lord has designed these predictions. There are no mistakes in their order. When the due time arrives that He will bless Israel, He will at the same time punish their enemies. Not one of them shall escape.

THE PROPHECY

“Moreover the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mt. Seir and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold O, mount Seir, I am against thee. I will stretch out mine hand against thee and I will make thee most desolate...because thou hast had a perpetual hatred and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end.” [Eze.35:1-5]

Mt. Seir (meaning “*hairy*” or “*rugged*”) was the dwelling place of the Horites and is first mentioned in Genesis 36:20. Seir was the name (title) of a chief of the people. It was probably given because of the rugged, rocky nature of the country, and especially the prominence of the high range of mountains. Esau supplanted the Horites; for we read that “**Israel moved from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to compass the land of Edom**” [Num.21:4].

The place was most appropriate for Esau as his name has the same significance of Seir (“*hairy*” or “*rough*”). He is also called **Edom** (meaning “*red*”), which was most suitable as the ground round about that region was of a reddish color. Those Edomites were always hostile to Israel. They had a continual hatred of them as the Scripture states. When the true significance of those people is understood, that is easy of interpretation. Jacob, progenitor of the 12 tribes, afterwards known as Israel, robbed, as they would say, their father Esau of his birthright [Gen.27]. Jacob and Esau were brothers, but were widely separated in country, fellowship, and interests. The one (Israel) speaks of God and a new creation; the other (Edom) figures the flesh and the world. Therefore, judgment is coming to the flesh and the world even as hereby announced. One of the very last judgment acts will be the cutting off of that people (Edom).

"I will make thee perpetual desolations and thy cities shall not return and ye shall know that I am the Lord, because thou hast said these two countries shall be mine and we will possess it, whereas the Lord was there." [Eze.35:9-10]

We believe Chapter 35 has a most peculiar and pregnant application to the present time. Edom is representative of the Arab. He is saying, as the above language implies, that Palestine belongs to him as well as his portion in Arabia. He insists, even as is evident, on possessing Israel's ancient dwelling place. He would not be against the Jews if they would dwell in the land as a subject people. Oh, yes, that would suit him immensely. The Jew's money, energy, and toil in making the land beautiful and prosperous would be most welcome. They would be given a wide-open door in such case; but for the Jews to come in as the rightful claimants of Palestine, that is another matter entirely. Hence, they do not propose to allow this wholesale possession of the land by Israel. However, here is where the old proverb applies most beautifully: "Man proposes; but God disposes."

God will have something to say as to the disposal of His land. The Lord claims Palestine for Himself. He says that He will give it to whomsoever He chooses; and He has already chosen Israel to possess it to the uttermost even to the dimensions as given to Abraham [Gen.15:18-21]. He will have something to say. The Great Kinsman Redeemer will have no rest ***"until He have finished the thing"*** [Rut.3:18]. The Arab's attitude to Jehovah's people is an insult to Him and He so declares,

"And thou shalt know that I am the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume. Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them." [Eze.35:12-13]

The Arabs are fighting against God and His purposes when they resist the Jews and their claims. No man can be against the Jews and prosper when once the Lord has risen up to give them their land. He has promised Palestine to these people from ancient time. It is His possession according to the Abrahamic Covenant [Gen.15] as well as the Palestinian Covenant [Deu.31], and He must fulfill His promises.

The time is coming when all men shall rejoice with Israel in the great blessings that the Lord will pour out upon them. When He appears for their deliverance from the hand of the nations at the time of the battle of Armageddon, all their troubles will be over. Their enemies will be the sufferers then. They will be desolate even as is written here [Eze.35:14-15].

ISRAEL'S RESURRECTION [EZE.36]

"Also thou Son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God: Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession; therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God, because they have made you desolate and swallowed you up on every side that you might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen and ye are taken up in the lips of the

talkers and are an infamy of the people. Therefore, ye mountains of Israel hear the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, to the hills, to the rivers, to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and a derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about...Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I have lifted up my hand. Surely the heathen that are round about shall bear their shame. But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. Behold, I am for you and I will turn unto you and ye shall be tilled and sown. And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel even all of it and the cities shall be inhabited and the wastes shall be builded.” [Eze.36:1-10]

With Chapter 36 we begin the section which is devoted almost exclusively to Israel's restoration. All is blessing in grace to them. If the other nations are mentioned, it is only by way of contrast, announcing Jehovah's judgment against the enemies of His chosen and beloved people. Men may jeer and rant at these prophecies concerning the Jews and their place in the world, even they themselves may not believe in their good fortune; but God cannot deny Himself. He must be true to His own Word. We believe that every jot and tittle of these predictions shall come to pass.

The enemy had spoken arrogantly against “**the mountains of Israel**” and the Lord had heard their words and answered them, as we already noted [Eze.35:13]. He now addresses words of comfort and cheer to “**the mountains of Israel**” who have suffered at the hands of their enemies and were forced to endure their harshness because of their barrenness and need. But now Jehovah makes known to them that their sorry plight is passed. They shall become the most prolific nation in the earth. They shall bud and blossom and fill the land with fruit. The waste places shall be renewed, as all the prophets witness, when they are in their own land again. The Prophet assures them, as well as all men, that this return is at hand. He is speaking, as we have noted again and again, from the standpoint of today.

These promises to Israel have never found fulfillment. No one can say that they apply to the return of the remnant from Babylon after the 70 year's captivity. These promises have a length, breadth, and unlimited outlook in blessing to the ancient people that have never been compassed yet in their history. It is still future, but not the distant future. They are at hand to come; yea, they shall be multiplied, saith the Lord. “**I will cause men to walk upon you** (the mountains) **even my people Israel and they shall possess them and thou shalt be their inheritance**” [Eze.36:12]. Ah, in the past 19 hundred years their sorrows have been long, their sufferings intense; but, soon all that will be changed. The phrase “**any more**” (also “**no more**”) is found 4 times in this portion [Eze.36:14-15]. It will be so; **NO MORE** shall they be a prey and a reproach in the world.

COMMENT ON THE PAST

“Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings. Their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them, for the blood that they had shed and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it; and I scattered them among the heathen and they were dispersed thru the countries; according to their ways and according to their

doings I judged them. And when they had entered unto the nations whither they went they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, "These are the people of the Lord and are gone forth out of His land." [Eze.36:16-20]

These verses tell the history of the nation of Israel. They were disobedient and rebellious to the Word of the Lord. The covenant of The Law, to which they had made themselves a party, was broken by them. They were judged as a woman unfaithful to her marriage vows and put away because of their defilement. When their Lord and Master appeared, they refused to acknowledge His rights to their love and His house and land. They delivered their Messiah-King into the hands of the heathen. He was crucified as a malefactor; and they cried, "**His blood be upon us and upon our children**" [Mat.27:25]. They pronounced their own doom, sentencing themselves to exile, sorrow, and death. As a result they were scattered among the nations whence they became a hissing and a byword. There they profaned the name of the Lord by their conduct of covetousness and mercenary dealing. They have had it constantly thrown in their faces that they are the people of the Lord whom He has cast out of the land.

So does the Spirit, through the Prophet, declare the reasons of Israel's wanderings in the earth that all the people, Jews and Gentiles, may know that they are not to be blessed and restored because of their own goodness. They had done nothing to deserve blessing, but are in the same position as a nation that each individual sinner is...they need mercy, which they will receive as the next portion announces.

FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

"But I had pity for mine holy name which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God. I do this not for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name which was profaned...And the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and will bring you into your own land." [Eze.36:21-24]

These precious promises need little comment. They are easy to be understood. Jehovah has purposes of blessing for the seed of Abraham and these purposes cannot fail fulfillment. They shall surely come to pass. In fact, these people have already begun to gather back to the land of Palestine. The Lord will do as He says and it will be done for His own Name's Sake. His Word is the Arbiter that settles the destinies of individuals and nations...it cannot fail. He declares that He will take Israel from the countries whence He had scattered them. The gathering is just as sure to come about as is the scattering. Jehovah is responsible for the one, even as He will be for the other. Nothing can hinder Him when once His due time has arrived. The nations shall know that He is God by His dealings in grace with Israel. "**I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.**" When He manifests Himself as the faithful covenant-keeping God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom the chosen people have rejected and whose name they have profaned, He turns to them in mercy and the heathen will marvel and wonder; but not in

unbelief. They will believe when they behold His grace to the Jews and the marvelous change in them and for them.

“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” [Eze.36:25-28]

There is nothing vague or mystic about these statements. They are positive announcements of the Lord’s intentions for His people; and notice, it is about **HIS DOINGS**. He will do the impossible. “**I**,” referring to Jehovah, is mentioned over 28 times in Ezekiel 36. This meaningful number, 4x7, tells us of the weakness of humanity brought to perfection by the Lord. It is His own Name, His holy name which they had profaned among the heathen that moves Him to thus act in their behalf. They had not believed His Word regarding their future, or at least had not acted as if they were the people of the Lord; but He believes His own Word. He knows that every part of it shall be fulfilled. His Name is at stake. He must vindicate it. The nations must know that He is God.

Israel shall be cleansed from all their defilement and unbelief. The promise, “***I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean,***” refers to the red-heifer ordinance of which we read in Numbers 19. Water was poured over the ashes of the animal sacrifice and was sprinkled with hyssop upon the unclean. It figures the efficacy of the death of Christ, not only to satisfy the justice of God; but to cleanse men from sin [Heb.9:13-14, Heb.10:22]. This consummation is by way of a new heart and a new spirit. The stony heart of unbelief shall be removed and they will receive a believing heart of flesh. Nicodemus, representative of the nation of Israel, was referred to this passage by the Lord when He told him of the new birth. He rebuked him for his ignorance of this fundamental fact in relation to the coming Kingdom and its blessings: “***Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?***” [Joh.3:9].

The following verses of Chapter 36 continue to enumerate the manifold blessings in grace which are to come upon the nation of Israel and the land. These will be far greater than they have ever possessed. The prosperity of the land will be increased. Famine will be gone forever. The desolate places will be so fruitful that those passing through will say,

“It is become as the Garden of Eden and the waste and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited.” [Eze.36:35]

The people will loathe themselves and their doings when God’s grace is revealed. There will be a national repentance after the Lord appears and blesses them. The Apostle Paul is a beautiful illustration of the nation of Israel in his conversion and life. He was not disobedient to the heavenly vision and neither will Israel ever fail God again. But the Prophet adds,

“Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. I will increase them with men like a flock.” [Eze.36:37]

Here is a most impressive, significant statement. Jehovah insists that Israel pray for His purposes to be fulfilled. Daniel, at the court of Babylon after the 70 year's captivity which he learned by Jeremiah's writings had passed, was found before the Lord beseeching Him for mercy in the fulfillment of His Word. He set his face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and fasting the revelation of His mind and will. His purposes cannot fail fulfillment, yet His people have part in bringing them to pass by their faith and prayers. He allows them to come into fellowship with Himself in His purposes. How blessed and comforting! His flock shall be holy in Jerusalem, and all the waste cities of the promised land shall be filled with men as saith the Lord,

"As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD."
[Eze.36:38]

RESURRECTION OF THE DRY BONES [EZE.37]

"The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and He caused me to pass by them roundabout, and behold there were very many in the open valley and they were very dry. And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest." [Eze.37:1-3]

This is the 6th time that Ezekiel declares that the "**hand of the Lord**" was upon him. It is a most significant statement. We believe it has the same character as the various viewpoints of John in his Patmos visions. He is emphatically seeing something supernatural and wonderful. In the case at this point he is "**carried out in the Spirit of the Lord**" and set down in the midst of a valley of dry bones, lo, "**very dry**," he states. It is a remarkable vision. The bones disjointed and bleached are typical of the national as well as spiritual condition of Israel. There is absolutely no hope for them as far as they are concerned. There is no life whatever in the dry bones. What a perfect illustration of all mankind's hopeless state.

