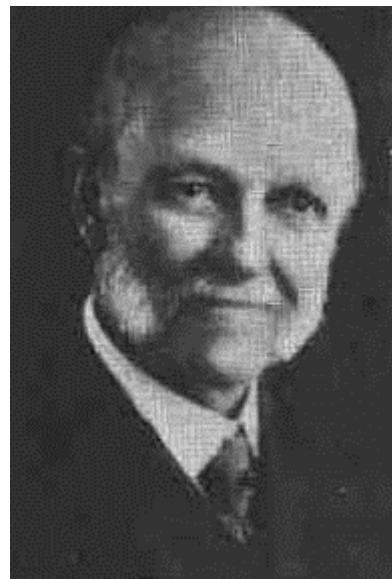


THE MILLENNIUM

William Eugene Blackstone



October 6, 1841 – November 7, 1935

With Critical Comments

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell

Preface

In the years when dispensational pre-millennialism was on the ascendency as a novel expression of Christian faith, many individuals eagerly pushed the movement forward through popular publications and with financial support. One such person was William Eugene Blackstone. Born on October 6, 1841 Mr. Blackstone died on November 7, 1935. He was buried at the Forest Lawn Cemetery in Glendale, California. During his evangelical life, Mr. Blackstone described himself as "God's Little Errand Boy."

In 1878, William E. Blackstone wrote, *Jesus is Coming*. His book became a valuable reference source of American dispensationalist thought. Over the next fifty years, *Jesus is coming* sold multi-millions of copies worldwide and was translated into 48 languages. In 1904 William Blackstone published another popular work, *The Millennium*, which is the subject of this critical review. The initial text of *The Millennium* has been left intact with the following exceptions.

First, whenever a Biblical passage has been alluded to, the full text of *Scripture* has been provided from the Authorized Version and for good reason. It is a favorite technique of dispensational teachers and authors to allude to a Biblical text as the source of their authority. However, in many instances, but not all, the texts cited by dispensationalist do not support the point they are asserting. This is especially true when Mr. Blackstone appeals to alternative translations other than the KJV. Mr. Blackstone liked to use the Revised Version. *The New Testament* was published in 1881, the *Old Testament* in 1885, and the *Apocrypha* in 1895.

Second, critical comments or supplemental material has been placed inside brackets [] or a box to distinguish that body of material from the writings of Mr. Blackstone.

Third, the chart "The Plan of the Aions" found in *The Millennium* has not been included in this work due to limitations of the reviewer's ability to reformat it for inclusion.

The well meaning heart of Mr. Blackstone to teach his view of prophecy is not in question, but time has proven his dispensational theories and theological biases to be contrary to the historical faith, contrary to the simplicity of the Word of God, and without validity as to prophetic fulfillment. All of this is very serious because first, a true "prophet" or prophetic teacher must be accurate, and second because the man of God must be careful to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

- *James 3:1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.*
- *Deuteronomy 18:20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.*

- *Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

Time and again Mr. Blackstone failed to be accurate in his prophetic utterances and in contending for the historic faith. The main tenants of dispensational teachings are not found in the historic faith. They will not be found in any of the creeds of Christendom nor discussed at any of the church councils. My desire is that his errors, and the errors of all dispensational writers and teachers, will be arrested.

Stanford E. Murrell
Viera, Florida, 2010

DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THERE IS TO BE A MILLENNIUM?

DEFINITIONS

Millennium

At the outset of the discussion of this question it is well to state certain definitions upon which we are agreed. The term Millennium — Mille-annum — a thousand years — as used by both Jewish and Christian scholars, stands for the doctrine of an era of righteous government upon the earth to last a thousand years.

Special Note. One of the tactical advantages of dispensational teachers is their ability to initially define terms with a slant towards their own theological biases. In this way dispensational teachers and writers can lead the mind to embrace their pre-suppositional thoughts. Not all Bible scholars and students would agree with Mr. Blackstone's definition of a "millennium" for many are convinced that the kingdom of the Messiah is without end.

- *Luke 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 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: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

The prophet Isaiah had prophesied the same truth.

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

The thousand years of Revelation 20 could very well be a symbolic numerical reference to completion or perfection as when the Psalmist said the Lord owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

- *Psalms 50:10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*

Jewish writers, throughout the Talmud, hold that this Millennium will be chiefly characterized by the deliverance of the Jews from all their enemies, recovery of Palestine and the literal reign of their Messiah in unequalled splendor and prosperity therein.

Pre-millennial Christians hold much in common with the Jews, but also that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Messiah, that He is to return to the earth and overthrow Satan, all ungodly governments and lawlessness; and establish a kingdom of righteousness, having the Church, with himself, as sovereign, Jerusalem as the Capital, re-gathered and converted Israel as the center, and all nations included, in a universal world-wide kingdom of righteous government.

Special Note. When Mr. Blackstone speaks of “pre-millennial Christians” he speaks from the theological bias of a *dispensational* pre-millennialist which is different from a *historical* pre-millennialist. *Dispensational* pre-millennialism does unite with modern Jewish writers to exalt the Jewish people focusing on the re-gathering of the Jews to Palestine, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the reinstituting of the animal sacrifices. In contrast historical pre-millennialism exalted the church which has received the covenantal blessings and promises of God. The New Covenant promised to Israel finds fulfillment in the church.

The New Covenant Promise to “Israel”

- *Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*
- *Jeremiah 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

The New Covenant Promise is Fulfilled in Christ and Given to the Church

- *Hebrews 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*
- *Hebrews 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:*
- *Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

The covenant blessing spoken to national Israel is applied to the church. The church is the holy nation for whom Christ has died in order to cleanse and glorify.

The Covenant Blessing Spoken to Israel

- *Exodus 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.*

The Covenant Blessing Spoken to the Church

- *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*

The True Children of Abraham Includes the Church

- *Galatians 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*

Post-millennialist hold that the present preaching of the gospel will result in the conversion of the world and usher in a golden era of righteousness and a government of justice and peace, to last a thousand years; after which, the Lord will return for a general judgment and introduction of an eternal state.

Special Note. While Mr. Blackman decries post-millennialism for being too optimist, he embraces a scheme of the future which first brings the Jews together as a nation but only so they can be slaughtered wholesale by the antics of an anti-Christ at the battle of Armageddon. According to Mr. Blackman, the church is also doomed to failure as an apostate organization. This terrible view of the church is discouraging to evangelistic efforts. Imagine someone saying, “Hello. I am part of an apostate organization doomed for judgment. Would you like to go to Sunday school with me next week?”

Scriptures

The Scriptures mean the Holy Bible, as contained in the Old and New Testaments.

Our question asks whether these Scriptures teach that there is to be any such Millennium. Affirming this, let us proceed with the discussion.

Special Note. The question as proposed is too limited in scope as the expanded teaching of Mr. Blackstone displays. No conservative Christian has ever denied the Scriptures teach there will be a “millennium” if defined as “the righteous rule of Christ”. Rather, the real question is to the nature of the millennium. Mr. Blackstone affirms the limited and messianic hopes of the ancient Jews for national Israel according to the flesh. The Jewish hope is that Jewish people will be regathered in Palestine, their enemies destroyed, and the nation of Israel will be exalted among all other racial nations on earth as the Messiah rules and reigns for a definite one thousand year period. That view of the millennium can be properly challenged according to biblical teachings, especially in the New Testament, for the New Testament should be and is to be the final word on any doctrinal issue.

DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM

The doctrine of the Millennium* and the concomitant events and conditions, which it embraces, is the pole star of the human race. It materializes the hope, which is embodied, not only in Christian teaching, but in all the great religions of the world. The Chinese look for the return of Confucius; the Hindus for the tenth reincarnation of Vishnu; the Mohammedans for the coming of the Mahdi, and Christians expectantly wait for the second coming of our Lord Jesus, according to His promise and the numerous prophetic utterances of Scripture.

* Millennium (Latin) is the same as Chiliad (Greek) and both mean a thousand years.

Special Note. When Mr. Blackstone speaks of “the second coming of our Lord Jesus”, he speaks from a dispensational frame of reference which presupposes another “coming” of Christ at the “rapture” *prior* to the actual “second coming” which is seven years after the alleged “rapture” of the church. This “coming” of Christ before His “second coming” is a novel idea within the historic faith of the church, but is justified by dividing the second coming into two stages or phases. Phase I, the rapture of the church. Phase II, the Second Advent proper. Of course such language is nonsensical but it has become very popular nevertheless.

The dispensational theological construct of the second coming being in two phases or stages has been embraced by multitudes, but is contrary to the simplicity of Acts 1:11 and Hebrews 9:28 which teach that Jesus will come as He went away. The Lord will come the second time, but not in stages or phases.

- *Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
- *Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

Confucius (literally "Master Kong") lived from September 28, 551 BC – 479 BC was a Chinese thinker and social philosopher.

Vishnu is the Supreme God of Hinduism. Vishnu is the All-Pervading essence of all beings, the master of—and beyond—the past, present and future, the creator and destroyer of all existences, one who supports, sustains and governs the Universe and originates and develops all elements within.

Mahdi. In Shia and Sunni eschatology, the Mahdi (Arabic: mahdī, English: *Guided One*) is the prophesied redeemer of Islam who will stay on Earth for seven, nine or nineteen years (according to various interpretations) before the Day of Judgment (literally, *the Day of Resurrection*) and, alongside Jesus, will rid the world of wrongdoing, injustice and tyranny. In Shia Islam, the belief in the Mahdi is a "powerful and central religious idea" and closely related to the Twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, whose return from occultation is deemed analogous with the coming of the Mahdi.

Occultation. In Shia Islam the Occultation is a term used to designate the hidden state of the Imam of the Time. An occultation is an event that occurs when one object is hidden by another object that passes between it and the observer.

The expectation of a golden age of just and righteous government is not only wide-spread, but it is also hoary [old] with age. Its deepest root is securely fastened in the Edenic promise, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

It is interwoven with all the precious promises and prophetic descriptions of the overthrow of Satan and his followers, and culminates in the definite statement of Revelation that Satan shall be chained for a thousand years. Not one thing is more plainly stated in Scripture than this thousand years of the righteous reign of Jesus and His saints.

Opponents of this doctrine usually begin their arguments by the assertion that the doctrine of a Millennium is nowhere taught in Scripture except in the twentieth chapter of Revelation.

The foolishness of such a statement is glaringly apparent, from the fact that the Jews had fully developed the doctrine, as the teaching of Old Testament Scripture, long before the book of Revelation or any portion of the New Testament was written.

Special Note. The argument that the “doctrine of a Millennium is nowhere taught in Scripture except in the twentieth chapter of Revelation” is not foolishness at all. It is the truth. A person will search the *Scriptures* in vain for the term “millennium” and will find no time frame placed on the reign of Christ apart from Revelation 20. But even in Revelation 20 the issue of time is in question for, by way of interpretation, John may have been speaking symbolically about a complete or fulfilled reign of Christ. What is more certain is that the ancient Jewish expectations of an exaltation of fleshly national Israel in Palestine, with a rebuilt temple and offering animal sacrifices, are not to be found in the New Testament.