The Spirit of the Lord spoke to the Prophet, saying, "**Son of man, Can these bones live?**" Ezekiel answered, "**O Lord God, thou knowest.**" He knew the impossibility from the natural standpoint, but he puts the responsibility of their living upon the Lord and that was exactly what He desired. With Him, nothing is impossible. Ezekiel is then commanded to prophesy and addresses the dry bones, saying,

"Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear ye the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these dry bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you and I will bring up flesh upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you and ye shall live and ye shall know that I am the Lord." [Eze.37:4-6]

According to the Word of the Lord, there is to be a complete reconstruction; a perfect adjustment of bone to bone and sinews, and flesh to cover them. As the Prophet spoke, there was a noise (literally a voice was heard) and a commotion indeed. Bone came to bone, sinew and flesh came into place, and skin covered all. It was perfect as far as outward form was concerned;

but there was no life yet. The Prophet is commanded to prophesy again, but now to the wind (or breath) saying, ***“Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live.”*** No sooner had the Prophet obeyed and spoken, then lo, the miracle happened. The breath came into those slain; the dry bones were electrified. ***“They lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army”*** [Eze.37:9-10].

We are not left in any doubt as to what is meant by the vision; for the interpretation is forthcoming immediately. The dry bones figure the whole house of Israel; for they confess, according as we read, ***“Our bones are dried and our hope is lost. We are clean cut off”*** [Eze.37:11 RV]. The Lord answers their repentant acknowledgement of their forlorn condition with words of tender cheer and comfort which interprets Ezekiel’s striking vision,

“I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people...and put my spirit in you and ye shall live and I shall place you in your own land.” [Eze.37:12-14]

The national restoration of Israel and their regathering back to the land of Palestine is plainly the correct interpretation of Chapter 37. They shall, all at one moment, be born of the spirit. This is what is meant by their coming out of their graves. This national change is indeed a startling fact and causes Isaiah in his prophecy of the same future period to ask the question, as in surprise, ***“Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children”*** [Isa.66:8].

Some have taught that Ezekiel’s vision symbolized the restoration of all the Christ-rejecting Jews of these 19 hundred years since the **DAY OF THE LORD** was rejected, as well as all of Israel before the cross, whether obedient or disobedient; that they all shall be raised up and believe on Him when He comes. How perfectly fantastic and foolish is such an application of Ezekiel’s vision. It has not a foot of Truth to stand on. There are only 2 resurrections mentioned in Scripture, the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked [Joh.5:28-29]. In Revelation, we also read of these 2 resurrections; the end of the one, the unjust, is called a **“second death,”** instead of a **“second chance”** [Rev.20:14]. There is no such absurd teaching in the Bible as that anyone who is impenitent shall be raised up and have another opportunity to be saved, as some deluded ones are teaching today. The 2 thieves on the cross are proof against it. The one who repented and believed even at the 11th hour was promised a place in Paradise; the other who died impenitent was promised nothing. But to return to our study.

In this realistic portrayal of the dry bones, we are looking forward to the national resurrection of Israel. They are as though dead to Jehovah, buried among the Gentiles, even as Jonah, their type, in the whale’s belly. God’s power must be put forth just as dynamically in their behalf as though they were actually in their graves. All men individually even as Israel nationally are **“dead in trespasses and sins”** [Eph.2:1]. They must all be born again. If these dry bones meant physical death, how could it be said that they speak and say, ***“Our bones are dried up and our hope is lost”***? These words tell of the heart despair of the national hope among the people, a living people, but dead to God. In the account of the prodigal son, we have a similar statement as

regards the latter, ***“For this my son was dead and is alive again”*** [Luk.15:24]. The son was not physically dead; neither was he made physically alive. He was as though dead to his father.

Then there is another class of interpreters who are inoculated with the spiritualizing bug. They make all these promises of national blessing and restoration of Israel apply to The Church, ignoring all the claims of the seed of Abraham. They teach that Israel forfeited her right to these promises when she rejected the Messiah and that they are now being fulfilled to the Gentiles. Thus, the Christian is robbed of the key to the knowledge of prophecy; for there is no understanding of prophecy without giving the ancient people of Jehovah their place on the program. God must fulfill His Word to them. It is grace on His part, it is true; but fulfill it He will. The Catholic church is the author of that fallacious doctrine. She has leavened the 3 measures of meal so thoroughly [Mat.13:33] that people generally are swayed by her teaching. This interpretation of prophecy is ruinous to Christian and Jew. It lowers the hopes and inheritance of The Church from heaven to earth and takes from the seed of Abraham the faintest hope of ever being reinstated to the land of Palestine. It is a fatal perversion of Scripture, for to understand prophecy we must see the Jew as the outstanding figure therein, the one through whom all men upon the earth are to be blessed.

In Paul's letter to the Romans he devotes 3 chapters [Rom.9-11] to the destiny of Israel. He dwells upon their past in Romans 11. His teaching is clear and convincing and needs little comment. He absolutely denies that God has cast away His earthly people. He declares that their temporary setting aside has been the means of salvation to the Gentiles and adds, ***“If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead...And they also if they abide not still in unbelief shall be grafted into their own olive tree; for God is able to graft them in again...I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in”*** [Rom.11:1-25].

The restoration and rejuvenation of Israel await a due time. It is after the full number of Gentiles is gathered that the nation of Israel will be formed. These 2 bodies of people, The Church and Israel, a heavenly and an earthly people, cannot be on the earth as representative of the Lord at the same time. The one must disappear when the other appears, though the one may be gradually going up, while the other is gradually showing up. The purposes of Jehovah concerning these 2 separate bodies overlap for a while as is the case now. We who are living may be able to trace the beginnings of God's ways with Israel, even while He is closing His purposes with The Church. It is wonderful to be on the earth at the end of one dispensation and the beginning of another and have our eyes open spiritually; for we may discern the steppings of Jehovah, even as is the case at the present. Every world event, religious and national, is full of interest these days.

Ezekiel was a much privileged character. He had an exalted place. He was, in vision, on The Lord's Day, even as John in the Patmos visions, and saw things that will shortly come to pass. He actually beheld the whole house of Israel becoming one body, as it were. His first view of them was as dry bones, all separate and divided; but as he looked, there was a great noise and shaking. The ***“bones came together, bone to his bone, and the sinews and flesh***

came upon them and the skin covered them.” Oh, it was a marvelous sight to behold! The unity of Israel is signified by this metamorphosis which the Prophet beheld. It shows what the Lord can and will do for His earthly people when His Day (the **DAY OF THE LORD**) is come. There will be a great noise and shaking among the dead bones; but, hallelujah, what a sight that will be for men and angels! At that time the whole Church will be visibly one body in the heavenlies; for they will all be gathered to their homeland in the skies at the same time that all Israel are gathered to their homeland in Palestine. There will be a grand reunion in heaven of the one body, even as on earth of the other.

REUNION OF JUDAH AND EPHRAIM

“The Word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover thou Son of man, take thee one stick and write upon it. For Judah and for Israel his companions: then take another stick and write upon it For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel, his companions, and join them one to another into one stick and they shall become one in thine hand.” [Eze.37:15-17]

Here is another little moving picture depicted upon the reel of coming events and the chief actor in this scene is still Ezekiel, as in the former scene of the dry bones. He is commanded now to take 2 sticks; on the one he was to write, **“For Judah and for Israel his companions”**; on the other stick these words were to be written, **“For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.”** He was then told to join the 2 sticks together, and he did so; they became one in his hand.

A marvelous supernatural sign was performed right there before the people’s eyes to lend weight and reality to his words. It was a positive proof of the reunion of the house of Judah and the house of Israel. The division between the nation, which has been evidenced since 975 B.C., will be ended and the whole 12 tribes will be as one in the Hand of the Lord. They shall be the royal rod (or scepter) by which He shall rule all nations; for Judah and Israel united as in the days of David and Solomon shall be the rulers of the earth under Christ their King.

NATION AND KING UNITED

“And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel and one King shall be king to them all. They shall no more be two nations; neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. Neither shall they defile themselves with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places...and will cleanse them. So shall they be my people and I will be their God. And David my Servant shall be king over them and they all shall have one Shepherd and they shall walk in my judgments and observe my statutes and to do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob, my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children and their children’s children forever and my servant David shall be their Prince forever.” [Eze.37:22-25]

These words are unmistakably plain and simple. They allow of no spiritualizing whatever. When Judah and Ephraim are joined as 1 nation,

they will have 1 King over them, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the greater than Solomon, as He declared [Mat.12:42], and the Prince of Peace. How ridiculous to apply these Kingdom promises to The Church at the present time, or any time. It surely takes a stretch of imagination and a wresting of the scriptures to do so. The Lord Jesus Christ is called the head of The Church: but He is never described as its King. As repeatedly affirmed in the Gospel of Matthew, He is King of the Jews; so declared before His birth by the angel to Mary,

“Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.” [Luk.1:31-33]

At His birth He was revealed to the wise men of the East as King of the Jews [Mat.2:3]; and at His death it was written upon His cross in Greek and Latin and Hebrew, **“This is the King of the Jews”** [Luk.23:38]. It faces the world—the wise, the powerful, the religious—commanding attention from all men informing them that the lowly Man, the seed of Abraham, a Jew who died upon a cross for all men, shall reign over all men as King of the Jews. Oh, yes these words of Ezekiel have a far greater compass and scope than has ever been realized. He is a Prophet indeed. He is predicting glorious things which are not far away for the nation of Israel. These promises have never been fulfilled. The people have never been restored to their land as is written here. As a whole, they have never been able to walk in the Judgments and Statutes of Jehovah; for, as a nation they never have been born again. This is all future, of which the following verses are further proof,

“Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.” [Eze.37:26-28]

These words have never had the least semblance of fulfillment. His covenant of peace has never been made with them; for the Peacemaker must be received and acknowledged as the Prince of Peace before the everlasting covenant of peace can be ratified. But, it will come when He appears who made peace by the blood of His cross. God will yet have an abiding dwelling in the land of Israel. He will set up His sanctuary, which is Christ, in their midst. **“My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God.”**

INVASION OF GOG AND MAGOG [EZE.38-39]

The contents of Ezekiel 38 and 39 are most interesting and instructive. They give us an inspired account of a great gathering of nations to battle in the latter years, as is distinctly stated in Ezekiel 38:8. But there is a question as to just what part of these latter years is this invasion, whether before or after the battle of Armageddon. Also, another question is prominent in this connection, whether this confederacy of nations is the same as that spoken of in Ezekiel 30-32. In fact there are many questions confronting us which are

not yet solved, and there are many conflicting opinions on prophecy; but we know that there is a true interpretation of all Scripture, which is God-breathed, and we are after it. The Holy Spirit has come to guide us into all the Truth. Let us trust Him and study, “**comparing spiritual things with spiritual**,” and we will come to understand [1Co.2:13].

THE NORTHERN CONFEDERACY [EZE.38]

“And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophecy against him. Say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and I will turn thee back and put hooks in thy jaws and I will bring thee forth and all thy army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armor, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. Persia, Ethiopia and Libya (or Egypt) with them; all of them with shield and helmet. Gomer and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters and all his bands and many people with thee.” [Eze.38:1-6]

After the beautiful scene portrayed in the preceding chapters (Eze.36-37) of the reinstatement of Israel to the land of Palestine and her restoration and rejuvenation, we are brought back, as it were, and view with something of a shock, that all will not be perfection even then. As Ezekiel 38 and 39 teach, there will be enemies yet who must be conquered.

We would answer the query of some as to the time of this invasion of God and Magog, which Ezekiel foretells. It must not be confounded with the later and final rebellion of the nations which John describes [Rev.20:7-9]. The one Ezekiel portrays will occur at the end of the first 7 years of the millennium; the one in Revelation, after 1,000 years are passed. The above quoted verses [Eze.38:1-6], prove that this invasion is at a separate epoch and is a different conflict entirely, for Ezekiel's horde of nations come from the North, while the post-millennium gathering of the armies come from the 4 quarters of the earth. Observe also the fact that the revolters of Ezekiel's vision assemble against “**the mountains of Israel**” and there is a real battle; but the later and final rebels are devoured by fire from heaven before they are allowed to fall upon the camp of the saints, or do any damage to the beloved city, Jerusalem [Rev.20:9]. Hence, we say, these 2 mad marches of envious nations against Israel are distinctly separated from one another by 1,000 years.

“After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.” [Eze.38:8]

Ezekiel also predicts the exact time when these nations shall invade Israel's land. It will be when the people “**have been brought back from the sword and are gathered out of many people**.” They will assemble together and come “**against the mountains of Israel which have been always waste**.” They will arrive with evil intent toward those gathered-out folk who have become rich.

“Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD;

It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.” [Eze.38:9-12]

They will simply fulfill Scripture when they go up against Israel; for it has been written what they shall do. Yea, their very thoughts are discerned and revealed, as well as their march against the land and the people, who are coming again into covenant relationship with the Lord.

At this point, we will say that this is not the same confederacy of nations as that of the revived Roman Empire, or the United States of Europe, as no doubt it will be named. The armies of Europe will be gathered around Jerusalem at the same time, but in opposition to those spoken of here by Ezekiel. The one is the Western League, the other the Northern Confederacy which will sweep down upon the land of Palestine as the Assyrian of ancient time; whom Isaiah describes in his prophecy, the type of these latter enemies [Isa.10]. They will be under the leadership of a powerful king and will come as a mighty storm-cloud upon the host of Jehovah; but, it will be an evil day for them. God is looking on the scene. Israel are again His people and He will have charge of their affairs. He has purposed that this rebellious horde shall come up against His land and people. He is drawing them on as it were. The Scriptures declare their coming. They are simply doing His will. He says,

“Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants, the prophets of Israel which prophesied of those days for many years that I would bring thee against them?” [Eze.38:17]

We thus learn that other prophets than Ezekiel had told of these armies. As we observed, the Assyrian, the ancient enemy of Israel, is a marvelous type of these foes, Gog and Magog, who come up against the Holy Land at the same time as the armies of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire, under the leadership of the Antichrist and energized by the False Prophet, may come against the armies of Gog and Magog. But altogether they come up to meet their eternal doom; for they are all in rebellion against God. The prophet Joel describes all those gathered around Jerusalem as being called there by the Lord. He says,

“Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war; wake up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near. Let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks (scythes) into spears...Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen and gather yourselves together round about...Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about...Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision (concision).” [Joe.3:9-14]

It is the cutting-off time for all flesh, and Palestine is the decreed place of its execution. Representatives from all the world will be gathered around there. It is there that they are to be judged. The European Confederacy will no doubt excite the jealousy of the other nations by its marvelous rise to

prominence. These will confederate in opposition to the Western nations and another world war will result, compared with which all other conflicts were as child's play. The prophets are unanimous in their report of its terrors. Devastation, destruction, and dismay face the world. Man will kill his fellowman. Humanity will wipe itself off the earth if God does not intervene and save man from himself.

THE CONFEDERACY IDENTIFIED

But someone may enquire, What nations will comprise this league who dare oppose themselves against the European Confederacy, the dominating force of those soon coming days? We will let the Word itself answer that question.

Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal undoubtedly apply to Russia, who is even now showing signs of the revolt which later will break into open rebellion against all that is of God, or man. The time of the fulfillment of these events is plainly stated. ***"It shall be in the latter days"*** [Eze.38:16]. Some may think that such a contingency as Russia heading a league of nations is impossible, that it has gone to pieces nationally; but such is not the case. Russia is greatly feared even at the present time by other nations. It desires to plunge Europe into war and is steadily working toward that end. The events in China in the last year prove the above statement. But someone says, let us have some proof that Rosh is Russia, hence, we will proceed. In Ezekiel 39:3, Rosh is addressed as Gog, therefore we conclude that Gog is the leader of these nations, his country being **Magog** (*"the overtopping, surmounting place"*). We learn from Genesis 10:2-3 that Magog, Gomer, Tubal, and Meshech were all sons of Japheth; while Togarmah was a grandson, being a son of Gomer. History tells us that Magog's location was between Mesopotamia and the Caucasus; and, that these 3 (Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal) were anciently related and were called Sycthians. They were nomadic and roamed the country north of the Black and Caspian Seas and were fierce, warlike tribes.

Their own traditions represent them as having lived in Asia and later mixed with the Medes, becoming known as the Sarmations from whence sprang the Russians. All the invading forces, which come up into Israel's land in the latter years, gather from a territory north of Palestine, which is today in the hands of Russia; we believe we are justified in saying that this nation will be at the head of the Northern confederacy. It furnishes the leader; for he is the *"prince of Rosh"* [RV], not *"chief prince"* as in the Authorized Version. He is in control of Meshech and Tubal which are now known as Moscow and Tobolsk. With him are represented other nations. Persia which is even now partly occupied by Russia, will be allied in the confederacy, as also Ethiopia and Phut. Then Gomer and all its bands will be under the leadership of the prince of Rosh. Gomer has been partly identified as Germany. This is of vital interest. Germany was not a part of the former Roman Empire; therefore it will not be a part of its revival; but rather an ally in the great confederacy of nations under the banner of Gog and Magog. The Prophet informs us that they shall come from their place out of the northern parts and many people with them.

Ezekiel is also commanded by the Lord to declare the defeat of this great allied company who come up against the land and people of Jehovah in **"the latter years,"** as is again repeated [Eze.38:14-16]. They are informed of their very

innermost thoughts and desires which will not be realized; for defeat will be their portion as is written. **“Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel”**; for the Lord shall arise in His jealousy and wrath and fight against Gog and his armies. He says,

“I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood and I will rain upon him and upon his bands and upon the many people that are with him an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself and I will be known in the eyes of many nations and they shall know that I am the Lord.” [Eze.38:22-23]

DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION OF GOG [EZE.39]

“Therefore, thou Son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. And I will turn thee back and leave but the sixth part of thee and will cause thee to come up from the north parts and bring thee upon the mountains of Israel. And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands and the people that is with thee. I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles, and they shall know that I am the Lord.” [Eze.39:1-6]

With this prophecy, we have the close of the predictions of judgment. The remainder of the book of Ezekiel is wholly given to predictions of the glory and blessing of Israel as restored to their land. But all their enemies must be subdued and made to acknowledge that God is true and righteous and has fulfilled His promises to them. In Chapter 39, we have the continuation of the announcement of the complete overthrow of this last enemy, who comes up in a final effort to dispute the authority of God and His disposal of the land of Palestine. Russia is getting ready for this very consummation at the present time. Godlessness and blasphemy against all that is holy and sacred characterize the whole nation of Russia. They are openly hostile to Christ, and openly flaunt their profanity and flout all religion. They want the world to know that they are not afraid of God, or Satan. They call it superstition to have any fear of God. They openly defy His authority and sneer at His power, and are teaching the younger generation absolute infidelity and anarchy. Oh, what a harvest they will reap!

It is the above manner of people that will come up from the north against Israel in the latter days, and the Lord Himself will take a hand in the conflict after they are in the land and apparently are on the winning side. It would appear that they are opposed by the European Confederacy; but when Russia is getting worsted in the fray and Israel is being mowed down as the grass, the Lord Himself appears to their help. They will have no quarter whatever when that time comes. Pestilence, hailstones, tempest, and fire and brimstone from heaven will fall upon this horde of wicked, devil-filled men, as well as the sword from the earth. They will have no chance of escape. Death is their due reward and damnation their eternal destiny. Upon the very mountains of Israel which they came to spoil and despoil, they are smitten and their carcasses are given to the ravenous birds and beasts of the field to devour. We infer from the language, that all the nations whose armies are represented in that advance upon Israel will be visited with judgment,

though not entirely destroyed. Magog (Russia) will be one of them, as well as other lands, which shall be visited with fire [Eze.39:6] after their armies are wiped out.

They shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forest for the space of 7 years; for the weapons of war will be sufficient for that length of time. We may not understand how this latter can ever develop, because these last days war armaments are all of metal and not of wood; but here will be something that answers to the wood, we are assured. It may be oil and gasoline which will be left in such quantities that no other heating commodity will be necessary. At any rate, the lesson is plain—Israel will spoil those who come to rob and spoil them; thus God will be avenged of all His foes.

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.” [Eze.39:11-13]

We quote many of these words of prophecy; for so very few people read these weighty words of Jehovah. They need little comment at this place. God will see that all the horde which come up to bury Israel are buried. The land is counted unclean until all the carcasses are put away. Gog and his horde of men thought to take Israel's land for a possession; but instead all that they get of it will be a grave. The entire multitude will be buried **“in the valley of the passengers east of the sea”** (no doubt the Dead Sea) [Eze.39:14]. It will be called the valley of Hamongog which means **“the multitude of God”** or **“the surmounting one.”** Their defeat will be memorialized in a place of death. The overtopping ones are overtopped. It will take 7 months to bury them all. Imagine if you can the multitude! Everyone is mustered into the service of cleansing the land; for when any sees a man's bone he must set up a sign by it that the buriers may put it out of sight [Eze.39:15]. So shall God's vengeance be manifested upon the rebellious, wicked armies that come to deal evil to a people that had done them no harm. Much of the details of the identity of these nations may be obscure; but the judgment meted out to them is as clear as noonday. God is not mocked. Vengeance belongs to Him; He will repay.

THE SUPPER OF GOD

“And thou Son of man, Thus saith the Lord God. Speak unto every feathered fowl and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves and come, gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel that ye may eat flesh and drink blood.” [Eze.39:17]

Here we read of another great gathering called of Jehovah. It is of the birds and the beasts of the earth. They are invited to the supper of God to feed upon the great multitude of men that come up the land of Palestine to feed

upon Israel. But the tables are turned. They become food, not for Israel to feed upon, for they are too vile; but, the hungry vultures and beasts of the field will enjoy them. The flesh of the mighty and the blood of the princes of the earth, compared to the flesh and blood of goats, bullocks, and fatlings of Bashan, will be served at that banquet on the mountains of Israel. The birds and beasts will have a feast indeed. For once they shall be satisfied, even as is the promise, ***“Ye shall be filled at my table...”*** [Eze.39:20].

There is a similar scene recorded in Revelation, as viewed by John in Revelation 19:17-18. An angel stands in the sun and calls to all the fowls of heaven to come to the supper of the great God. We believe these 2 feasts, that of John and Ezekiel, are the same. John beholds the armies of the European Confederacy served to the birds, while Ezekiel sees the collapse of the Northern armies and the birds and beasts filled with their dead bodies. But some question may arise in this connection, such as—What is the reason of the gathering of the armies of both these opposing confederacies? We believe that the answer is given us in Daniel’s description of the trouble of these latter days of which Ezekiel and John are also the prophets. We quote,

“³⁶ And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

⁴⁰ At the time of the end, shall the king of the south push at him and the king of the north shall come against him with a whirlwind, with chariots and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and pass over.”
[Dan.11:36, 40]

We have 3 kings mentioned in these Scriptures: ***“The king,”*** the ***“king of the south,”*** and the ***“king of the north.”*** ***“The king”*** figures the great one of the last days, the Antichrist, a greater one than ***“the prince of Rosh.”*** He is the leader, or king, of the Western powers and will be accounted the despot of the world for a short while; but there will come a halt to his onward march as is evident. The king of the south and the king of the north will push at him with devastating artillery. There will be trouble in the East also [Dan.11:44]. Spirits of demons, working miracles, will go forth unto the kings of the earth, and the armies of the whole world will gather up to Palestine to the battle of the great day of God Almighty [Rev.16:16]. We have here the solution of every difficulty as regards those confederacies. The questions of why they meet and when they meet are solved by John’s vision. The Lord takes away all restraint and Satan is free to do His worst [Rev.7:1 and 9:15].