Special Note. It would be good at the outset to read Revelation 20:1-10 and notice what the Bible does *not* say. This is necessary for many dispensational teachings are read into the text.

- *Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

What Revelation 20:1-10 Does Not Say

If Revelation 20:1-10 is read carefully, it will be seen that the basic tenets of the dispensational premillennial view are not found in this passage.

- John does not mention the return of Jesus to earth. The Lord's second coming according to promise (Hebrews 8:28) is not under discussion in this passage. This has been assumed by premillennialists.
- John does not say that the reign of the beheaded saints for a thousand years will be after Jesus' second coming. This has been assumed.
- John does not say that Jesus will reign on the earth. The place of the reign of Christ is not mentioned.
- John does not say directly that the reign of the martyred saints will be an earthly reign. The context indicates the reign is in heaven.
- John does not say that Jesus will reign in Jerusalem. The earthly Jerusalem is not mentioned.
- John does not say that Jesus will sit on the throne of David. David's throne is not mentioned.
- John does not mention anything about the Lord's throne. While the thrones of the martyrs are mentioned, the throne of Christ is not. In the book of the Revelation, thrones are symbols that the saints will no longer be the downtrodden. They will be exalted and known as servants of Christ. In this spiritual sense, the martyred saints will reign with Christ during the thousand-year period; they will not reign on literal, earthly thrones. They will be victorious in death.
- John does not say that the saints have had a bodily resurrection. John only speaks of their souls.
- John does not mention anything about a rapture, a great seven year tribulation period, the rise of an antichrist nor a Battle of Armageddon.

The foregleams of the Millennium are in the book of Genesis and we shall see how their shining increases, in the pre-exile, exilic and post-exilic prophets of Israel.

It was the view most frequently expressed in the Talmud, "that the Messianic Kingdom would last for one thousand years," and this was commonly believed among the Jews.

Special Note. Talmud. The Talmud (Hebrew: תְּלִמּוּד talmūd "instruction, learning", from a root *lmd* "teach, study") is a central text of historic Judaism, in the form of a record of rabbinic discussions relating to Jewish law, ethics, philosophy, customs and history. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah (c. 200 BC), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law; and the Gemara (c. 500 BC), a discussion of the Mishnah and related writings. The terms *Talmud* and *Gemara* are often used interchangeably. The Gemara is the basis for all codes of rabbinic law and is much quoted in other rabbinic literature. The whole Talmud is also traditionally referred to as *Shas* (שָׁס), a Hebrew abbreviation of *shisha sedarim*, the "six orders" of the Mishnah.

Jesus and the Apostles have given great prominence, in the Scriptures, to this inspiring theme, and it is admitted on all sides that the pre-millennial coming of Christ and His reign with His saints upon the earth a thousand years, was the faith of the early church.

Special Note. It is not "admitted on all sides" that the pre-millennial coming of Christ and His reign with His saints upon the earth for a thousand years was the faith of the early church. Neither Peter nor Paul ever taught such a concept, nor did Christ. The selected quotes Mr. Blackstone sets forth in support of this statement is countered by equally competent historians. In his book, *Regnum Calorem: Patterns of Millennial Thought in Early Christianity*, Dr. Charles E. Hill has effectively challenged the claim that the Patristic era was predominantly chiliastic or pre-millennial after examination of every known reference during the first three hundred years AD. In essence Dr. Hill shows that chiliasm or pre-millennialism slowly came into the church towards the end of the second century as a reaction to another assault on Christian doctrine.

We must be content to select only a few of the many authorities upon this point.

Moshiem says: "The prevailing opinion that Christ was to come and reign a thousand years among men before the final dissolution of the world, had met with *no opposition previous* to the time of Origen [c. AD 185-254]" (Vol. 1, p. 89) .

Special Note. Johann Lorenz von Mosheim or Johann Lorenz Mosheim (October 9, 1693 – September 9, 1755), a German Lutheran church historian, was born at Lübeck on 9 October 1693 or 1694.

Giesler says: "In all the works of this period (the first two centuries) Millenarianism is so prominent that we can not hesitate to consider it as universal" (Church Hist., Vol. 1, p. 215.)

Bishop Newton says: "The doctrine of the Millennium (as held by Millenarians) *was generally believed in the first three and purest ages*" (Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 527.)

Bishop Russell, though an anti-Millenarian, says: "Down to the beginning of the fourth century, the belief was universal and undisputed" (Discourse on the Millennium, p. 26.).

Gibbon, who is an unprejudiced witness, in his history of Rome (Vol. 1, p. 262), says: "The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of Fathers, from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the

Apostles, down to Lactantius, who was the preceptor of the son of Constantine. It appears to have been the reigning sentiment of orthodox believers."

Special Note. While Justin Martyr (AD 110-165) and others did believe in a millennium, they did *not* believe in the *dispensational* version of the millennium. One of the most distinctive features of dispensational teaching is that Israel and the church are always separate. Justin Martyr and other church fathers taught they were the same. Justin wrote, "As, therefore, Christ is the Israel and the Jacob, even so we, who have been quarried out from the bowels of Christ, are the true Israelitic race" (*Dialogue with Trypho*, Chapter 135). As a Gentile church leader speaking to Trypho the Jew, Justin unites Israel and the church, a spiritualized concept which dispensationalism totally rejects.

He also says: "As long as this error (as he calls it) was permitted to subsist in the Church, it was productive of the *most salutary effects* on the faith and practice of Christians."

Could an historian give higher praise? Thank God for such an encomium on this blessed doctrine. Is it not an excellent antidote for the worldliness and indifference of the Church in these days?

Even Dr. Daniel Whitby, — father of modern post-millennialism, — in his "Treatise on Traditions," candidly acknowledges that "the doctrine of the Millennium passed among the best of Christians, for two hundred and fifty years, for a tradition apostolical, and as such is delivered by many fathers of the second and third centuries, who speak of it as a tradition of our Lord and His Apostles, and of all the ancients who lived before them."

Special Note. Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) was born in 1638 at Rushden in Northhamptonshire County in England. In 1653 he was admitted to Trinity College, Oxford. In 1657 he was awarded a BA and in 1660 an MA. He became an Arminian minister in the Church of England.

Lest anyone should lose the full force of these quotations, it may be proper to state, that this "ancient and popular DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM," as Gibbon styles it, was the belief in the pre-millennial coming of Christ and His reign on the earth for a thousand years. It was commonly called Chiliasm, from the Greek word Chiliad, meaning one thousand. On such incontrovertible evidence do we affirm the universal belief of the early Church, in the doctrine of the Millennium?

Special Note. While it is true that from its inception the church has embraced some form of "millennial" expectation in the sense that the Messiah would come again to rule the world in person, it is not true that the church has consistently and universally embraced *pre-millennial* expectations. It is even more certain that the majority of the church has never embraced the *dispensational* pre-millennial view of Scripture which is a historical novelty. The main tenants of *dispensational pre-millennialism* are not found in any of the creeds of Christendom nor have they ever been discussed at any of the great church councils in history.

It would be profitable to trace its history down through, the ages, and see how it shines forth in every great awakening of the Church. Melanchthon and Charles Wesley were Millennialists. So were the great missionaries, Ben Ezra, Joseph Wolf, James McGregor, Bertram, L. D. Manfield, Gonsalves, Dr. Kalley, Hewitson and Bishop Heber, who gave us that grand hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains."

It was the hope that energized Gutzlaff, the opener of China, and Bettleheim, the opener of Japan; and that inspired the noble Duff and McCheyne, Lowrie, Rankin and Lowenthal, Guinness, Spurgeon and Hudson Taylor, Moody, Whittle, Bliss and an army of modern evangelists.

It numbers Volck, Bengel, Delitzsch, Dean Alford, Jemison, Faussett and many other commentators of renown as its advocates and defenders. We rejoice to join this holy company of apostles, fathers, martyrs and devout servants of God, in defense of the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Special Note. This list of proponents of individuals who have embraced a pre-millennium understanding of Scripture is very misleading for two reasons. First, it suggests that all of the individuals named would embrace a *dispensational* pre-millennium understanding of the future which would be impossible for some of the people listed, such as John and Charles Wesley, did not live when dispensational premillennialism was on the ascendency. Second, in opposition to pre-millennialism is amillennialism. Amillennialism also has a long and honorable history of exeges and theologians: Origen, Augustine, the whole church after Augustine through the Middle Ages, Luther and the Lutheran, John Calvin and most Reformed churches (e.g., Abraham Kuyper), Anthony Hoekema, etc. In like manner *pre-millennialism* has been opposed by *post millennialists*. Capable defenders of post-millennialism include many Puritans, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, A. A. Hodge, and B.B. Warfield, A. H. Strong, William Shedd, R. L. Dabney, J. H. Thornwell etc. While it is always nice to be able to point out individuals who have supported a favored particular doctrinal bias, in the final analysis we must all open the Bible and return, like the Bereans, to the *Scriptures* to see whether or not what is being taught is true.

- *Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

But we do not forget that our question asks, "Do the Scriptures teach that there is to be a Millennium?" Therefore let us seek "unto the law and to the testimony."

THE SABBATH OF GOD'S WEEKS

The doctrine of a literal Millennium has a solid foundation in the Scriptural account of the creation. It is recorded in the first and second chapters of Genesis that God created the heavens and earth, and all that in them is, in six days, but the *seventh* day He rested from all His work. Wherefore He hallowed the *seventh* day and established, by His unalterable fiat, based upon His own example, the law of the Sabbath,

Let it be noted that this recurrence of the *seventh* day is not measured by astronomical movements like the day, month or year. It is, however, ingrained into the constitution of all life, both vegetable, animal and human. This law of completion in weeks is illustrated by gestation and disease. Even fevers run their course in weeks.

The human body is said to change its material substance once in *seven* years.

Music is based upon *seven* notes.

This division of time into *sevens*, or weeks, permeates the entire Scriptures.

A fundamental enactment, of the Mosaic Law, was the keeping of the Sabbath. Not only was the week of days reaffirmed which had been established, from the creation, but a week of weeks unto Pentecost was provided, a week of months, with the Atonement and seven days' feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month, and a week of years, ending with the Sabbath year, and also a week of weeks of years ending with a *seventh* Sabbath year and followed by the year of Jubilee.

- Weekly Sabbath. *Exodus 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*
- A Week of Weeks unto Pentecost. *Leviticus 23:15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: 16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.*
- The Seventh Month. *Leviticus 23:27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.*
- A Week of Years. *Leviticus 25:4 But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.*
- A Year of Jubilee. *Leviticus 25:8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. 10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the*

land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. 11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. 12 For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

The people and even the land were to rest on these recurring *seventh* years, both Sabbath and Jubilee. God made special provision that the earth should bring forth so fruitfully on the sixth years, that there should be enough for man and beast to last over the *seventh* year of rest.

- *Leviticus 25:20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: 21 Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. 22 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.*

This law of *sevens* is also illustrated in the punishments of Israel. Their captivity in Babylon was for *seventy* years.

- *Jeremiah 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.*
- *Daniel 9:2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.*

The great period revealed to Daniel (Ch. 9), unto the coming of the Messiah was divided into *seventy sevens*.