The Northern Confederacy, comprised of nations from different points of the compass, with Russia and Germany the prominent peoples, will get together and mobilize their forces, as Ezekiel informs us. They will go against Palestine to take a spoil of her. The reputed wealth of the land will no doubt be the drawing power. Reading some reports lately of the astounding riches that are lying in the mineral deposits in the Dead Sea, we are amazed. If even a fraction of this estimated wealth is realized, of which there is no question, Palestine will be the richest country in the world. We can therefore easily understand what a desirable plum it will appear in the eyes of the avaricious nations of the world. They will all desire to befriend and annex her;

and failing thus, some will plan to despoil and rob her. Russia would no doubt long ere this time have taken advantage of the unprotected position of Palestine except that Britain holds the mandate over that little country. We are assured from Ezekiel that her colossal wealth will be the predominating factor leading up to the great struggle of the ages that culminates in Armageddon. Human greed and cupidity will over leap all moral restraint, and Jerusalem may appear all golden and a city to be desired in the eyes of all the world. The lust for gold will no doubt bring the mobilized armies of the Northern League to Palestine. This may be the signal for the other nations, the Western powers, to arise and speed to the help of the Jews. We are assured that it will take some terrible menace, such as the Confederacy of Russia, Germany, Persia, etc. to bring the nations of Europe to a sense of their need of harmony. They will settle their little differences in haste and come into agreement when they hear of the confederacy of the nations of the North and East. They will quickly mobilize their united forces and advance against the intruding armies when the news of their project is broadcasted. Then will come the battle of all battles, the conflict of all ages. God's Word will be vindicated. All the nations who refused the peace purchased by the cross and the Christ of the cross, even those who will arise to the help of the Jews, will come in for judgment at that time. They will be usurping the place and prerogative of Christ, who will be seated on His throne; and they will realize when too late that God is not mocked.

All these strenuous efforts toward peace, these peace pacts, treaties, and agreements between nations that are being made today are in self-will and daring defiance of God and His declared will, as revealed in His Word. His plans and purposes are outlined and expressed; but men refuse to believe them. In this very year (1930), there is a conference in London in the interests of peace. The 5 powers represented there seek a curtailment of navy armaments, which they hope will be a great advance toward peace for the world. There are also many other schemes, endeavors, and efforts for the furtherance of the coveted goal; but sad to say, they will never have permanent peace. When their object is apparently attained and they are enjoying the spoils of victory, then will come the trumpet blast of alarm. The greatest discord and din of all time will be the answer to their efforts. The apostatized Christian nations will mobilize and go against the blatant, blasphemous infidel nations; but they will be worsted in the fray.

Someone may ask, "Why is this?" We answer, "Because the religious nations are in apostasy and usurpation." They, with their king, will be taking the place of Christ. He should be the acknowledged King of the Jews and the world at the time of the peace proclamation. He, instead of the Gentile nations, should be the Protector of the Jews. And, as we said, God holds these so-called Christian nations responsible to know the end of their times of rulership and yield up the scepter to Christ; but they will insist on reigning instead. The devil has blinded their minds. The false teacher (the Romish church) has leavened the 3 measures of meal with her evil doctrines and they will be guided by her hand to an apparent conquest [Rev.17]. They will be led into danger, and destruction will be imminent. But, when they are at their wits end, all hope taken away, the Lord Himself will appear. He will come to the help of the despairing remnant of the Jews; and, incidentally, some of the Gentile nations will be saved. His coming will end the conflict.

The late war (1914-1918) affords a feeble illustration of these later events. If we let the Allies represent the Western Confederacy, and Germany and her forces figure the Northern Confederacy, we will get some idea of the end of the conflict. The Allies were losing the war. The German forces were rapidly and surely gaining ground, when suddenly something happened which turned the tide. America came to the help of the worsted nations and shortly the war was over. The battle of Armageddon will end in somewhat a similar manner with this difference: the Lord will appear as the ally. He will then forcibly take the reins of government from the Gentiles who will have been usurping His Place as Ruler for 7 years; and heaven will then rule not only invisibly, but manifestly. It will be evident that all things are in subjection to the Son of God, the Messiah and King of the Jews. The glory of the Lord will then come to pass.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

“And I will set my glory among the heathen and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they trespassed against me; therefore hid I my face from them and gave them into the hand of their enemies; so fell they all by the sword.” [Eze.39:21-23]

The Lord's rule will extend over all nations as the above verses describe. His glory will be worldwide. It will cover the earth after the universal judgment of the nations has been executed. Those that remain will assuredly be the ones who repent during the 7 years of trial which will come upon all the world [Rev.3:10]. Jesus tells us of the judgment of all nations and the verdict of the Judge [Mat.25:31-46]. His wisdom and righteousness will be vindicated.

The Lord will be glorified in the midst of His people Israel. Then will come their happy day when Jesus takes the guilt of their sins away. He will teach them how to shout and pray and live rejoicing every day. As all prophecy declares, a happy day for the whole earth will then be the order.

“Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel and will be jealous for my holy name...Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen. But I have gathered them unto their own land...Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” [Eze.39:25-29]

These verses are a further proof that the overthrow of Gog and Magog, as related by Ezekiel, is before the Millennium and must not be confounded with the later judgment recorded by John [Rev.20:7-10]. Ezekiel emphatically declares that Israel shall never have any cause to be afraid after the destruction of those enemies when the Lord appears in their behalf and ends the battle of Armageddon. Thereafter, He is with them, their Protector and King; and it is woe to the beast, individual, or nation that forgets that fact and dares to hurt or destroy **“in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD”** [Isa.65:25]. He promises that He will never anymore hide His face from them. He says His Spirit will be poured out upon the house of Israel. That is, the literal descendants of Abraham will receive a deluge of the Spirit as Isaiah declares,

“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground” [Isa.44:3]. Peace, prosperity, and perpetuity are the promises made to the children of Israel when they are again in their land as a nation. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon them in the beginning of this age, if they had received Him; the nation of Israel rejected their Blessor. But God was not defeated. He began another purpose, which had been hidden for ages—the gathering out from among the Gentiles a people for His Name. This purpose has not yet been consummated. The fullness of the Gentiles is not come in [Rom.11:25]; but when the clock strikes that hour, a great day will dawn for Israel. God’s purposes for the nation will commence to be fulfilled.

“The wilderness will become a fruitful field and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places.” [Isa.32:15-18]

WORK, WAR, WIN

UP! QUIT THY NEST! NO TIME TO REST.
LONG HAS THE ENEMY OPPRESSED
AND KEPT HIS SLAVES IN PAIN.
QUICK NOW, ARISE! THE HOUR FLIES.
WITHOUT THE WORD, THY BROTHER DIES.

UP! LEAVE THY BOW’R! LATE WEARS THE HOUR.
SPEAK LOUD THE WORDS OF LIFE AND POW’R.
THE CHRIST SOON COMES TO REIGN.
OH, DO NOT SHIRK, THO’ ROUND THEE LURK
PITFALLS OF SATAN. UP! AND WORK!

UP! FIGHT LIKE MEN! AND SPEAK AGAIN.
BE NOT DISMAYED IN FIELD, OR FEN.
PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL GAIN.
BE OUT AND OUT; FOR THERE’S NO DOUBT
THE LORD WILL COME WITH TRUMPET SHOUT.

THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE, THE WORSHIP, AND THE LAND [EZE.40-48]

These final chapters of the prophecies of Ezekiel belong entirely to the future of the nation, Israel. No other people are in view; and, there is no foundation for spiritualizing these predictions. They are altogether of a literal character; concerning a literal people and a literal time. The vision will come to pass when Israel is in their own land after the overthrow of Gog and Magog. There should be no difficulty whatsoever as to the time of their accomplishments. They have never been fulfilled in the past. The remnant, which returned under Zerubbabel and Ezra, were far from seeing the marvels of these prophecies realized. Neither have they been fulfilled since. All is still future; but such a near future that it makes our hearts rejoice as we contemplate and study these glorious prophecies which must shortly come to pass. There is no doubt that the due time is here when Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Messiah of Israel, will arise to the help of His people. He watches over His

Word to perform it and not one jot or tittle of it shall be overlooked by its Omniscient Author and Inspirer.

There are in the main 3 distinct parts of this final portion. It is most systematically arranged. We will look at each part in some measure, but not in detail, as we are impressed most energetically by the Holy Spirit to put forth this study book as quickly as possible. So very much of it is coming to pass in the next few years, as the dates have plainly showed.

VISION OF THE TEMPLE [EZE.40]

"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate." [Eze.40:2-3]

Here is another date recorded for our benefit. It emphasizes a much later time, 14 years after the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, which was the last date [Eze.33:21] until we come to our present chapter. The destruction of the city happened in 587 B.C.; 14 years later would be 473 B.C. to which, according to our later day reckoning, 1947 A.D. corresponds. The Temple of the Lord, the jewel and star of that glorious city, Jerusalem, will be completed. Ezekiel mentions the fact that his vision occurred in the beginning of the year, no doubt referring to the sacred year commemorating the time when Israel came up out of Egypt. The Lord declared, ***"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you?"*** [Exo.12:2]; which corresponds with April of our calendar year. The Prophet tells us that, ***"the hand of the Lord was upon me."*** It is the 7th and last time that the phrase is used. It is an important statement and has somewhat the thought of another viewpoint, or a new line of things at hand, which is the case here.

Ezekiel had an experience similar to John on the isle of Patmos. He is taken in his spirit into the city of Jerusalem, though literally he is in his body in Babylon. He is given to see the glorious Temple as it will appear in The Lord's Day. This is conclusive evidence that the vision pertains to the people Israel and not to The Church in any particular. He is set down upon a high mountain to view the grandeur of the building, and he beholds a city toward the south of where he stood. The mountain is no doubt Zion which the prophets declare shall be the foundation of the city and temple of the great King of the Jews, and a source of blessing to the whole world. Isaiah declares, ***"It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow into it"*** [Isa.2:2]. There is an earthly as well as a heavenly Zion [Heb.12:22]. It speaks of Grace in contrast with The Law. Sinai is superseded by Zion. ***"For the Lord hath chosen Zion. He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest forever. Here I will dwell"*** [Psa.132:13-14].

THE MEASURING MAN

As the Prophet gazed, behold a man, whose appearance was as of brass, came into view. He had a line of flax to measure the temple and all that pertained to it. Other prophets have had a similar vision.

- Zechariah lifted up his eyes and beheld a man with a measuring line in his hand who, upon being questioned, said that he was going to measure Jerusalem [Zec.2:1].
- John likewise was so privileged. The angel who talked with him had a **“golden reed to measure the city and gates thereof”** [Rev.21:15].

“And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes and hear with thine ears and set thine heart upon all that I shall show you; for to the intent that I might show them unto thee are thou brought hither. Declare all that thou seest unto the house of Israel.” [Eze.10:4]

Ezekiel, even as John, is in vision on The Lord's Day. He is taken to the very city of his dreams, his desires, and his hopes; and, he beholds the city and temple rebuilt. He is instructed to open his eyes and ears and take in with his heart all that he is about to view that he may thereby be able to cause others to behold the vision. That is the only possible way to make others see the Divine Things; when we behold, we must be gripped by them ourselves. Our hearts must be filled and fired with the certainty of the fulfillment of our visions of Truth; otherwise, we will not impress the hearers. Prophecy must be real to us if we would make it real to our fellows.

Ezekiel is bidden to declare what he is about to behold **“unto the house of Israel.”** These are the people who are especially interested in the vision. It is shown to the Prophet, as representative of his kinsfolks, for their benefit. It relates to their future and glory. Although we may enjoy the truth which it teaches and revel in the certainty of its fulfillment; nevertheless, the Prophet was instructed to declare the vision **TO ISRAEL**. Oh, that there was in them a heart to understand and heed these solemn things! How very much of sorrow and blind stumbling they would thus escape.

DIMENSIONS OF THE HOUSE

“And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and a hand breadth. So he measured the breadth of the building, one reed and the height one reed.” [Eze.40:5]

The house herein described with the wall round about is the entire Temple. There is another wall mentioned in Ezekiel 42:20; it has a length and breadth of 500 reeds. Its purpose, as we read, was to make **“a separation between the sanctuary and profane place.”** This cannot be the same wall as that of Ezekiel 40:5; for this one simply surrounds the outer court, while the other encloses the whole of the temple territory. The man with the reed is busily engaged in measuring all that Ezekiel beholds.