- *Daniel 9: 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

The unequaled period of Israel's punishment and dispersion in the lands of their enemies, prophesied by Moses in Leviticus 26, is with four fold emphasis, specified to be for *seven times*. See verses 18, 21, 24 and 28.

- *Leviticus 26:18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.*

- *Leviticus 26:24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.*

The sacred year of the Jews began, by divine appointment, in the *seventh* civil month.

- *Exodus 12:2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.*
- *Exodus 13:4 This day came ye out in the month Abib.*
- *1 Kings 8:2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.*

The Passover was on the (twice *seven*) fourteenth day of the *seventh* month.

- *Exodus 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

Seven days were they to eat unleavened bread.

- *Deuteronomy 16:3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.*

The wave sheaf was to be on the first day after the *Sabbath* in the beginning of harvest.

- *Leviticus 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.*

It was *seven* weeks thereafter to Pentecost.

- *Leviticus 23:15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: 16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.*

In the *seventh* sacred month was the feast of Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacle.

- Leviticus 23:24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. 25 Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. 26 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. 29 For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. 30 And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath. 33 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. 35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.

Seven days were they to dwell in booths.

- Leviticus 23:39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. 40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. 41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: 43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

This *sacred seven* is woven into the laws, life and history of the chosen people, with whom God established his theocracy.

Special Note. By going through many biblical passages which uses the number seven, Mr. Blackstone tries to draw a conclusion that the millennium represents the final thousand years of a seven thousand year period of human history. This is a false conclusion and wholly speculative. The Bible does not give the age of the earth nor the creation of man though many have tried to calculate both using either an evolutionary model, in the case of the secular humanist, or a biblical model, based upon years supplied in Scripture. Caution should be taken about reaching speculative conclusions based upon pre-suppositional thinking.

THE MILLENNIAL SABBATH

Two great and precious facts are founded upon this unalterable law of the *Sabbath*:

First — That God has decreed a great day of rest, a keeping of the Sabbath, for the whole world.

Second — That this Sabbath is to be a thousand years, or the *seventh millennium*.

Special Note. There is a quantum leap from the first fact to the alleged second. Nowhere in Scripture is the “sabbath” said to be “a thousand years, or the seventh millennium”. There is a genuine “sabbath” or “rest” for the people of God spoken of in Hebrews 4 of which the believer in Christ is to enter, but this “sabbath” is eternal in nature based on the finished redemptive work of Christ at Calvary.

- *Hebrews 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. 11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

It is instructive at this point to note two more dispensational techniques.

First, the tendency is for the dispensational writer or teacher to quote many passages of Scripture, and then suddenly arrive at a false conclusion. Here is a case in point based upon a pre-suppositional theory of a seven thousand year interpretation of history. In reading all the passages alluded to, there is not a word of Scripture teaching of a “sabbath” being “a thousand years, or the *seventh millennium*”. The reading of Scripture, and not allowing someone to merely allude to them, will protect the thoughtful Christian from the errors of dispensational teaching.

Second, there is an authoritative tone with which a dispensationalist will often use which is not always warranted. Sincere people can be sincerely wrong.

The first proposition is forcibly argued by the Apostle in the 4th chapter of Hebrews; wherein he shows that the Israelites did not enter into God’s rest, by reason of unbelief. Joshua did not give them rest. On the contrary, because of their unbelief and rebellious conduct, their carcasses fell in the wilderness. So, likewise, Jesus, our Joshua, had come to lead them into rest. He came unto His own — the lost sheep of the house of Israel — “and His own received Him not” (John 1:11).

- *John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

He would have delivered them and established the kingdom. He said the Kingdom of God is among you (*not within you*) (Luke 17: 21, see margin).

- *Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone writes that Jesus said, “the Kingdom of God is among you (*not* within). Then he invites the reader to “see margin” meaning that in some translations there is an alternative reading. However, the Authorized Version has correctly translated Luke 17:21.

γὰρ	ή	βασιλεία	τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἐντὸς	ὑμῶν	ἔστιν.
for,	the	kingdom	toú	of God	within	you.	is
gár	hee	basileía	Theoú	entós	humoón	estin	

As a dispensationalist, Mr. Blackstone must try to prove that the kingdom of God is not a present spiritual reality, but a coming physical kingdom yet to be established. He must make the “kingdom of God” be something external in order to conform to fleshly expectations, thereby redefining the true nature of the kingdom of God which is spiritual and within the heart. Commenting on Luke 17:21, Greek professor Dr. A.T. Robertson notes the following: ‘within you’, *entos humoon*. This is the obvious, and, as I think, the necessary meaning of *entos*. The examples cited of the use of *entos* in Xenophon and Plato where *entos* means “among” do not bear that out when investigated” (*Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament*).

The king was there and the kingdom, coming not with scrupulous observation (So the Gr., Luke 17:20), was ready to be manifested among them.

- *Luke 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:*

Special Note. While the “kingdom of God” did not come with observation, it did come. The King of kings and Lord of lords was in the midst of His people. *John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

The Second Proposition

Our second proposition, that this Sabbath rest is to last for a thousand years, is founded upon the Scriptural week of Creation.

In six days God made the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, but on the seventh day He rested. Six days of labor and one of rest.

In the 90th Psalm, we have the great fact stated, that a thousand years with God are as one day. “A thousand year” in Thy sight are but as yesterday.”

- *Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:*

But in unreasonable and blind unbelief, they rejected their Messiah and with wicked hands nailed Him to the cross. Then He, like the nobleman's son, of whom He had spoken, went into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and return, for His kingdom is not (*ek*) out of this world (John 18:36).

- *John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

But the Apostle shows that, notwithstanding this unbelief, and twice rejecting the offer of rest, by them to whom the gospel was preached, there still remains a rest, a keeping of the Sabbath, for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9).

- *Hebrews 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

Special Note. There is indeed “a rest to the people of God” but it is not a future millennium rest as Mr. Blackstone is leading his readers to embrace. The “rest to the people of God” is an eternal “rest” that must be entered into now. *Hebrews 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

The Lord helps us all to heed the injunction that we ourselves may not fail to enter into it, by the same reason of unbelief.

Lest we should construe this loosely, as a mere illustration of the brevity of time, in the sight of God, the Apostle Peter (2 Peter 3:8) has emphatically guarded the fact, by a combined, double and reverse reiteration of the statement, prefacing it with a word of warning. Listen to his words: "Forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

- *2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Upon this rock we can consistently base our conclusion that as we have the Scriptural week, week of weeks, week of months, week of years, week of weeks of years, week of seventy years and week of times, we shall also have a week of millenniums. Six thousand-year days of labor, and then the blessed seventh millennium, a thousand years of rest.

Special Note. The “rock” upon which Mr. Blackstone builds his dispensational beliefs is nothing more than shifting sand. Neither the psalmist nor Peter was saying that one day with the Lord IS a thousand years, rather, one day with the Lord is “as” a thousand years meaning that time passes swiftly. The context of Psalm 90:4 concerns the resurrection of which Matthew Henry comments.

"Though God turns all men to destruction, yet he will again say, Return, you children of men, at the general resurrection, when, though a man dies, yet he shall live again; and "then shalt thou call and I will answer (Job 14:14, 15); thou shalt bid me return, and I shall return." The body, the soul, shall both return and unite again. [The psalmist acknowledges] the infinite disproportion there is between God and men, v. 4. Some of the patriarchs lived nearly a thousand years; Moses knew this very well, and had recorded it: but what is their long life to God's eternal life? "A thousand years, to us, are a long period, which we cannot expect to survive; or, if we could, it is what we could not retain the remembrance of; but it is, in thy sight, as yesterday, as one day, as that which is freshest in mind; nay, it is but as a watch of the night," which was but three hours.

1. A thousand years are nothing to God's eternity; they are less than a day, than an hour, to a thousand years. Betwixt a minute and a million of years there is some proportion, but betwixt time and eternity there is none. The long lives of the patriarchs were nothing to God, not so much as the life of a child (that is born and dies the same day) is to theirs.

2. All the events of a thousand years, whether past or to come, are as present to the Eternal Mind as what was done yesterday, or the last hour, is to us, and more so. God will say, at the great day, to those whom he has turned to destruction, Return—Arise you dead. But it might be objected against the doctrine of the resurrection that it is a long time since it was expected and it has not yet come. Let that be no difficulty, for a thousand years, in God's sight, are but as one day. "To the king all periods are alike". To this purport these words are quoted, 2 Peter 3:8".

To take the words of the Psalmist and Peter out of context in order to establish a "rock" for dispensational theory is "twisting the scriptures"

THE WEEK OF AIIONS

We have another line of proof, which runs through the whole of Scripture. It may be briefly stated as follows: All continuity of being or existence is measured by what we call time. Time is divided by the fundamental intermittent or wave principle into pulsations, or vibrations. A fly's wing makes 300 or more strokes in a second. In an alternating electrical current we can detect 100,000 vibrations in a second. But this is sluggish compared with alternations of light, which are said to be hundreds of millions of times in a second, and no one can tell how much more infinitesimal such vibrations may be, for they are like the indiscernible ultimate atoms.

From such unthinkable divisibility, we pass upward, through the discernible vibrations, into the common measurements of time, to-wit: seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, sabbatic years and Jubilees. Man has placed next, above jubilees, centuries, but centuries are like a Scriptural measurement.

The next Scriptural measurement of time is called in the Hebrew an *olam* and in the Greek an *aion*. This term *aion* has been transferred into the English, viz.: "eon," from which we derive the word "age."

This word *aion* is used 124 times in the New Testament.

Unfortunately, it is translated, in our King James Version, by several English words, such as "world," "course," "ages," "end," "ever" and "eternal." The Revised Version has corrected much of this erroneous translation. The Greek and even the English lexicon tell us that the word is a measure of time, and this is easily seen from its use.

It is impossible to give all the passages where it occurs in the limit of this paper. A few samples will suffice.

Special Note. In the following examples Mr. Blackstone is arguing that the Greek word "*aion*" should be translated "age" and not "*cosmos*" or world. Mr. Blackstone is attempting to prove a definite millennium reign by using the word "*aion*" or age in lieu of "*cosmos*" or world. In some passages he is correct to notice a better translation. However, care should be taken for in John 6:51 putting a limited measure of time on the words of Jesus, "he shall live forever" (*aion*, age), destroys the Lord's teaching on eternal life. The same is true in John 6:68. In John 8:35 the eternality of the Son should not be limited to a definite and limited measure of time.

- The harvest is the end of the *aion* (not *cosmos-world*). Matthew 13:39-40.

Matthew 13:39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world [*aion*, age]; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [*aion*, age].

- What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the *aion* (not *cosmos-world*)? Matthew 24:3.

Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [*aion*, age]?

- Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for an *aion* (not *aidios* — eternal — forever). Matthew 21:29.

Special Note. The correct passage should be Matthew 21:19 and not Matthew 21:29.

Matthew 21:19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever [*aion*, (for an) age]. And presently the fig tree withered away.

- "For the *aion*" (not forever). Luke 1:55; John 6:51, 58; 8:35, etc.

Luke 1:55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever [*aion*, age].

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever [*aion*, age]: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world [*cosmos*, world].

Special Note. αἰών **aion** (ahee-ohn'); properly, an age; by extension, perpetuity (also past); by implication, the world; specially (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future):

John 6:58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever [*aion*, age].

John 8:35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever [*aion*, age].

- "The children of this *aion*" (not world) "are... wiser than the children of light." Luke 16: 8.

Luke 16:8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world [*aion*, age] are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

- "The children of this *aion*" (not world) "marry...but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that *aion*...neither marry nor are given in marriage." Luke 20:34-35.

Luke 20:34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world [*aion*, age] marry, and are given in marriage: 35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

- "Not only in this *aion*, but also in that which is to come." Ephesians 1:21

Ephesians 1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world [*aion*, age], but also in that which is to come:

- "The mystery which from the *aions*" (plural) "hath been hid." Ephesians 3:9.

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world [*aion*, age] hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

- "That in the *aions* to come." Ephesians 2:7.

Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages [*aion*, age] to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

- "Now unto the king of the *aions*," 1 Timothy 1: 17. (RV)

1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (KJV)

- "By whom also he made the *aions*," Hebrews 1: 2.

Hebrews 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; [*aion*, age]

- "Both now and throughout all the *aions*," Jude 25.

Jude 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever [*aion*, age]. Amen.

- "Unto Him be glory...throughout all the generation of the *aion*" (singular) "of the *aions*" (plural), Ephesians 3: 21. (RV)

Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. (KJV)

- "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for *aions* (plural) "of *aions*" (plural). Revelation 14:11.

Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

- "Her smoke rose up for aions of *aions*," Revelation 19: 3.

Revelation 19:3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever.

- "Shall be tormented day, and night for *aions of aions*," Revelation 20:10. (RV)

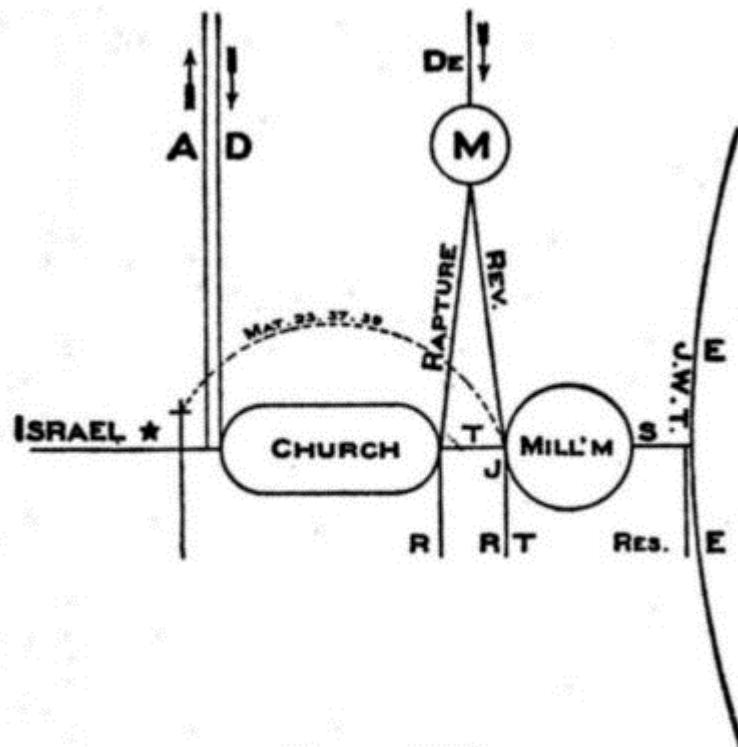
Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. (KJV)

- "They shall reign for *aions of aions*," Revelation 22: 5.

Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.

Notice that we have the singular *aion*, the plural *aions*, an *aion* of *aions*, a great *aion* composed of *aions*, the week of *aions* (see diagram), and the multiplied form, *aions of aions*.

DIAGRAM CHART



It will be seen from the above that an *aion* has an end, and, as another follows, it must have a beginning. That there have been many in the past and there are to be many in the future. Jesus is the King of the *aions* (1 Timothy 1: 17), they are all made by Him (Hebrews 1:2), and they are all arranged on a plan. "According to the purpose (plan) of the *aions*." Ephesians 3: 11, R. V.

The Plan of the Aions

The seven *aions*-dispensations are numbered 1 to 7.

The first, Eden, terminates with the expulsion.

The second, Antediluvian, terminates with the flood.

The third, Postdiluvian, terminates with the overthrow of Sodom.

The fourth, Patriarchal, terminates with the Red Sea.

The fifth, Mosaic, terminates with the Crucifixion.

The sixth, Christian, terminates with the Rapture and Revelation.

The seventh, Millennial, terminates with Satan's final overthrow.

Then follows the new Heavens and new Earth.

The character of each, dispensation is indicated by the words innocence, freedom, etc.

Special Note. First, the alleged seven dispensations is an arbitrary number which is simply preferred by the author who is a student of C. I. Scofield. Other Christian authors previous to Mr. Blackstone and Mr. Scofield, and after, prefer a different number. Second, the word "dispensation" as used in *Scripture* does not refer to a period of "time" but rather to the administration of an economy. The Greek word is οἰκινεμέα oikonomia (oy-kon-om-ee'-ah); administration (of a household or estate); specifically, a (religious) "economy".

"From *oikos* "house" and *nemoo*, "to dispense or manage." Hence, *oikonomos* "a house-steward." Here the meaning is "stewardship"-the office of a steward or administrator in God's house" (*Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament*).

- *1 Corinthians 9:17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.*
- *Ephesians 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*

- *Ephesians 3:2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you ward:*
- *Colossians 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God;*

Third, the termination of each alleged “dispensation” is also arbitrary, especially when it is discovered there is no “rapture” as defined by dispensationalism whereby believers suddenly disappear off the face of the earth.

The spreading lines [on the chart] indicate the increase of population.

Israel is shown as a distinct people among the nations, from the time of Abraham to the Crucifixion, and destruction of Jerusalem.

Then they are scattered like seed among all nations throughout the Christian dispensation and again gathered as the center of the Millennial kingdom.

The small cross represents the crucifixion and descent of Christ's spirit into hades, followed by His resurrection and ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit and commencement of the Church — the body of Christ — distinct from Jew or Gentile during this dispensation.

The dotted line marks [on the chart indicate] “the times of the Gentiles” running from Nebuchadnezzar to antichrist, during which Israel is under the Gentile dominion of the four great empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, represented by the image in Daniel 2.

RAPTURE

The resurrection of those that sleep in Jesus, and change of living believers, who are caught away to meet the Lord in the air. Enoch and Elijah are types of this Rapture.

- *1 Corinthians 15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
- *1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

Special Note. The assertion that Enoch and Elijah are types of “this Rapture” is without Scriptural precedent or warrant but is a forced false analogy since the Rapture itself is not proven by Scripture but merely assumed in a theological construct. In the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, Enoch is included in the list of those who “died in faith.” *Hebrews 11:13 These all [Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah] died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

The Bible cannot contradict itself and the Bible teaches in Hebrews 9:27 that, “*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*” Jesus said in John 3:13, “*And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*”

While Enoch was transported so that he did not see death as others, his soul must have been separated from his body at some point. The same is true of Elijah.

The council of John Calvin regarding both Enoch and Elijah is wise: “Let it suffice us to know, that their translation was a sort of extraordinary death; nor let us doubt but that they were divested of their mortal and corruptible flesh, in order that they might, with the other members of Christ, be renewed into a blessed immortality”.

It is instructive to remember that even after Elijah had been “taken away to heaven”, King Jehoram received a letter from Elijah in which he rebuked the king and predicted judgment for the acts of wickedness that took place after Elijah had been taken away. *2 Chronicles 21:12 And there came a writing [letter] to him [King Jehoram] from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, 13 But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: 14 Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:*

M * MEETING
The Meeting of Christ and His Bride

- *1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
- *Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*
- *2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

❖ **This [meeting] is our gathering together unto Him.**

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

❖ **And the marriage of the Lamb.**

Matthew 22:2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. 4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. 5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. 7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

Matthew 25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Luke 14:15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. 16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. 20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. 21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. 23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Special Note. Dispensational theology places the marriage supper of the Lamb with the events associated with the Rapture which, in their scheme, precedes the Second Advent by seven years.

In context Revelation 19:7 and "the marriage of the Lamb" is the figure under which is depicted that complete union between Christ and his faithful Church, which will be consummated at the last day, when Satan has been overcome and sin destroyed. It stands in contrast with the fornication of the harlot - the union of the spiritually unfaithful portion of Christ's Church with the powers of the world (*The Pulpit Commentary*).

The figure, of a marriage between the Lord and his people, is a frequent and familiar image in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

- *Isaiah 54:1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. 2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; 3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. 4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. 5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. 6 For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. 7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

- *Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.*
- *Matthew 9:15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.*
- *Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.*
- *John 3:29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*
- *Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

The saints of all ages, which constitute the church, make themselves ready by being clothed with the robe of righteousness (Revelation 19: 8).

❖ So shall we ever be with the Lord.

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

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

❖ It is the Hope of the Church.

Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

❖ **It is the redemption mentioned in**

Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Romans 8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

❖ **Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

1 Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone sets forth this array of Scripture with a false view towards the Rapture which is to precede the Second Coming of Christ by seven years, according to dispensational timetable. However, the Lord Jesus Christ is only coming a “second time” for all who believe according to Hebrews 9:28.

- *Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

There is no pre “second time” in which Jesus comes in a secret silent way in phases or stages with intervals of time. Not at all. Jesus will return in the same way He went away.

- *Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

All the previous points made can be and should be applied to the Second Advent.

❖ **Thus the church escapes the tribulation.**

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

2 Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Revelation 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Special Note. The word “thus” indicates a concluding thought based on the previous points made and Scripture cited. It is Mr. Blackstone’s contention that because of the special relationship the church has with Christ it will not have to endure great tribulation. However, the “tribulation” of which Mr. Blackstone has in mind according to dispensational teaching is future while the tribulation referenced in Luke 21 is historical. The church largely escaped the tribulation period of AD 70, which is in view in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, not by removal, but by remembering the words of the Lord and moving in gospel obedience to comply with His specific instructions.

TRIBULATION

Then follows a period of unequaled tribulation to the world (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21; Luke 21: 25-26)...

- *Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*
- *Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*
- *Luke 21:25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.*

...during which, the true church having been taken out, God begins to deal with Israel again (Acts 15:13-17; Psalm 51:18; 102:16).

- *Acts 15:13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*
- *Psalms 51:18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*
- *Psalms 102:16 When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*

Special Note. Like the theory of evolution made popular in 1859, dispensationalism began as a new concept c. 1830, but has evolved as a system of thought to make many dogmatic assertions that are neither logical nor provable by Scripture. Fantastic statements are here boldly proclaimed as if the great tribulation of Matthew 24 and Luke 21 are future rather than historical. It is taught that Christians will disappear from the earth, and God “again” begins to deal with Israel –as if the Lord has ever stopped! The kindest fact that can be said about dispensational theology is that it is audacious!