The teaching in this is important. It signifies that every detail of the Millennial Temple is according to the Divine Standard. It is built under the direct

supervision and direction of the heavenly Architect Himself. The blueprint, marked out in the beginning of the reconstruction and regeneration of the world, is being put together according to the aforesaid plans and specifications. The gates, the little and larger chambers, the porches, the pillars, the posts; everything is according to the measurements. The number 12, symbolic of Divine Government, is frequently found in the description. It reminds us of John's vision of the heavenly Jerusalem; the number 12 is quite prominent there as here.

Ezekiel views 3 gates in the wall:

1. An East gate [Verse 6],
2. a North gate [Verse 20] and
3. a South gate [Verse 24]; but there was no West gate.

Seven steps lead up to these gates; 7 being the number of perfection as to consummation. These gates are not mere openings to allow of entrance, but are rather passages joining together separate parts of the great building, which project into the outer court. On both sides of these openings (gates), the Prophet sees 3 little chambers; 3 on each side, each 6 cubits square. There is also a porch in connection with each passage way; but from the description we would rather designate these as halls or vestibules. There is such a porch mentioned in Solomon's temple: "***Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord weep, between the porch and the altar...***" [Joe.2:17]. This was not an outside porch, but an inside anteroom. These vestibules, which Ezekiel beholds, are the termination of the gates leading into the outer court.

The vestibule of the East gate is reserved for "***the prince***" of the house of David. He comes in and goes out by this gate [Eze.44:1-3]. Each of these passages had 2 posts, 2 cubits thick and 60 cubits in height upon which were palm trees. These are probably of some ornamental precious material, not living trees. They symbolize prosperity and victory and are prominent in the vision of the Millennial Temple. They are seen first on the high posts of pillars, which tower far above all, the eminent conspicuous part of the outer court of the temple, as it is entered. Palm branches were used in the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, which foreshadows the Millennial blessings; hence, we can understand the preeminence of the palm tree in the description of the Temple.

EZEKIEL WITHIN THE COURT

The man with the measuring reed now enters the inner court and the Prophet follows. It is smaller than the outer court, and its approach is by way of 3 gates in the wall of the outer court. There are 8 steps to these passageways, the number which speaks of the new creation. The inner court, the place of worship, has thus the seal upon it of a new age which Ezekiel visions in its dawning. We notice also the little chambers here as in the hallways of the outer court. All is correspondence and harmony.

Ezekiel enters by the East gate [Verse 6]; then he is brought to the North gate [Verse 20]; then to the South [Verse 24], where the man measured everything

according to the righteous line which he carried. Again, the Prophet is brought to the North gate and is shown some tables in the porch (vestibule) in this passageway, which were not in the others. There are 8 of these tables, for the purpose of slaying the burnt offerings, the sin offerings, and the trespass offerings. These are to be offered in the Millennium as a memorial of Calvary [Eze.40:39].

The tables in the vision were of hewn stone, equipped to hold the instruments wherewith the priests will slay the sacrifices [Eze.40:42]. Then, besides the chambers and entries to the gates where they will wash the sacrifices [Eze.40:38], the man measured chambers for the singers and the priests. The priests are the custodians of the house; they have charge of the ordinances of worship. Mention is especially made of Zadok among the sons of Levi. God does not forget His faithful saints. Their children reap of their blessings even to the 10th generation [Eze.40:44-46].

Finally, the Prophet is brought to the entrance of the Temple proper. The porch (vestibule) introduces us to the building itself: It is 20 cubits long and 11 cubits broad. The Septuagint manuscript gives only 10 cubits which probably is correct as conforming to the length being half as broad as it is long. Besides the posts of the porch there are pillars, one on each side of the entrance, reminding us of the 2 pillars: **Jachin** (“establish”) and **Boaz** (“strength”) in the temple of Solomon [1Ki.7:21]. The glorious Millennial Temple will witness of the power and faithfulness of Jehovah. Every whit of that Temple will say GLORY.

THE INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE WITH ITS BUILDINGS [EZE.41]

“Afterward he brought me to the Temple and measured the posts six cubits broad on the one side and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle...Then went he inward and measured the posts of the door two cubits, and the door seven cubits before the Temple, and he saith unto me, This is the Most Holy place.” [Eze.41:1-4]

In the vision, Ezekiel is being gradually introduced to all that pertains to Israel’s Temple of the future. At this stage, he is now brought into the vestibule, the entrance to the building. He beholds the Tabernacle and the Most Holy—a house within a house, as it were. Then there are the side buildings, the hinder places, and the beautiful interior of the great God of Israel.

In the first 2 verses, the Prophet is given the dimensions of the Holy place, or tabernacle as it is called [Eze.41:1]. Nothing is said of its furnishings. The sacred enclosure is to be 40 cubits long and half as wide. It corresponds in size to the Holy Place in Solomon’s temple, but is twice as large as the tabernacle or Holy place in the wilderness.

Then the man with the line went inward; Ezekiel is not bidden, or brought in there, as he measures the Most Holy. It appears that he waits outside. This is the dwelling place of Jehovah, for Him alone; it is holy ground. The measurements reveal it as a perfect cube, 20 cubits long and 20 cubits broad [Eze.41:4]. There was a door separating the 2 compartments, as well as a door leading to the Holy Place. The Holy Place was 10 cubits broad being a

double door, 5 cubits on each side; but the door leading to the Most Holy was 7 cubits broad, the number of Divine Perfection [Eze.41:1-4].

Then was given to the Prophet the measurements of the wall which surrounded the above sacred enclosures (it was 6 cubits) and the size of the side buildings (or “*chambers*” [RV]). These side buildings are each 4 cubits. They were in Solomon’s temple also [1Ki.6:5] and were fastened to the house itself with beams of cedar [1Ki.6:10]. In the Millennial Temple, according to the specifications outlined here, they will be somewhat in the same positions, as additions to the main building. We are not informed as to the use of these chambers. There will be 90 of them, 30 on the North, 30 on the West, and 30 on the South side. None are found on the East side, it being the entrance way to the whole edifice, an imposing front to the Temple.

Then another building comes into view. It lies toward the West behind the temple itself. Its dimensions are 70 cubits broad and 90 cubits long. Its wall is 5 cubits in thickness. Ezekiel does not state the use of this large place [Eze.41:12-15]. Israel will learn about it later.

THE DECORATION OF THE INTERIOR

Now, we come to the inside of the wonderful Temple that will be the glory of Israel for 1,000 years. Beautiful, rare wood is its prominent feature, teaching that it is for the use of humanity.

The door posts, the narrow windows, the galleries roundabout, and the ceiling were all of wood. It is inlaid or carved with cherubim and palm trees. It is similar in this respect to Solomon’s Temple: “*And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers within and without*” [1Ki.6:29]. A palm tree was enclosed by 2 cherubim. These cherubim tell us of sacrifice and service, the palm tree of victory and prosperity. How significant. The interior of the Temple will proclaim, in its beautiful carving and ornamentation, the sacrifice, the cross, the blood, the death that brought the prosperity and victory, that will be in evidence at that time.

The cherubim are seen in mighty array in this book of Ezekiel. They are an essential part of it; therefore it is fitting that they, or rather that which they symbolize, is immortalized in the beautiful wood of the Temple. But here they are shown with only 2 faces, the lion and the man, not 4 faces as in the opening vision [Eze.1:10-12]. Is that not significant? For as we know, these faces speak of different characteristics of Christ. His official lineament⁸, as Lion and man, Ox and Eagle, are portrayed by the cherubic faces; in these His people have part. But in the Temple only 2 of those faces are carved—those that especially concern Israel—**THE LION**, figuring His Kingly glory, and **THE MAN**, His true humanity. When at last the Temple is a reality in Jerusalem, the city of the Great God of heaven, it will be manifested in all its measurements and beauty as the result of Christ’s redemptive work. The glorious person of Christ, as the King of Judah and as the Son of Man, will be eulogized and immortalized in every stick of timber and in every work of

⁸ An outline, feature, or contour of a body or figure and especially of a face.

beauty in that imposing edifice of Divine Structure. His the victory and the glory and the honor! And we say, Amen; so let it be.

An altar now comes into view and is measured. It is the altar of incense and will be all of wood. The man spoke to the Prophet regarding it saying, “***This is the table which is before Jehovah***” [Eze.41:22]. It is not overlaid with gold as it was in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and in Solomon’s Temple. It appears to emphasize the teaching that the humanity of Christ will be to the front of the stage, as it were, during the Millennium. That is, it will be the **FACE OF A MAN** that will greet men when they look at the Temple of God. The King of glory will be **A MAN**. God’s Almightyness will be vested in **A MAN** for 1,000 years. **A MAN** will rule the nations with a rod of iron and receive the worship and honor of all men as God. His fragrance will be wafted to the Temple on high from all the prayers and praises that ascend from men in the Temple on earth. The incense altar of the future will be almost twice the size of the one in the tabernacle and temple of the past. It expresses the great degree of adoration that God will receive from the world during Christ’s Millennial reign. It will be far more than any time heretofore; a hint of the eternal worship which God will receive from humanity because of redemption.

Nothing is told us of any other article in the Holy Place. Even the omissions of Scripture are significant.

There are 2 doors with 2 leaves (or sides) designated as “***turning leaves***.” These 2 are decorated with Cherubim and palm trees.

CHAMBERS FOR THE PRIESTS [EZE.42]

Then he brought me forth into the outer court, the way toward the north and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place and which was before the building toward the north.” [Eze.42:1]

The man with the line is still busy. He leads Ezekiel soon to more investigation and measurements. Now it is the chambers of the priests that occupy him. He goes toward the North and faces a building over against the separate place, which is the same building that we read of in Ezekiel 41:12,

“Now the building that was before the separate place at the end toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits.”

There are 3 of these dwellings: North, South, and East buildings; but we will not go into detail here regarding the measurements and description. Two of them are designated as Holy Chambers [Eze.42:13]. The priests who are called to approach unto the Lord shall therein eat the most holy things, and therein they will place the most holy things: The meal offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. At the end of these buildings, we later are shown the kitchens where the priests shall prepare the offerings [Eze.46:19-20]. But the chamber buildings will be for their clothing and their preparation for this holy ministry. The priests were never allowed to wear their holy garments outside of the inner court lest they should be profaned and likewise we read the same directions here.

Finally the measuring of the inner house is completed and the Prophet is led back to the starting point. The gate is toward the East. Here the measurement reaches up to 500 reeds, and also the other sides, West, South, and North are found of equal measure. It is difficult to reconcile this immense temple territory with Mt. Moriah, the chosen site for the Temple; but that is explained when we remember that when the Lord returns there are to be great physical changes in the earth in Palestine. Zechariah declares that Mt. Olivet shall cleave in the midst and form a great valley and that the land from Geba to Rimmon shall be turned into a plain [Zech.14:4-10]. This extensive area is no doubt the territory of the entire temple buildings. There was an immense wall round about the enclosure, to make a separation between that which is holy and that which is common [Eze.42:20].

THE GLORY [EZE.43]

We begin here the 2nd part of the final section of Ezekiel's marvelous prophecies. We have walked throughout the Temple, and the various by-paths within, with the Prophet and the man with the measure. Now, we are privileged to view greater things if possible. The man with the line still leads on.

"Afterward he brought me to the gate even the gate that looketh toward the east: And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and His voice was as the noise of many waters and the earth shined with His glory. It was according to the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city and the visions were like the visions that I saw by the river Chebar. And I fell on my face?"
[Eze.43:1-3]

They are again at the same gate by which they entered the house. At that time, all was in sacred silence. Not a sound disturbs the stillness, not a form invades the scene; but now there is a change. Suddenly, as they stand at the East gate, there shines forth before the eyes of the Prophet the glory of the God of Israel. Notice the latter phrase. Ezekiel beholds the glory of the God of Israel—His Father's God, the Keeper of Israel, He who neither slumbers, nor sleeps [Psa.121:4]. His voice was heard as the sound of many waters. This is the dedication of the house by the Lord taking up His abode therein. The same event, in type, happened when the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was dedicated. A cloud covered the Tent of the Congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the house" [Exo.40:34-35]. Also, a similar happening is recorded in the time of Solomon's giving over the house to the Lord which he built for His indwelling: "***The cloud filled the house, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house***" [1Ki.8:10-11]. But those clouds of glory were as nothing compared to the glory which will fill the Millennial Temple with splendor.