He allows them to gather themselves (Zephaniah 2:1-2),

[The Re-gathering of National Israel]

- *Zephaniah 2:1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; 2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.*

they make a covenant with antichrist (Daniel 9:27),

[A Covenant with Antichrist during the Tribulation Period following the Rapture]

- *Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

and pass through great judgments and affliction, until at last they look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12: 10),

[Israel in the Tribulation Period following the Rapture]

- *Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

and they are saved and restored (Isaiah 11:11, 60; Jeremiah 30 : 3 ; Jeremiah 31 ; 32 : 36-44 ; Zechariah 10 : 10 ; Romans 11)

[Israel in the Tribulation is Saved and Restored to Favor with God to Usher in the Millennium]

- *Isaiah 11:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

Special Note. In order for there to be a “literal” fulfillment of this prophetic utterance, which Dispensationalist insist upon, then Assyria must one day come back into existence as an empire as well as Cush, Elam, Shinar, and Hamath.

- *Isaiah 60 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. 4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. 5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. 6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. 8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? 9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. 10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. 11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. 12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. 13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. 14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. 15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. 16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. 17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. 18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. 19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. 20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. 21 Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. 22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.*
- *Jeremiah 30:3 For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.*

- Jeremiah 31 At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. 2 Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. 3 The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. 4 Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. 5 Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things. 6 For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God. 7 For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. 8 Behold, I will bring them from the North Country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. 9 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. 10 Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. 11 For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. 12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. 13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. 14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord. 15 Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. 16 Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. 17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. 18 I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. 19 Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. 20 Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. 21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities. 22 How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man. 23 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness. 24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks. 25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have

replenished every sorrowful soul. 26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me. 27 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. 28 And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord. 29 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. 30 But everyone shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. 37 Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. 38 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. 39 And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone includes all of Jeremiah 31 to prove in part that in the future Israel shall come out of a Great Tribulation saved and restored to favor with God to usher in the Millennium kingdom. What Mr. Blackstone neglects is how the New Testament takes the words of Jeremiah and applies them to events in the early church age such as the slaughter of the innocent (Jeremiah 31:15-16 cf. Matthew 2:18) and the New Covenant being given to the church (Jeremiah 31: 31-34 cf. Hebrews 8: 7-13).

- *Jeremiah 32:36 And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; 37 Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: 38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: 39 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: 40 And I will*

make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. 41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. 42 For thus saith the Lord; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

43 And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. 44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord.

- *Zechariah 10:10 I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Labanon; and place shall not be found for them.*

Special Note. In order for there to be a future literal fulfillment of this prophecy then the land of “Gilead and Labanon” must be in existence with Jews living in the land. It would make more sense to study these prophetic promises in a historical context, not a futuristic one. When that is done then it will be seen that God has already kept His Word following the Babylonian Captivity.

- *Romans 11:1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16 For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Special Note. In Romans 9-10-11 there is not one word about national Israel being restored to a promised land, nor of the exaltation of the nation. The only issue under discussion is the salvation of souls.

never more to be pulled up out of their land. Amos 9: 15; Ezekiel 34:28.

[Israel in the Land Forever]

- *Amos 9:15 And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.*
- *Ezekiel 34:28 And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.*

Antichrist will be revealed. 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 13.

[The Revelation of Anti-Christ Following the Rapture]

- *2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

- *Revelation 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. 11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

The vials of God's wrath poured out. Psalm 2:1-5; Revelation 6:16-17; 14:10; Revelation 16.

[The Vials of Wrath During the Great Tribulation Period Following the Rapture]

- *Psalms 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. 5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*
- *Revelation 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

Special Note. The dogmatic assertions continue as a system of theology is set forth rather than a contextual and systematic examination of Israel, Antichrist, National Conversion, the Land of Promise and the Wrath of God. By running a multitude of statements together with select Scriptures an aura of authority and credence is given. Only by slowing the processing down, opening the Scriptures and studying each passage in context can it be seen what is really said, something far different than what Dispensational theology advocates. As you examine the Scriptures cited, keep in mind the point that is trying to be sustained. Notice what has been provided in the brackets for clarification of what Mr. Blackstone is trying to prove. Obviously, the points trying to be proved have nothing to do with the Scriptures cited. The fulfillment of many prophetic statements in the New Testament are completely dismissed by dispensational teaching as being only partially fulfilled or double fulfillment. In this way all Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel can be relegated to the future.

REVELATION

Revelation of Christ and His saints (the Church His body) descending to the earth (Col. 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 3:13) in flaming fire (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10) to execute judgment on the earth. Jude 14, 15.

- *Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*
- *1 Thessalonians 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*
- *Jude 14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,*
- *Jude 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

Then follow the destruction of antichrist.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

The beast and false prophet are taken.

- *Revelation 19 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. 3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever. 4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of*

God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

Special Note. There is much evidence to suggest the book of the Revelation was written prior to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. The details of the Revelation are now historical for what Jesus said would happen in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, John saw would happen in the Revelation and history records it all did happen. The Beast, which was Nero, and the False Prophet, emperor worship were destroyed. The church emerged victorious.

Gog and his allies are smitten.

Ezekiel 38 – 39

Special Note. The dispensational idea that Gog refers to Russia is nonsensical. The idea that the narrative is future is ridiculous in light of history, which is forgotten by Dispensationalist.

Sometime between the years 592-570 BC the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of the future of Israel. He foresaw the holy city being destroyed. He foresaw the Temple of Solomon plundered. It all happen in 586 BC Then Ezekiel foresaw the restoration of Israel based upon the faithfulness of God (Leviticus 26:40-45; Deuteronomy 30:3) from the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 6:6-9). Israel would be re-gathered from the Babylonian exile. And yet, in the restoration Israel would still have enemies. Some of these enemies would be known and some unknown. One such enemy would be Gog.

The derivation of the word "Gog" is unknown. It may be a reference to a particular ruler of the people who lived in Magog. Josephus has identified Magog as the land of the Scythians, the region N and NE of the Black Sea and E of the Aral Sea.

It is at this point that the temptation for some is to go to a modern day map, find as many of the ancient biblical places as possible, transpose modern day countries for the ancient places and then proceed to explain the Bible with modernistic countries in mind and assign a future fulfillment of the prophetic portions of the passage.

For example, one futuristic author who has a widely used reference Bible identifies the geographical places in Ezekiel 38-39 in the following manner. Magog, the region N and NE of the Black Sea and E of the Aral Sea is thought to be Russia. Meshech and Tubal are identified as Turkey. Persia is the modern Iran and Ethiopia is equated with Northern Sudan. Liby and Gomer is associated with the E part of Turkey and the Ukraine. The house of Togarmah is said to be the part of Turkey near the Syrian border. Sheba and Dedan consist of the Arab people. Tarshish is declared to be located in the S part of Spain near Gibraltar. The Valley of Hamon-Gog refers to a valley E of the Dead Sea.

Instead of thinking in terms of ancient places and locations, instead of finding meaning to the people to whom Ezekiel ministered to, instead of finding a historical fulfillment, God's people are told to view these verses as speaking to modern day Iran, Turkey, Syria and Spain and to look for a future battle with Russia.

It really is a creative way to interpret the Bible and it does make for some interesting concepts but it is not right to wrongly divide the Word of Truth. We submit that God knows how to spell and if modern day Iran, Turkey, Syria, Spain and Russia were meant God would have easily identified them by their name.

Geographical places are not the only thing transposed by those determined to find some future battles in ancient prophecies. The very weapons of warfare Ezekiel saw are also modernized and given to Gog for his invasion of Israel. When the Word of God is interpreted in context and in the historical time period in which the prophecy was given, it is obvious that Ezekiel foresaw a battle to take place in the land of Israel. Observe the distinctive features of the now ancient battle.

- All of the invading soldiers who made up the armies of this passage were to be found riding on horses (38:15). According to Ezekiel 27:14 the house of Togormah, which is included in the invasion, was in possession of horses and traded them in Tyre.
- The time of this invasion is described as a time when Israel was dwelling in peace (38:11) and in un-walled villages (Leviticus 25:29, 31 cf. Deuteronomy 3:5).
- The purpose of the invasion against Israel was to possess the resources of the land including the cattle (38:11-13).
- The weapons of warfare are ancient weapons (38:4, 5; 39:9).
- The ancient weapons would be used as firewood (39:9, 10).
- The battle would take place when people used wood for fuel (39:9,10)

Summary.

If the prophecy of Ezekiel 38-39 is still futuristic then several things must happen. First, huge armies of the world will have to go back to depending upon horses. In Ezekiel's vision every soldier is riding a horse. Second, Israel will have to be at rest and dwelling in safety.

Also, cities in other areas will have to have walls built around them again for protection in order for Israel to be compared to them and so be called a "*land of un-walled villages.*" Third, major

nations must return to using ancient and primitive weapons of warfare made of wood such as bows, arrows, and spears.

Satan is bound.

- *Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*
- *Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

Special Note. The binding of Satan is not a future event but a historical reality that took place at Calvary with the triumphal victory of Christ followed by His resurrection. Jesus said, "How can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?" (Matthew 12:29). In the context, the strong man is Satan, the house is his sphere of influence (compare Matthew 4:8, 9) and the one who plunders the house is Jesus. Casting out demons, as He had just done, is an example of the plundering. In order to plunder Satan's house, Jesus "first binds the strong man." Jesus engaged in the "binding" Satan. *Ephesians 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

The judgment of the nations or the quick.

- *Matthew 25: 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them,*

saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*
- *Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*
- *I Peter 4:5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*

The resurrection of the tribulation saints, which, completes the First Resurrection.

- *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

Special Note. Dispensational theology teaches multiple resurrections in contrast to our Lord Jesus Christ who taught on physical, general resurrection from the dead. *John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.* The idea of a resurrection of the tribulation saints distinct from other saints was not heard throughout church history until it was introduced by dispensational teachers in the 19th century. The Apostle's Creed, one of the earliest of the church's confession of faith states plainly faith in "the resurrection of the body"; the faith of the church has been in a singular resurrection, not multiple ones.

Christ's glorious reign on earth for a thousand years, with His bride or body.

- *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*
- *2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*
- *Revelation 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*
- *Isaiah 2:2 And 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 unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. 5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.*
- *Isaiah 4:1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach. 2 In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. 3 And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: 4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. 5 And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense. 6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.*
- *Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. 6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead*

them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. 10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

- *Isaiah 25:6 And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. 7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. 9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.*
- *Isaiah 32:1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. 2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*
- *Isaiah 65:18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 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. 20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. 21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. 22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. 24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.*
- *Micah 4:1 But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. 2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of*

his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 3 And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. 4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.

- *Zephaniah 3:14 Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. 15 The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. 16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. 17 The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. 18 I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. 19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. 20 At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.*
- *Zechariah 8:3 Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. 4 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. 5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. 6 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvelous in mine eyes? Saith the Lord of hosts. 7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; 8 And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*
- *Zechariah 20:23.*

Special Note. The reference might be to Zechariah 8:23 for there is no Zechariah 20:23.

Zechariah 8:23 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.

- *Zechariah 14:16 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. 17 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. 18 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. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. 20 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 bowl's before the altar. 21 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 seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.

Special Note. The concept of Christ reigning for only 1,000 years on earth is embraced as dispensational teachers by taking the words of Revelation 20 literally as opposed to a symbolic number of completion. Far better is it to believe that “of His kingdom there shall be no end”. *Luke 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

S * SATAN

Satan loosed for a little season, deceiving the nations once more. Gog and Magog are destroyed, and Satan is finally cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:7-10: Hebrews 2:14), the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25: 41.

- *Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*
- *Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*
- *Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

Then follows the Resurrection of Judgment.

- *Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

- *John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*
- *Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

The judgment at the Great White Throne of all the remaining dead.

- *Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Death and hell (hades) destroyed.

- *Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

Then "the *aions* to come" (Ephesians 2:7), beginning with the New Heavens and the New Earth. The lower portion of the diagram shows these seven *aions*, on a much smaller scale, as an "aion of *aions*."

- *Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

In the past are the *olams* of *olams* and in the future are the *aions* of *aions*, showing that eternity is the continued measurement of time.

Aion is the measure of each of the eras, or dispensations, which mark the progress of the universe. They are not all of the same duration, but, so far as we know them, each *aion* marks a change in God's method of dealing with mankind.

Probably the *aions* of the past, the ante-Edenic *olams* of the Old Testament, mark the geological periods of the earth, and the various eras in the development of the universe. And, as the past has been an orderly unfolding of Creation and revelation of the Creator, so shall the future be, not a limitless *aion* called eternity, but a limitless *olam*.

"For detailed explanation of this diagram — giving all the passages in which the word *aion* occurs — and the presentation of other subjects concerning the second coming of Christ — see "*Jesus is Coming*," by "W. E. B. Fleming H. Revell Company, Chicago, New York, Toronto.

Succession of *aions* measuring infinite duration. See lower section of the diagram.

But, says one, if *aions* are measured periods then all *aions* are measured; and there will be no end to the sorrows of the ungodly (Revelation 14:11), and to the glory and dominion of the Lamb and his saints.

- *Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*
- *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
- *Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.*
- *Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.*

No! Beloved, for the best idea we mortals can have of infinity, or eternity, is that of continued measurement, and this is exactly the idea conveyed by the indefinite expression *aions* of *aions*.

Time is the measure of eternity; and eternity is the continued measurement of time.

Take, for instance, a yard-stick, and it measures only three feet. But turn it over and over and over, and you pass round the world, out to the moon, the sun, the stars, the farthest nebula, and all the limits of imagination, and still the little measure goes on and on into the unthinkable.

In like manner the Scriptural succession of *aions* measures eternity.

The little section of this mighty plan of the *aions* which covers human history is shown on a large scale in the upper portion of the diagram (p. 14). It shows seven *aions* — a week of *aions*. The diverging lines represent the increase of population, suddenly cut down to eight at the flood and to be again greatly reduced at the close of the present dispensation.

Notice that each *aion*, or dispensation, begins in grace and ends in judgment.

1. The *aion* of holiness in Eden, terminating in the expulsion.

2. The Antediluvian, terminating in the flood. During this *aion* Enoch is caught up, a type of the coming rapture of the Church.
3. The Post-diluvian, terminating in the destruction of Sodom.
4. The Patriarchal, terminating in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.
5. The Mosaic or Jewish, terminating in the crucifixion and destruction of Jerusalem. In this Elijah becomes another type of the coming rapture of the Church.
6. The Christian, to terminate in the great tribulation (Matthew 24:21), the coming of our Lord, the overthrow of Satan's kingdom and the judgment of nations. During this *aion* the Jews are scattered like seed among all nations (Amos 9:8-9; Luke 21:24).
 - *Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*
 - *Amos 9:8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord. 9 For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.*
 - *Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*
7. The Millennial Kingdom, terminating in Satan's last deception and the judgment of the great white throne (Revelation 20:7-15).
 - *Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Special Note. Prior to the rise of dispensationalism, a specific and detailed chronology of past or future events had not been suggested by students of *Scripture*. All of that changed reflected by the work of Mr. Blackstone. The problem with dispensationalism is that the chronology Mr. Blackstone dogmatically advocates in his theological construct cannot be sustained by an exegesis of the passages cited in their contextual structure. Whereas dispensationalism teaches seven dispensations including a “church age”, the Bible teaches there are only two “ages”, this present age and the age to come. Furthermore, there is no such terminology as “church age” in *Scripture!*

The Present Age

- *Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*
- *1 Corinthians 7:26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.*
- *Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*
- *2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*
- *Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*
- *Matthew 13:40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.*
- *Luke 20:34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:*
- *John 8:23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.*
- *Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
- *1 Corinthians 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*
- *Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

The Characteristics of this Present World or “Age”

• Suffering.	Romans 8:18
• Distress.	1 Corinthians 7:26
• Evil.	Galatians 1:4
• Temptation.	2 Timothy 4:10
• Ungodliness and lust.	Titus 2:12
• An ending.	Matthew 13:40
• Marriage.	Luke 20:34
• A Pilgrimage.	John 8:23
• Christians are to be Different.	Romans 12:2
• Foolish wisdom.	1 Corinthians 3:19
• Sinful.	Ephesians 2:2

Conclusion

The present world or age in which we now live began at creation and will end at the second advent of Christ.

The Age to Come

- *Hebrews 13:14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*
- *Hebrews 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;*
- *Hebrews 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*
- *1 Timothy 6:19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*
- *1 Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*
- *Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*
- *Ephesians 1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*
- *Luke 18:30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.*
- *Mark 10:30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

These seven make a week of *aions* corresponding to the expression in Ephesians 3: 21, *aion of aions*.

- *Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

Special Note. Dispensationalism demands a literal interpretation of the Bible, but does not hesitate to make a spiritual "week of *aions*" of seven dispensations, which is nowhere to be found in *Scripture* despite the assertion of an alleged correspondence.

Beyond this is the "New Heavens" and "New Earth," wherein dwelleth righteousness, the beginning of another series of *aions*. In harmony with the weeks of years, appointed unto Israel (Leviticus 25:8-11), other great *aions*, that is, weeks of *aions*, are to follow, corresponding to the repeated expression *aions* of *aions*.

- *Leviticus 25:8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. 9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. 10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. 11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.*

How vain it seems for any one to assert, in the face of such overwhelming Scriptural testimony, that the present Christian dispensation is the final *aion* of human history upon the earth. Some even assert that Matthew 13:39-40; 24: 3, etc., speak of the end of the world, instead of the end of the age, or *aion*.

- *Matthew 13:39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.*
- *Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

* Again, it is often asserted, by so-called scholars, that, after this present dispensation, there is to come an eternal age or *aion*. This cannot be, for the Scriptures plainly show that this *aion* is to be followed by the *aion* to come and that there are *aions and aions of aions* to come, an orderly unfolding of the future, in which our God shall "show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

- *Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

Special Note. Dispensationalism teaches that even after Christ comes at the Rapture and then for a third time at the Second Advent, there will still be death. There will be death during His millennium reign and there will be death after His millennium reign. But what does the Scripture say.

- *1 Corinthians 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

Question: "How can there be death after Jesus comes?"

Out of this vast *aionian* division of time, so clearly and thoroughly set forth in the Scriptures, six *aions* have thus far covered the experiences of our race; and six *aions* of trouble and sorrow have they been. But thank God another is coming, an *aion* of peace and happiness, for it is the first of those in which God will show the exceeding riches of His grace to us (Ephesians 2:7), and hence we conclude it is that thousand-year day of rest which God has promised to the willing and obedient of the children of men.

- *Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

It may be asked, if the seventh *aion* is to be a thousand years, why should not the preceding six *aions* be, each one, a thousand years long. We only know, from history, that each *aion* is a measured period, in which God manifests a different method in dealing with the human race. Each begins with a fresh manifestation of grace and closes with judgment. So that, while of unequal duration, they are definitely marked eras of time; and the sum of them, from Eden up to the present time, is almost six thousand years.

The first six days of the week are not ordinarily distinguished one from another, as to the character or occupation, but are taken together. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."

- *Exodus 20:9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:*

So the six *aions* have been work days for man, of labor and sorrow, but the seventh shall be the keeping of a Sabbath. The thousand-year day of the Lord.

THE KINGDOM

We have another argument based upon the revelations of Scripture concerning the Kingdom.

God made man in his own image and said: "let them have dominion ... over all the earth."
Genesis 1: 26.

- *Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

Through sin, man lost the dominion and Satan became ruler — "the god of this world." A train of woe and sorrow has filled the earth through these six days of labor and even in this boasted twentieth century and the Nations are yet plunging on into war, avarice, idolatry and misery, under Satan's deceptions.

But God promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Genesis 3.

- *Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

He hath sworn that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is the Lord. Isaiah 45:23; Philippians 2: 10, 11.

- *Isaiah 45:23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.*
- *Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

The knowledge of the Lord shall yet cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

- *Habakkuk 2:14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*

God called Abraham and promised that, in him and in his seed, all the nations shall be blessed.

- *Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

He established the Theocracy, through Moses, and gave a code of laws, which have been the foundation of all good government. He promised that David's house, and his throne, and his kingdom should be established forever (for the *olams*, or *aions*). 2 Samuel 7, 16.

- *2 Samuel 7:1 And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; 2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. 3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee. 4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, 5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? 6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. 7 In all the places*

wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? 8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: 9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, 11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. 17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. 18 Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? 19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? 20 And what can David say more unto thee? For thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. 21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. 22 Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? 24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God. 25 And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. 26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. 27 For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. 28 And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: 29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever.

Special Note. The spiritual and thus ultimate fulfillment of this passage is found in Hebrews 1:8 where the holy author quotes 2 Samuel 7:14.

- Hebrews 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

- *2 Samuel 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:*

It is best to let the New Testament interpret and apply the Old Testament prophecies and receive them as being fulfilled.

He has promised that a "king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."

- *Isaiah 32:1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.*

He hath promised that "the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Daniel 7: 27.

- *Daniel 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

He hath said of Israel,

- *Isaiah 43:21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.*
- *Deuteronomy 32:8 When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.*

He says, "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee." Jeremiah 46:28 and 30:11.

- *Jeremiah 46:28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.*
- *Jeremiah 30:11 For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*

He says, "Israel is the rod of His inheritance," ... His "battle ax," with which He will break in pieces the nations and destroy kingdoms. Jeremiah 51: 19, 20.,

- *Jeremiah 51:19 The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts is his name. 20 Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;*

He says they shall be restored to their own land and "shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." Amos 9: 15.

Indeed, it is impossible to quote the multitude of Scripture passages which affirm and describe this great dispensational truth, of the restoration of Israel and their glorious kingdom.

- *Amos 9:15 And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.*

Prophecies to the people, like Deuteronomy 30 and Ezekiel 37.

- *Deuteronomy 30:1 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, 2 And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; 3 That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. 4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: 5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. 6 And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. 7 And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. 8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. 9 And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: 10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. 11 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. 15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; 16 In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. 17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; 18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon*

the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. 19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: 20 That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

- *Ezekiel 37:1 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, 2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. 3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. 4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and 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. 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. 8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord. 15 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, 16 Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of 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: 17 And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. 18 And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? 19 Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. 20 And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. 21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: 22 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: 23 Neither shall they defile themselves any more 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, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people,*

and I will be their God. 24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25 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 for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. 26 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. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

Prophecies to the nations, like Isaiah 34 and 35.