The Lord could not manifest Himself in the past as He will in the future; for His Church, His Body, was not yet gathered. In this latter time they will be with Him. We saw the significance of this glorious vision in the earlier chapters. It is Christ appearing to Israel and taking possession of the place prepared for Him. But He will not be alone. This is the meaning of His voice as "***the sound of many waters,***" though as one voice. The God of glory will include the redeemed and glorified Body of Christ. The fulfillment of the vision has

never taken place and never can until Christ and His mystical Body are one in actual experience.

But we must digress a moment and notice an important statement. Ezekiel emphasizes the fact which he desires to call attention to: It is not the first time he visioned the glory of God, as manifested in the temple vision. He points us back to the beginning of his book when he saw the heavens opened and beheld the glory of God as he was **“by the river Chebar.”** Also, he glimpsed the same vision when he went into the plain [Eze.3:22]. And again later, the supernatural sight was visible to him, above the temple in Jerusalem when he saw the glory of the Lord as though leaving the city [Eze.10]. He says the vision he now beholds is like the others even as the one he saw at the time he came **“to destroy the city.”** Are these not significant words? How did Ezekiel destroy the city? By his prophecy he did so. His words were the words of Jehovah, hence, must have a fulfillment.

But we want to notice the decided and unmistakable similarity of the former visions of the glory of the Lord with the present one. All commentators of Ezekiel agree that the latter vision symbolizes the return of the Lord to Israel and Jerusalem. We perfectly agree with this; but we add, they all declare His return to the chosen people and city. We have already shown by the exposition of Ezekiel, that His favor is again returning to Israel. The evidence of this is indisputable. World War I was the beginning of the end of Gentile Times, which latter presages the dominion again of the Jews. The one dispensation is gradually closing, while the other is opening. Hence, the opened heaven in the beginning of Ezekiel's book, with the vision of the glory of the Lord, expresses exactly the same fact as the similar vision of the end. They both teach that the judgment of the nation is over, its captivity a thing of the past, by the fact of the Lord's return to them. He has been gradually showing His face and favor and finally the covering will drop off their eyes and they will cry, **“Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him”** [Isa.25:9]. Ezekiel sees the God-Man on the throne in the place of His rest. The Cherubim will be seen in Person, Christ and His overcoming saints, as well as the whole Body of saints, who have been gathered to the Name of Jesus during this age. Ezekiel writes,

“So the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court, and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard Him speaking unto me out of the house and the man stood by me. And He said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, the place of the soles of my feet where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever and my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile.”
[Eze.43:5-7]

The Prophet is transported into the house. He gets there this time without following the man with the line. The Spirit takes him up and carries him into the inner court and he finds the glory of the Lord filling the Temple. He hears the voice out of the glory cloud even as Peter did on the Mount of Transfiguration. The speaker is the Lord Himself, who has come into His Tabernacle. At this time, He declares that now he will bless the people of Israel and never again will they depart from Him, nor He from them. **“He will rest in His love. He will joy over them with singing”** [Zep.3:17]. It will be in 1947 A.D., according to the reversal of the times in their application to Christ's 2nd Advent, when this Temple of the Lord will be finished and sanctified by the

presence of the Lord. It will take at least 7 years for the cleansing of the land after the dreadful carnage of Armageddon and the judgment of the nations [Mat.25:31-46]. It will be during that eventful period that the Millennial Temple will be built. The Lord will have a new house. The one in which the image of the Antichrist shall be set up is surely going to be cast down. Nothing that rebellious man builds shall stand in that day.

“For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the dry land and I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come and I will fill this house with glory saith the Lord of hosts...The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts, and in this place will I give peace.” [Hag.2:6-9]

Haggai prophesied contemporary with Zechariah during the rebuilding of the Temple after the Babylonish captivity. He uttered the above significant words. And though, in a measure, they had a fulfillment as Christ came while that Temple was still standing; yet we can readily see that the great fulfillment is still future. The prophesied shaking has not yet come; for **“this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made that those things which cannot be shaken may remain”** [Heb.12:27]. Old things, built by the old creation, must be pulled down. Everything will be built on a new foundation when Christ is accepted as King by the Jews. In 1 day a nation shall be born again. It will be an astounding event as the Prophet Isaiah declares [Isa.66:8]. He asks in astonishment, **“Who hath heard such a thing? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in a day?”**

The glory will be visible and permanent. The Lord will dwell forever with His renewed people in a renewed spot of the earth. The Desire of all nations will have a House upon the earth in which to dwell, as well as in the heavens. The Shekinah Glory will envelope the city on earth as of old; a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night covered the children of Israel in the wilderness [Isa.4:5]. Then, His holy name will no more be blasphemed and the nation of Israel will be ashamed of their past history of rebellion and rejection of His grace. The Prophet's description of this marvelous temple will be studied with delight shortly, if not at present, by the returning Jews. The Scriptures of their restoration will eventually lead them to repentance.

“Upon the top of the mountain, the whole limit round about shall be most holy. Behold this is the law of the house.” [Eze.43:12]

Then, Ezekiel is given the measures of the altar. The fact is emphasized that the measurement is by the cubit and a hand breadth, **“even the bottom shall be a cubit and the border thereof a span and this shall be the higher place of the altar”** [Eze.43:13]. We will not enter into the significance of all this description, for significance there is, undoubtedly; but emphasize the fact that there shall be an altar of burnt offering upon which sacrifices shall again be consumed. The priest, the sons of Zadok will minister unto the Lord the King of Israel. By the way, Ezekiel was of this priestly line. Here, he represents the priests. That is one reason that the details of all that pertains to the future house of the Lord is shown to him. The priests must follow the guide and learn the requirements of their office. Some may be surprised that bloody sacrifices will again be required; but so we read. They will be as a memorial of Calvary and the death of Christ. The nation shall never for one moment be allowed to forget

the price that was paid for their redemption. It will be kept fresh in their minds by the continual offerings.

Today the memorial of Calvary is in the symbols of bread and wine of which we partake and remember Christ and His death. But when He returns, this “forget me not” feast ends. It is only till He come. The sacrifices will be resumed instead, as the memorial of Christ’s shedding of His blood. The nations of the earth will thus be taught redemption. The children born during the Millennium will learn of the cross through the death of lambs and goats and bullocks. But there will not be the formal acting out of the details of the killing and the eating of these sacrifices as in the days of the past. Redemption will be a fact; the acknowledgment of which will produce the greatest scene of worship and praise that this old earth has ever beheld. The meaning of the cross will be in great measure understood. Some of its depths and heights and lengths and breadths will be fathomed by even the earth-dwelling people in that glad Millennial day. The sacrifices in the new Jerusalem on earth will be a constant witness and reminder of Him who died, not only for all Israel, but for all creation as well. In the new Jerusalem above, the Lamb **“as it had been slain”** will be on exhibition and the saints will sing redemption’s story and the angels will be forced to fold their wings (if they have any) and be still, as the song says.

THE GATE AND THE PRINCE [EZE.44]

“Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east and it was shut. Then said the Lord unto me: This gate shall be shut. It shall not be opened and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord God of Israel hath entered in by it; therefore, it shall be shut. It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate and shall go out the same way.” [Eze.44:1-3]

The man is again the guide to the Prophet. He leads him out of the inner court where he had been in the previous chapter. It was there that he beheld the glory of the Lord and heard His voice and saw the great altar with its ordinance. But now he is again at the Eastern gate. It is no longer open; for as it is written, It is shut **“because the glory of the God of Israel hath entered in”** by that way. Furthermore, it is distinctly stated that, **“It shall not be opened and no man shall enter in by it.”** But immediately we are informed that the gate is **“for the prince, he shall sit in it and eat bread before the Lord.”** Here is somewhat of a difficulty. On the one hand the gate is said to be shut and no man shall be allowed to enter into the Temple by way of that gate; and, on the other hand, it is said to be for the use of the prince. We would infer **“the prince”** meant Christ, as in Ezekiel 34 and 37. He is styled a Prince; also in many other cases (see Rev.1:5, Dan.9:25, Isa.9:6-7, and Isa.55:4 RV)

But here, in these closing chapters, Ezekiel informs us of a prince who cannot be Christ. He mentions him 17 times, but not once is he designated as **MY SERVANT DAVID**, or **DAVID**, as is the case when the prince plainly refers to the Messiah. Furthermore, we learn that he must bring burnt offerings and peace offerings and worship in the same manner as the common people. We also learn he has sons, and he is warned not to give them an inheritance that he unjustly takes from another [Eze.46:18]. We cannot imagine that such

admonitions would be fitting as regards Christ who will be the supreme Ruler of the universe at that time. The prince mentioned here no doubt is Christ's representative on earth who will have his throne in Jerusalem, while Christ's throne will be in the heavens. The King above will need such a prince to represent him; for He will not lie on the earth Himself. None of the saints with their glorified bodies will remain here. Their sphere will be heavenly, but they with Christ will visit the earth. The 40 days that Christ remained on earth after His resurrection is an earnest of the future. He was not present with the disciples all the time, but met with them in sweet fellowship at intervals. Likewise in the Millennium, he will appear and show Himself to them. But this man whom Ezekiel calls "*prince*" will sit upon the throne of David in Palestine as the vicar of Christ, during the Millennium. He will have a place superior to the rest of the nation and will enter the Temple by way of the East gate, even as the glory of the Lord will enter that way, and he must go out the same gateway [Eze.44:3], as is an ordinance insisted upon.

Ezekiel now has a further experience...another act is put on the reel. He is brought to the North gate and beholds the glory of the Lord again. It fills the house. He falls upon his face awed by the splendor. The Lord now addresses him personally, calling him "*Son of man*," and gives him sundry directions concerning the ordinances of the house and the laws thereof. Observe the fact that the Temple is repeatedly called the "*house of the Lord*." It portrays the place, exalted above the hills where the glory of God will dwell. The nations will honor that city and that house and, year by year, will send their representatives to worship there. The Prophet stands here as a priest. He is given a message to the nation of Israel. They are designated, "*a rebellious house*," but it is simply as a reminder of what they had been. In the vision, those years are behind them. The abomination of the past, the pollutions of the Lord's house, and all else that is sinful and vile will be put away forever. "*Let it suffice you of all your abominations*" [Eze.44:6] is the word to Ezekiel. The burden of his words is that God's house demands holiness. Sin and failure is no longer to be tolerated. the Lord instructs that the uncircumcised in heart and flesh shall not enter the sanctuary of the Lord; but, in that day of His reign, those words will be easy to bear. The people will all be born again and His yoke of grace will be easy and His burden of faith will be light. His Sabbath will be "*a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable*" [Isa.58:13]. His people will all be holy and yielded to Him. The spirit will be poured out upon them and the fruit of holiness will be inevitable.

The Levites and priests come in for special mention [Eze.44:10-31]. Some of these are seen degraded as respects their office. Here is another question for man: "When was the time that these Levites failed?" It cannot refer to past generations of the tribe, but to the time just previous to the 2nd Advent of the Lord. There will probably be some Levites of the tribe of Aaron who will fail, in measure, in their loyalty to God during the 7 years of trial which is coming upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth [Rev.3:10]. It cannot mean that they apostatize in that dark time, but are guilty of some minor offense which makes them ineligible for the office of priesthood. It is not a little thing to be untrue to God. It has serious consequences as regards our official position before God, now and always. To be faithful to God in a dark and difficult time brings commendation and reward far beyond what we can even estimate. It is written of some that they were faithful "*even in those days*" wherein Antipas, that faithful martyr, was slain [Rev.2:13].

Those early days were especially dark and terrible; but they were merely a foretaste of worse ones in the beginning of the next age. At that time the nation of Israel, who will have returned in outward semblance to the Lord, will in reality worship the Antichrist because of fear of death. Many of the Levites will, no doubt, be obliged to play some part in this departure or at least the Lord judges them so, whether it is a case of omission or commission. We read,

"Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity." [Eze.44:12]

Hence, for this transgression and disloyalty they will be barred from ministering before the Lord.

"And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed." [Eze.44:13]

Yet they shall not be cast away altogether from the Lord. His grace shall find a way. There will be some service for them. It is written,

"I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein." [Eze.44:14]

They shall have the stewardship of the holy things.

"But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God." [Eze.44:15]

The sons of Zadok (Ezekiel was of that line) will no doubt be found faithful in that future time, the time of apostasy which is due to come upon Jew and Gentile. The Lord announces the reward for their faithfulness. The earthly priesthood is to be reestablished and will be vested in the sons of Zadok. They are to come near to Jehovah and minister in His presence. They shall offer the sacrifices which will memorialize the death of Christ upon Calvary. All the directions are given as to their garments, their habits, their service, and their salary. Verily, they shall have their reward. They shall be teachers among the people and also exercise some official authority.

"And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my Sabbaths." [Eze.44:23-24]

The law of defilement as to the dead will be scrupulously observed; but there will be slight possibility of such condition; for death will be almost unknown during the Millennium especially in Israel. The devil will be bound for 1,000 years and his terrible weapon, death, will scarcely be in evidence except in cases of utter rebellion; and then, it will be the sign of eternal doom. Hence, we say, the priests shall rarely be in danger of defilement. They shall

have no inheritance in the land, because the Lord Himself shall be their possession. In a special sense Jehovah will be near and precious to them. The priests shall not eat of anything that is dead of itself or torn, whether it be fowl or beast [Eze.44:31]. The priests shall feed on that which figures Christ. All the offerings, first fruits, etc. shall be theirs to use for themselves and their families that the blessing of the Lord may rest upon the land. They will be partakers with the altar [1Co.10:13].

DIVISION OF THE HOLY LAND [EZE.45]

“Moreover when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land; the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds and the breadth shall be ten thousand. This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about. Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth, square round about, and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof. And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand and the breadth of ten thousand and in it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place.” [Eze.45:1-3]

The land of Palestine, in the uttermost dimensions as promised to Abraham [Gen.15:18], shall be divided by lot for an inheritance to the children of Israel. At this state of procedure, the first act on the program will be to give the Lord His portion of the land. This special part is marked out, its length and breadth is plainly set forth so that there shall be no question. It is called the “**oblation unto the Lord**” (or heave offering which means the lifting up of the hands). When anything was offered to the Lord the offerer raised his hand. The extent of this oblation seems great; but, we must remember that the land will be greatly enlarged, while the mountain on which the Temple will stand shall be highly exalted. We cannot understand how all this shall be accomplished, but it is enough that it is so written.

In the center of this holy portion of Jehovah’s, will be the sanctuary around which the priests shall have their portion. Then the Levites will come next. After this the measurement of the part of the city is given, which is for the whole house of Israel. Finally, the portion for the Prince is recorded. It has 2 sections, the one on the West and the other on the East of the Lord’s oblation. He is in closest connection with the sanctuary, as head and ruler.

After these allotments are secured by measure, there are some exhortations to the princes, or heads of the different tribes. They are admonished to execute justice. “**Ye shall have just balances, a just ephah and a just bath**” [Eze.45:9-11]. Then the Prince is again mentioned. He will also receive an oblation from the people [Eze.45:13-16], and is himself to offer, at stated intervals, offerings unto the Lord to make reconciliation for the house of Israel. The offerings will be simply of retrospective value, referring to Calvary and the great work accomplished there. Calvary and the great work accomplished there is to be constantly and vividly kept in mind by these ceremonies and offerings. We will quote at length from this portion.

2 GREAT FEASTS

“18-22 Thus saith the Lord God: In the first month, in the first day of the month thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish and cleanse the sanctuary. And the priest shall take of the book of the sin-offering and put it upon the posts of the house and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar and upon the posts of the gate. And so shalt thou do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth and for his that is simple. In the first month in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the Prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land, a bullock for a sin offering. And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the Lord, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily for seven days and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering. ²⁵ In the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days.” [Eze.45:18-22, 25a]

Here we have instructions for the Passover feast and the Feast of Tabernacles. But, before this there are instructions for the cleansing of the sanctuary...it begins the Jewish year.

The offering of the young bullock on the 1st day of the 1st month shows forth Christ as the Sanctifier of the sanctuary because of His unblemished devotedness even unto death. On the 14th of the same first month, the Passover feast will be celebrated. It will continue 7 days. Each day, the Prince will prepare a burnt offering unto the Lord. The precious blood of the Lamb of God will thus be constantly remembered as the basis of all their blessings. The Feast of Tabernacles will likewise be celebrated for 7 days of offerings on each day.

It is surely significant that only these 2 feasts, the Passover feast and the Feast of Tabernacles, are to be celebrated during the Millennium.

The one, **THE PASSOVER FEAST**, represents the 1st Advent (coming) of the Lord in weakness and humiliation to suffer and die for the nation of Israel as well as for all people. It was first kept by Israel in Egypt when they killed the Lamb and put the blood upon the doorposts and lintels of their houses to escape the wrath of the destroying angel [Exo.14]. They observed it in the wilderness [Num.9:5], and in the land [Jos.5:10], and, during their long dispersion (19 hundred years) since the Roman army came up against the city, Jerusalem, and led them away captive (71 A.D.), the Jews have not forgotten to keep the Passover. It is marvelous that though they are judicially blinded as a nation to its significance; yet once a year a family celebrates that typical event. Each time, the father (or head) repeats the longing desire of their hearts in these words, “*This day here, next year in Jerusalem.*” In these last years, some of them have had that wish granted; they have kept the Passover in Jerusalem...still it is not yet as they desire. The Kingdom is not established, the Temple is not built, the Messiah has not yet come. But, when these glorious hopes are realized and they keep the Passover, what meaning it will have for them! What memories will cluster around it! What glory will fill their hearts when they sit around the table, each family, and remember Calvary! What praise the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, their own Kinsman-Redeemer sitting on the throne of glory, will receive from their overflowing hearts! It will rival the hallelujah chorus of heaven, the sound of the voices as the sound of many waters [Rev.19:6].

The 2nd one, **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES**, which the nation of Israel will celebrate during the Millennium, represents the 2nd Advent of Christ, when all the promises will be made good to them. They will come into the blessings provided by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. For 1,000 years they will enjoy the spoils of Calvary. There will be no sin, no sickness, no death, nor sorrow, nor tears in all that Holy Land. Palestine will really come into the meaning of its name. It will be holiness unto the Lord. The harvest will have come. The ingathering will have taken place. The closing verses of the prophecy of Zechariah describe, in some detail, the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles when Israel will be in their land.

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.” [Zec.14:16-21]

ISRAEL UNDER GRACE, WORSHIP OF THE PRINCE [EZE.46]

“Thus saith the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the East shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the Prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without and shall stand by the post of the gate and the priest shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate, then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.” [Eze.46:1-2]

This 46th Chapter is almost entirely devoted to the Prince. It describes the entire religious program relating to him during the Millennium. The prominent gate on the East side will be closed the 6 working days, but opened on the Sabbath, as well as in the day of the new moon. Those will be 2 prominent days in the coming age. They both have a figurative meaning which shall be fulfilled when Israel shall have received Christ. They will really keep a Sabbath rest then. The moon is typical of Israel in their fluctuating character. Their glory waned, like the moon, and disappeared for a while; but, they will shine like the new moon when their light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon them [Isa.60:1].

On the Sabbath, the Prince will worship at the threshold of the gate, and the people before the gate; but neither people nor Prince will enter inside the veil. It will be an earthly worship. The Prince occupies the central place as representative of the people. He presents his offerings to the Lord while the people stand outside before the East gate. The offerings during the millennium on the Sabbath are more abundant than were required under the

law dispensation, which evidences the higher ground of the worship of restored Israel under grace.

There are further instructions presented here. The worship of the people are now considered. When they come before the Lord in their solemn feasts, some will come in by way of the North gate and leave by way of the South gate and vice versa. Those who enter by the South gate will go out by the North gate. No one is permitted to leave by the way he entered (except the Prince [Eze.45:15]; probably to avoid confusion because of the multitude of worshippers who will be present on those solemn occasions.

Another point of interest commented upon is the fact that the Prince will be in the midst of those worshipping masses [Eze.45:10]. It reminds us of our Lord Jesus Christ who has promised to be in the midst of the 2 or 3 who are gathered together in His Name. The Prince, as His representative, will be in the midst of redeemed Israel whenever they gather together.

A further significant item, noticed in these instructions relative to Israel's worship in the Millennium, is the fact of the absence of the burnt offering for the evening. In the old dispensation, there was the requirement of the daily burnt offering, a lamb every morning and a lamb every evening; but here there is no mention of the evening burnt offering. It seems to imply that there will be no night in that happy land. The day will have dawned for Israel forever. There will be no night there in the sense of spiritual night and even the physical night will be lightened to a great degree, if not altogether.

THE SONS AND SERVANTS

Finally, there are instructions concerning the family of the Prince. We are thus taught that he has natural descendants and whatever gifts he bestows upon them shall be their possession by inheritance. This proves that the Prince of Ezekiel is not Christ. His gifts to his servants shall belong to them until the year of liberty when they shall return again to the Prince. There is further instruction regarding the Prince's conduct toward the people. He is admonished against oppressing them or thrusting them out of their possessions; which fact further justifies the interpretation that the Prince is not Christ, but simply His representative upon the earth.

VISION OF THE LAND AND ITS HEALING STREAM [EZE.47]

"Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house, and behold waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the East and the waters came out from under the right side of the house at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward, and behold there ran out waters on the right side." [Eze.47:1-2]

Here is a very interesting portion of this prophetic book that was a vision, as was much of the teaching of Ezekiel. But it is no foolish imagery, nor is it to be spiritualized. It is a prophecy of a literal river, which will bring literal rejuvenation and physical blessings to a physical earth. We need not trouble ourselves as to the manner of its flow, nor need we puzzle ourselves about the difficulties and impossibilities. With God nothing is impossible. When the

due time arrives, some lightning-like changes will take place on this earth ball. The coming age will be miraculous and astounding. The Creator will re-create some things. He who called the earth into being by His Word will be on the scene; hence, why question the why or where of the marvelous stream that we read shall proceed out from under the Temple in Jerusalem?

John had a similar vision regarding the heavenly city, the throne of God and the Lamb [Rev.22]. Others of the prophets tell us of the great irrigation scheme which the Lord will put into service when He is in command of the situation.

- Isaiah tells us, ***“The parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water”*** [Isa.35:7].
- Joel had a vision of the same mighty inundating water supply. ***“A fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord and shall water the valley of Shittim”*** [Joe.3:18].
- Zechariah is more explicit in his description of that life giving stream that shall flow out from Jerusalem. ***“And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be”*** [Zec.14:8].

The Lord will not have to harness the Jordan to get His water supply. He declares that He will do a new thing. ***“I will open rivers in the high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water”*** [Isa.42:18]. The waters which Ezekiel beheld issued from under the threshold from the right side of the house, the south side of the altar. The description of the beginning of this stream is most interesting and significant:

It will come from out the Millennial Temple. Its source is supernatural and the waters gush forth in ever increasing volume. The stream does not become shallower, but deepens as it flows which is unusual; for it is not dependent upon any springs or streams of earth for its increase. It is a miraculous stream with an unexplainable self-supplying reservoir.