- *Isaiah 34:1 Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. 2 For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. 3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. 4 And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. 5 For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. 6 The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. 7 And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. 8 For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. 9 And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. 10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. 11 But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. 12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. 13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. 14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. 15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. 16 Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. 17 And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.*

- *Isaiah 35:1 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and*

Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. 3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. 4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. 8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. 9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: 10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Prophecies to the isles and people that are far off, to the heavens and the earth, like Isaiah 49.

- *Isaiah 49:1 Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. 2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; 3 And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. 4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God. 5 And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. 6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. 7 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. 8 Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; 9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. 10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. 11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. 12 Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. 13 Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. 14 But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. 15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. 17 Thy children shall make*

haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. 18 Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. 19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. 20 The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. 21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? 22 Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. 23 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me. 24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? 25 But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. 26 And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Prophecies to the land itself, its mountains, rivers, valleys and desolate wastes, like Ezekiel 36.

- *Ezekiel 36:1 Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord: 2 Thus saith the Lord God; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession: 3 Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people: 4 Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about; 5 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiseful minds, to cast it out for a prey. 6 Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: 7 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. 8 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. 9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: 10 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: 11 And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old*

estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the Lord. 12 Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men. 13 Thus saith the Lord God; Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations; 14 Therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord God. 15 Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord God. 16 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 17 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. 18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: 19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. 20 And when they entered unto the heathen, 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. 21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. 22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 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. 26 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. 27 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. 28 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. 29 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. 31 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. 32 Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. 33 Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. 34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. 35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. 36 Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. 37 Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. 38 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.

The Apostle James summed them all up at the first council of the disciples in Jerusalem, saying: "To this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written; after this" (after, the church is taken out, see v. 14) "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is "fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." Acts 15, 16.

- *Acts 15:15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,*
- *Acts 15:16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:*

Special Note. When Mr. Blackstone adds in parenthesis, "after, the church is taken out", he is clearly superimposing a theological bias into the text that is not warranted. The context in Acts 15 is to the conversion of the Gentiles in the first century in particular and not to the removal of the church 2010 plus years later.

Acts 15:6-21

Matthew Henry

[James] addresses himself respectfully to those present: "Men and brethren, hearken unto me. You are men, and therefore, it is to be hoped, will hear reason; you are my brethren, and therefore will hear me with candor. We are all brethren, and equally concerned in this cause that nothing be done to the dishonor of Christ and the uneasiness of Christians."

2. He refers to what Peter had said concerning the conversion of the Gentiles (v. 14): "Simeon" (that is, Simon Peter) "hath declared, and opened the matter to you—how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, in Cornelius and his friends, who were the first-fruits of the Gentiles—how, when the gospel began first to spread, presently the Gentiles were invited to come and take the benefit of it;" and James observes here,

(1.) That the grace of God was the origin of it; it was God that visited the Gentiles; and it was a kind visit. Had they been left to themselves, they would never have visited him, but the acquaintance began on his part; he not only visited and redeemed his people, but visited and redeemed those that were *lo ammi*—not a people.

(2.) That the glory of God was the end of it: it was to take out of them a people for his name, who should glorify him, and in whom he would be glorified. As of old he took the Jews, so now the Gentiles, to be to him for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory, Jeremiah 13:11. Let all the people of God remember that therefore they are thus dignified in God, that God may be glorified in them.

3. He confirms this with a quotation out of the Old Testament: he could not prove the calling of the Gentiles by a vision, as Peter could, nor by miracles wrought by his hand, as Paul and

Barnabas could, but he would prove that it was foretold in the Old Testament, and therefore it must be fulfilled, v. 15. To this agree the words of the prophets; most of the Old-Testament prophets spoke more or less of the calling in of the Gentiles, even Moses himself, Romans 10:19. It was the general expectation of the pious Jews that the Messiah should be a light to enlighten the Gentiles (Luke 2:32): but James waives the more illustrious prophecies of this, and pitches upon one that seemed more obscure:

It is written, Amos 9:11, 12, where is foretold,

(1.) The setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah (v. 16): I will raise up the tabernacle of David, that is fallen. The covenant was made with David and his seed; but the house and family of David are here called his tabernacle, because David in his beginning was a shepherd, and dwelt in tents, and his house, that had been as a stately palace, had become a mean and despicable tabernacle, reduced in a manner to its small beginning.

This tabernacle was ruined and fallen down; there had not been for many ages a king of the house of David; the sceptre had departed from Judah, the royal family was sunk and buried in obscurity, and, as it should seem, not enquired after. But God will return, and will build it again, raise it out of its ruins, a phoenix out of its ashes; and this was now lately fulfilled, when our Lord Jesus was raised out of that family, had the throne of his father David given him, with a promise that he should reign over the house of Jacob forever, Luke 1:32, 33.

And, when the tabernacle of David was thus rebuilt in Christ, all the rest of it was, not many years after, wholly extirpated and cut off, as was also the nation of the Jews itself, and all their genealogies were lost. The church of Christ may be called the tabernacle of David. This may sometimes be brought very low, and may seem to be in ruins, but it shall be built again, its withering interests shall revive; it is cast down, but not destroyed: even dry bones are made to live.

(2.) The bringing in of the Gentiles as the effect and consequence of this (v. 17): That the residue of men might seek after the Lord; not the Jews only, who thought they had the monopoly of the tabernacle of David, but the residue of men, such as had hitherto been left out of the pale of the visible church; they must now, upon this re-edifying of the tabernacle of David, be brought to seek after the Lord, and to enquire how they may obtain his favor.

When David's tabernacle is set up, they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, Hosea 3:5; Jeremiah 30:9. Then Israel shall possess the remnant of Edom (so it is in the Hebrew); but the Jews called all the Gentiles Edomites, and therefore the Septuagint leave out the particular mention of Edom, and read it just as it is here, that the residue of men might seek (James here adds, after the Lord), and all the Gentiles, or heathen, upon whom my name is called.

The Jews were for many ages so peculiarly favored that the residue of men seemed neglected; but now God will have an eye to them, and his name shall be called upon by the Gentiles; his

name shall be declared and published among them, and they shall be brought both to know his name and to call upon it: they shall call themselves the people of God, and he shall call them so; and thus, by consent of both parties, his name is called upon them.

This promise we may depend upon the fulfilling of in its season; and now it begins to be fulfilled, for it is added, saith the Lord, who doeth this; who doeth all these things (so the Seventy); and the apostle here: he saith it who doeth it, who therefore said it because he was determined to do it; and who therefore does it because he hath said it; for though with us saying and doing are two things they are not so with God.

The uniting of Jews and Gentiles in one body, and all those things that were done in order to it, which were here foretold, were, [1.] What God did: This was the Lord's doing, whatever instruments were employed in it: and, [2.] It was what God delighted in, and was well pleased with; for he is the God of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, and it is his honour to be rich in mercy to all that call upon him.

It is amusing, yea, it is astonishing, to see the attempts of many scholars to try to spiritualize (as they call it) all these promises and vainly apply them to the church; and tell us that Jesus is now on His "mediatorial throne" reigning over the church.

Special Note. While Mr. Blackstone finds it "amusing" to believe that Jesus Christ is even now "King of kings and Lord of lords", the conservative Christian is not amused but believes that all power in heaven and earth has been invested in Christ. Christ must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

- *Revelation 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*
- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

There is no such term in *Scripture* as "mediatorial throne." It is man-made, the same as the term "general resurrection" or "general judgment."

Special Note. In like manner Mr. Blackstone must confess there is no such term in *Scripture* as "rapture", "church age", and "millennium", not to mention the speculative theories of a seven year tribulation period and a coming anti-Christ with incredible powers to rule the world.

Jesus was received into the heavens and is set down at the right hand of God. He is far above all authority and power, but He is on His Father's throne, from henceforth expecting until his enemies be made His footstool. Psalm 110: 1; Mark 16: 19; Hebrews 10: 12-13.

- *Psalms 110:1 A Psalm of David The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*
- *Mark 16:19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*
- *Hebrews 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

He is there as a minister, a mediator, the high priest of the true tabernacle, in the heavens (Hebrews 8). Head over all, to the church (Ephesians 1: 24), our intercessor (Romans 8: 34), our advocate (1 John 2:1). He is appearing in the presence of God for us. Hebrews 9: 24.

- *Hebrews 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*
- *Ephesians 1:24*

Special Note. The intended reference is probably Ephesians 1:22 for there is no verse 24.

Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

- *Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*
- *1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:*
- *Hebrews 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:*

But in due time, like the earthly high priest, He shall come forth, out of this heavenly Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:28), appearing the second time, in like manner as He went away. Acts 1: 11.

- *Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*
- *Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

Special Note. Ironically, these two verses by themselves destroy most of Dispensational teaching. Consider the evidence. Dispensationalism teaches a third coming of Christ:

There is the First Advent

Virgin Birth

*

There is the “Second” Coming
Rapture
Whereby Christ comes for the Church

*

Then, seven years later,

There is the Second Advent
Christ comes with the Church

Of course dispensational teachers generally do not say the Rapture is the second coming followed by a third coming – but that is what it is.

One way out of this dilemma is to speak of the Rapture and Second Coming as one event – but in two phases or stages. Dr. John Walvoord would speak of the Second Coming in two Phases, Phases I, the Rapture, Phase II, the Second Advent Proper.

Such language is nonsensical and is inconsistent with Hebrews 9:28 which states Jesus will appear the “second time” for all who believe. There is no mention of Christ coming in “phases” or “stages”.

There is no a dispensational writer, living or dead, who can change this *Scripture* or explain away its simple statement.

There is another problem. The dispensational teacher speaks of a “secret” and “silent” coming of Christ at the Rapture, and then appeals to one of the nosiest passages in the Bible to sustain this idea as per 1 Thessalonians 4:16. However, Acts 1:11 teaches Jesus will return as He went away, slowly, visibly, bodily.

Then shall the church be caught up to meet Him and forever be joined unto her Lord (1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18) to reign with Him forever. 2 Timothy 2: 12.

- *1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

Special Note. It is true that when Jesus Christ returns “the second time” for all who believe (Hebrews 9:28), in the same manner as He went away (Acts 1:11), the church shall rise to meet the Lord but that meeting is not for removal in a secret rapture. Rather, the heavenly meeting is in the form of a greeting of the King of kings and Lord of lords, for such is the meaning of the word “meet” in 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Meet, ἀπάντησις apantesis (ap-an'-tay-sis); a (friendly) encounter:

Jesus is descending. Jesus is coming again. It is proper the church goes forth to greet Him.

- *2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*

Then shall His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14: 4) ...

- *Zechariah 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

and then shall Israel look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12: 10)

- *Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

and a nation shall be born in a day. Isaiah 66: 8.

- *Isaiah 66:8 Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.*

Then shall He sit in His throne (Matthew 19: 28; Revelation 3: 21) as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. 1 Timothy 6: 15.

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*
- *Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

- *1 Timothy 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;*

The Church and the Kingdom

This distinction between the church and the kingdom is fundamental.