The man with the measuring line in his hand is again on the scene. He is plumbing the depths of the holy waters. He walks into the stream guiding Ezekiel, a 1,000 cubits and the waters are shallow. They just reach to the ankles; but they go on advancing a further 1,000 cubits, they reach the loins and the next 1,000 cubits are beyond Ezekiel to fathom them. According to our reckoning, they had gone a mile and a half from the source of the river.

The rivers describe for us a condition of prosperity and rejuvenation that is beyond our finite minds to understand for the nation of Israel and the land. It has its spiritual counterpart in the marvelous outpouring of the Spirit which will come upon the people. Rivers of living water will flow out of their innermost being [Joh.7:38] and inundate all those around with spiritual life and vigor. Those spiritual rivers will have their source in Christ as the Head and Life of a new creation; even as the physical river that comes out from the Temple is a figure of Christ. The spiritual stream will deepen, as will be the case in the natural, as the Millennium advances and the people yield more and more to

the refreshing sway of the Holy Spirit. There may be an application of this fertilizing stream in the life of everyone who receives the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal fashion; but the real interpretation is to the Millennium and the land of Palestine. It refers to the dry and arid ground, making it fruitful and beautiful.

The guide brought Ezekiel to a point where the waters were too deep to measure; then he brought him back from whence they started. Then the Prophet notices many trees on the banks of the river, trees on the one side and trees on the other side. He is amazed at their sudden appearance. The waters had caused them to spring forth. They witness of the great fertility which the stream will produce in nature. Abundance of all that is desirable and beautiful will spring forth suddenly when the Temple is built and the city of Jerusalem is in the hands of its rightful owners, the Jews, as a new creation, the blessed heritage of the Lord.

The man with the line in his hand explains to Ezekiel that the waters go toward the east country and go down into the desert, toward the plains of Jordan, which signifies a dry, parched place. The desert will be transformed by this river of life. It will cause the land almost immediately to blossom and burst forth into such beauty as no natural gardener could make it with years of toil. Today, men are endeavoring to transform Palestine into a land of beauty at great outlay of money and labor; but, if they will wait a little while, the Lord will accomplish it in His own time and His own way. The living stream will flow into the Dead Sea and it will be healed. In all places of death, devastation, and decay, life, abundant life, will be manifested. Wherever the waters go, things will grow.

The rivers will be filled with fish as we read, “**Everything shall live whither the river cometh**” [Eze.47:9]. The fishermen shall stand upon it from En-ge-di, the one end of the Dead Sea, and En-eglaim, at the other end. Yet there will be miry marshes and pools which will show no sign of restoration, a hint that the Millennium will not be the perfect eternal state. Upon the earth there will be many conditions remaining subject to further change. Man himself will still be in his body of humiliation. It will only be in heaven that the eternal state will have begun. The saints there will be 1,000 years ahead of those on earth.

The description of trees on both sides of the living stream reminds us of a similar scene in Revelation 19, though the one is a vision of heavenly realities, while the other is of earth. “**Their leaf shall not fade,**” the Prophet assures us. They will be green and growing all the year. No sign of death or decay where that wonderful river shall flow. Both its sides shall be lined with these trees, which shall bear fruit, each tree according to its month. There will be a variety suitable to its season. The people will not tire of the fruit, because of its variety. It shall be for food for the people and the leaf shall be for medicine. The trees are symbolic of Christ in His perfection and sustaining power as the strength and health of all men. There is enough in Him to meet the varied needs of all the world. He will satisfy the hunger of each individual. No one need be poor, sick, or hungry with such an abundant supply at hand, is the significance of the description of the river and its beautiful surroundings.

The remainder of this 48th Chapter needs little comment. It is taken up with the land which the children of Israel shall inherit. Observe the emphasis is on the people and the land. There is no spiritualizing of these promises. They refer to “**the twelve tribes**” of Israel as is expressly stated. The 10 tribes (lost to men’s sight, but not to God’s), are here seen united with the 2 tribes, and each tribe gets his portion in the land. According to prophecy, the tribe of Joseph gets 2 portions [Gen.48:22].

There is also provision made for the stranger. When that glorious day of Israel’s restoration and blessing has come, the Arab and the Turk will be treated kindly by Israel and have a portion, if they desire it, in the enlarged land of Palestine. No more will the Gentiles be outcasts and “**aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world**” [Eph.2:12]. God will be the God of the whole earth; for Christ is the world’s Redeemer and Savior. That will be the day when the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man shall be in evidence. But the point that is emphasized and marked out in this prophecy is the fact that the Holy Land belongs to Israel. They have the prior right. Nations are wise who acknowledge that fact today. Strangers may come and build the walls and join themselves to Israel; but Israel will be the chosen nation. They will no longer be the tail; but the head of all nations. Though she is wailing and weeping now, Israel’s day, her singing and rejoicing time, shall surely come.

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. In that day saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine (Israel) and under the fig tree” (Judah).
[Zec.2:10-11 and 3:10]

The Jew will no longer be despised and ostracized, having to “cultivate the art of being a Jew,” which one of that race has said is a necessity if the Jew dares to dream of rising in the world that regards him “as an irritation.” He will be the honored man, the most sought for of all the people, even as Scripture declares,

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you.
[Zec.8:23]

THE ALLOTMENT OF THE LAND [EZE.48]

“Now these are the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamoth, Hazarenan, the border of Damascus northward to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east and west; a portion for Dan.”
[Eze.48:1]

The apportionment of the land to the 12 tribes is by lot, as we read in the preceding chapter,

“So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the

strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.” [Eze.47:21-22]

The disposing will be by the Lord, even as it is already written how it will be allotted. The new order of things is plainly manifested here; for there is a great change from the allotments to the tribes as recorded in Joshua 15-19. The allotments in Joshua 15-19 was the order observed until the captivity of Israel and Judah. The 10 tribes never returned to the land; hence, the division as herein recorded has never been in effect in the history of Israel. It is a further proof, if any is needed, that the prophecy of Ezekiel has reference entirely to the restoration, the building time of the nation.

The allotment of the land is in 12 sections, all similar in dimension, running side by side of each other from East to West: 7 tribes receive their portion in the North and 5 in the South, and in-between lies the oblation reserved for the Lord. In this sacred enclosure of the “**oblation**” is the section given to the Prince, the Levites, and the priests. It also contains the holy city Jerusalem with its great Temple and surrounding territory.

A matter of note is the fact that the tribe of Dan has his portion in the extreme North, the furthest away from the city and the sanctuary of all the tribes. In the days of Joshua, he was not satisfied with his place in the land but went up North to obtain more land [Jdg.18]. That choice may have some bearing on his place at the later time. There is a hint in Jacob’s prophecy that this tribe lends itself to Satan in some manner [Gen.49:17] and is in disrepute. Dan is not mentioned among the other tribes in Revelation 7:4-8; but he gets his place in the land at the last. Not one of the 12 tribes will be missing from his place when the Lord is crowned King of the Jews. They will all get their portion in that rich and glorious land, and no power of Satan can hinder that consummation.

THE LORD’S PORTION

“The oblation that ye shall offer unto the Lord shall be five and twenty thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth. And for them, even for the priests, shall be this holy oblation...the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok which have kept my charge and went not astray when the children of Israel and the Levites went astray...And over against the border of the priest, the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth...And they shall not sell of it neither exchange, nor alienate the first fruits of the land; for it is holy unto the Lord.” [Eze.48:9-14]

Judah’s portion on the North and Benjamin’s on the South mark off the oblation for the Lord. This holy territory of large dimensions is dedicated property. It cannot be disposed of in any manner whatsoever and must be used even according to the above directions. The priest’s portion will be marked off first. Its separated character is emphasized as well as the priest’s faithfulness in a time of declension. Loyalty figures high on God’s ledger of accounts. He does not forget as earthly friends do; neither does he fail to mention and reward the loyal ones. The Levites shall find their place next to the priest’s portion in the territory belonging to the Lord. They are forbidden to sell or exchange their section of the land; a little hint, as it seems, of their

former estate...the Jewish characteristic of looking out for a bargain, a merchant man, seeking always to get a better portion. There will be no more the Canaanite spirit in Palestine; no more of that “good business” ability in the Jew of the Holy Land. He will be content with the part assigned to Him by Jehovah and abide under his own vine and fig tree, seeking nothing but the will of God.

“And the five thousand that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand shall be a profane (common) place for the city, for dwelling and for suburbs. The city shall be in the midst thereof...and they that serve the city shall serve out of the all the tribes of Israel. The residue shall be for the Prince on the one side and on the other side of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city...and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst of the city.”
[Eze.48:15-21]

Everything is marked out according to the blueprint of heaven. Nothing is left to the reason, expediency, or suggestion of man. These sacred dimensions in the Holy Land shall all be supervised and controlled by the Divine Architect. The wisdom and ingenuity of man will be lacking in these ordered and ancient plans of Jehovah. The city shall be in the midst of the oblation given to the Lord; and the Sanctuary (or Temple) in the midst of that city. The prince’s portion will be in 2 parts, on both sides of the holy oblation, or heave offering.

That the 2 tribes of Judah and Benjamin border the holy section of the land, and thus have their allotment closest, is not without significance. They both speak of Christ, but in 2 official aspects: ❶ The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Man, is also ❷ the Son of the Right Hand, Benjamin.

THE GATES OF THE CITY

“And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi. And at the east side four thousand and five hundred (measures): and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan. And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun. At the west side four thousand and five hundred, with their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali.”
[Eze.48:31-34]

We have a decided correspondence here with the heavenly city, Jerusalem, of which John is the advance seer. It too will have 12 gates, on which shall be written the names of the 12 tribes of Israel **[Rev.21:12]**. John visioned the Eternal City in heaven while Ezekiel beheld and described the earthly city, Jerusalem, as it will exist during the Millennium. There are some points of correspondence between the 2; but there are many more points of distinction as is seen when we compare them.

- There is no Temple in John’s city on high; **“for the Lord God and the Lamb are the Temple thereof”** **[Rev.21:22]**; while Ezekiel’s city has a Temple in the midst, which is in the center of the land.

- Jerusalem above has a wall great and high in which are 12 foundations; but we find no description of such a wall about the earthly city.
- John's golden jewel-studded wonder in the sky is 4 square, "*its length and the breadth and the height of it are equal*"; but we read nothing like that regarding Ezekiel's city.
- There is no golden paved street mentioned, no gates of pearl, no jewel-bedecked walls in Ezekiel's description.
- The one, the eternal city of the skies, will never pass away; but the earthly city of beauty, after 1,000 years, will merge into the heavenly city. It will be swallowed up in the grandeur and the glory of the New Jerusalem from above, There will be a new heaven and a new earth. The Tabernacle of God will dwell with men. God Himself shall be with them and be their God. He will make all things new [Rev.21]. But the Jerusalem in Palestine will have its place and time on earth. It will be the greatest and best city that the world has ever beheld. For 1,000 years, it will reign unchallenged, holding its own as the capital, the Holy City, and its name shall be known throughout the world as "The Lord is there." What a glory it will have. The city Jerusalem where the Son of God once walked in lowly guise as a Servant of men; throughout the streets of which they dragged Him, His portion there being one of untold humiliation and torture; the city which mocked and rejected Him, where He carried the cross on which they crucified Him; that city likened to Sodom [Rev.11:8], shall be filled with the glory of heaven. The Lord will be there, the same Holy One whom they cast out of the city shall be reigning over it; all nations being subject unto Him, and all the honors His own.

O JOY! OH BLISS!
 WHAT GRACE IS THIS!
 WE MARVEL AT THE WONDROUS PLAN;
 BLOOD-SOAKED EARTH AND MURDEROUS MAN
 SHALL BE THE OBJECTS OF GOD'S LOVE.
 HIS SON WAS BORN OF JEWISH CLAN,
 AND EVERMORE SHALL BE A MAN,
 AND REIGN ON ZION'S HILL ABOVE.
 WHAT GRACE DOTH SHINE!
 'TIS LOVE DIVINE!
 LET ALL MEN BOW AND PRAISES BRING.
 HEAVEN SHALL RULE WHEN CHRIST IS KING.

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