Special Note. The failure to see the essential unity between the church and the kingdom has led to much error in dispensational teaching.

The church is called a royal priesthood (see Exodus 19:6) and a holy nation. *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

The saints are even now kings and priests unto our God. *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

The King has come and has been invested with all authority in heaven and earth. Now, come to the kingdom. That was the message John preached. That was the message Jesus preached. That was the message the apostles preached. That was the message Paul preached.

John. Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus. Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Apostles. Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Paul. Acts 28:30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Individuals are called, yea pressed into the kingdom. *Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*

The church is the body of the Lord, subject to persecution and affliction, filling up the sufferings of Christ which are left behind, unto the close of Satan's reign as the "prince of this world."

But the kingdom is the restoration of the Theocracy, with Jesus and the Church (head and body — the Christ) as sovereign, Israel as the center; and all nations subdued to a righteous government.

Special Note. The idea that national Israel is the key to biblical prophecy and understanding the future is a fatal flaw in dispensational teaching. So enamored are dispensational teachers with

national Israel they exalt Israelites above the church to the point the church becomes a mere parenthesis in the divine plan. According to much dispensational teaching, the church began on the Day of Pentecost and will be removed at the Rapture so God can continue with His great plan to exalt national Israel and move the world through the tribulation and towards His millennial reign. The church is said to occupy an “intercalation period”, an interruption, an insertion, into the overall plan of God.

But what saith the Scripture? Does the church play only a minimal role in world history and the plan of God? No! A thousand times no! Christ loved the church and died for her (Ephesians 5:25). It is national Israel which has been part of God’s temporary plan of the ages. The Church existed before national Israel for Enoch and Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all existed before Moses established national Israel. The church existed during the existence of national Israel (Romans 9:6-8). The church exists following the destruction of national Israel in AD 70.

Then shall the Lord sit in His throne and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Matthew 25: 31.

- *Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

Then shall the twelve apostles "sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matthew 19: 28. Mark well that these are no fanciful imaginations, but they are the literal words of Scripture.

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone is correct to note the words of Jesus “are no fanciful imaginations”. He is not correct to apply them to an exaltation of a fleshly national Israel ruled over by the twelve apostles. The words of Matthew Henry are helpful to understanding the context and the words of Jesus to Peter.

**Matthew Henry
Matthew 19:23-30**

Peter took occasion from hence to enquire what they should get by it, who had come up to these terms, upon which this young man broke with Christ, and had left all to follow him, v. 27, &c. We have here the disciples' expectations from Christ, and his promises to them.

1. We have their expectations from Christ; Peter, in the name of the rest, signifies that they depended upon him for something considerable in lieu of what they had left for him; Behold, we have forsaken all, and have followed thee; what shall we have therefore? Christ had promised the young man, that, if he would sell all, and come and follow him, he should have treasure in heaven; now Peter desires to know,

(1.) Whether they had sufficiently come up to those terms: they had not sold all (for they had many of them wives and families to provide for), but they had forsaken all; they had not given it

to the poor, but they had renounced it as far as it might be any way a hindrance to them in serving Christ.

Note, When we hear what are the characters of those that shall be saved, it concerns us to enquire whether we, through grace, answer those characters.

Now Peter hopes that, as to the main scope and intendment of the condition, they had come up to it, for God had wrought in them a holy contempt of the world and the things that are seen, in comparison with Christ and the things that are not seen; and how this must be evidenced, no certain rule can be given, but according as we are called.

Lord, saith Peter, we have forsaken all. Alas! it was but a poor all that they had forsaken; one of them had indeed quitted a place in the custom-house, but Peter and the most of them had only left a few boats and nets, and the appurtenances of a poor fishing-trade; and yet observe how Peter there speaks of it, as it had been some mighty thing; Behold, we have forsaken all.

Note, We are too apt to make the most of our services and sufferings, our expenses and losses, for Christ, and to think we have made him much our debtor.

However, Christ does not upbraid them with this; though it was but little that they had forsaken, yet it was their all, like the widow's two mites, and was as dear to them as if it had been more, and therefore Christ took it kindly that they left it to follow him; for he accepts according to what a man hath.

(2.) Whether therefore they might expect that treasure which the young man shall have if he will sell all. "Lord," saith Peter, "shall we have it, who have left all?" All people are for what they can get; and Christ's followers are allowed to consult their own true interest, and to ask, What shall we have? Christ looked at the joy set before him, and Moses at the recompence of reward. For this end it is set before us, that by a patient continuance in well-doing we may seek for it. Christ encourages us to ask what we shall gain by leaving all to follow him; that we may see he doth not call us to our prejudice, but unspeakably to our advantage.

As it is the language of an obediential faith to ask, "What shall we do?" with an eye to the precepts; so it is of a hoping, trusting faith, to ask, "What shall we have?" with an eye to the promises.

But observe,

The disciples had long since left all to engage themselves in the service of Christ, and yet never till now asked, What shall we have? Though there was no visible prospect of advantage by it, they were so well assured of his goodness, that they knew they should not lose by him at last, and therefore referred themselves to him, in what way he would make up their losses to them; minded their work, and asked not what should be their wages.

Note, It honors Christ, to trust him and serve him, and not to bargain with him. Now that this young man was gone from Christ to his possessions, it was time for them to think which they should take to, what they should trust to. When we see what others keep by their hypocrisy and apostasy, it is proper for us to consider what we hope, through grace, to gain, not for, but by, our sincerity and constancy, and then we shall see more reason to pity them than to envy them.

2. We have here Christ's promises to them, and to all others that tread in the steps of their faith and obedience. What there was either of vain-glory or of vain hopes in that which Peter said, Christ overlooks, and is not extreme to mark it, but takes this occasion to give the bond of a promise,

(1.) To his immediate followers, v. 28. They had signalized their respect to him, as the first that followed him, and to them he promises not only treasure, but honour, in heaven; and here they have a grant or patent for it from him who is the fountain of honour in that kingdom; Ye which have followed me in the regeneration shall sit upon twelve thrones. Observe,

[1.] The preamble to the patent, or the consideration of the grant, which, as usual, is a recital of their services; "You have followed me in the regeneration, and therefore this will I do for you." The time of Christ's appearing in this world was a time of regeneration, of reformation (Hebrews 9:10), when old things began to pass away, and all things to look new. The disciples had followed Christ when the church was yet in the embryo state, when the gospel temple was but in the framing, when they had more of the work and service of the apostles than of the dignity and power that belonged to their office. Now they followed Christ with constant fatigue, when few did; and therefore on them he will put particular marks of honour.

Note, Christ hath special favor for those who begin early with him, who trust him further than they can see him, as they did who followed him in the regeneration.

Observe,

Peter spoke of their forsaking all, to follow him, Christ only speaks of their following him, which was the main matter.

[2.] The date of their honour, which fixes the time when it should commence; not immediately from the day of the date of these presents, no, they must continue a while in obscurity, as they were. But when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory; and to this some refer that, in the regeneration; "You who now have followed me, shall, in the regeneration, be thus dignified."

Christ's second coming will be a regeneration, when there shall be new heavens, and a new earth, and the restitution of all things. All that partake of the regeneration in grace (John 3:3) shall partake of the regeneration in glory; for as grace is the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6), so glory is the second regeneration.

Now their honour being adjourned till the Son of man's sitting in the throne of his glory, intimates,

First, That they must stay for their advancement till then.

Note, As long as our Master's glory is delayed, it is fit that ours should be so too, and that we should wait for it with an earnest expectation, as of a hope not seen. Romans 8:19. We must live, and work, and suffer, in faith, and hope, and patience, which therefore must be tried by these delays.

Secondly, That they must share with Christ in his advancement; their honour must be a communion with him in his honour. They, having suffered with a suffering Jesus, must reign with a reigning Jesus, for both here and hereafter Christ will be all in all; we must be where he is (John 12:26), must appear with him (Colossians 3:4); and this will be an abundant recompence not only for our loss, but for the delay; and when our Lord comes, we shall receive not only our own, but our own with usury. The longest voyages make the richest returns.

[3.] The honour itself hereby granted; Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is hard to determine the particular sense of this promise, and whether it was not to have many accomplishments, which I see no harm in admitting.

First, When Christ is ascended to the right hand of the Father, and sits on the throne of his glory, then the apostles shall receive power by the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8);

shall be so much advanced above themselves as they are now, that they shall think themselves upon thrones, in promoting the gospel;

they shall deliver it with authority, as a judge from the bench; they shall then have their commission enlarged, and shall publish the laws of Christ, by which the church, God's spiritual Israel (Galatians 6:16), shall be governed, and Israel according to the flesh, that continues in infidelity, with all others that do likewise, shall be condemned.

The honour and power given them, may be explained by Jeremiah 1:19, See, I have set thee over the nations; and Ezekiel 20:4, Wilt thou judge them? And Daniel 7:18, The saints shall take the kingdom; and Revelation 12:1, where the doctrine of Christ is called a crown of twelve stars.

Secondly, When Christ appears for the destruction of Jerusalem (ch. 24:31), then shall he send the apostles to judge the Jewish nation, because in that destruction their predictions, according to the word of Christ, would be accomplished.

Thirdly, Some think it has reference to the conversion of the Jews, which is yet to come, at the latter end of the world, after the fall of antichrist; so Dr. Whitby; and that "it respects the apostles' government or the twelve tribes of Israel, not by a resurrection of their persons, but by a reviviscence of that Spirit which resided in them, and of that purity and knowledge which they delivered to the world, and, chiefly, by admission of their gospel to be the standard of their faith and the direction of their lives."

Fourthly, It is certainly to have its full accomplishment at the second coming of Jesus Christ, when the saints in general shall judge the world, and the twelve apostles especially, as assessors

with Christ, in the judgment of the great day, when all the world shall receive their final doom, and they shall ratify and applaud the sentence.

But the tribe of Israel are named, partly because the number of the apostles was designedly the same with the number of the tribes; partly because the apostles were Jews, befriended them most, but were most spitefully persecuted by them; and it intimates that the saints will judge their acquaintance and kindred according to the flesh, and will, in the great day, judge those they had a kindness for; will judge their persecutors, who in this world judged them.

But the general intendment of this promise is, to show the glory and dignity reserved for the saints in heaven, which will be an abundant recompence for the disgrace they suffered here in Christ's cause. There are higher degrees of glory for those that have done and suffered most. The apostles in this world were hurried and tossed, there they shall sit down at rest and ease; here bonds, and afflictions, and deaths, did abide them, but there they shall sit on thrones of glory; here they were dragged to the bar, there they shall be advanced to the bench; here the twelve tribes of Israel trampled upon them, there they shall tremble before them. And will not this be recompence enough to make up all their losses and expenses for Christ? Luke 22:29.

[4.] The ratification of this grant; it is firm, it is inviolably immutably sure; for Christ hath said, "Verily I say unto you, I the Amen, the faithful Witness, who am empowered to make this grant, I have said it, and it cannot be disannulled."

(2.) Here is a promise to all others that should in like manner leave all to follow Christ. It was not peculiar to the apostles, to be thus preferred, but this honour have all his saints. Christ will take care they shall none of them lose by him (v. 29); Every one that has forsaken anything for Christ, shall receive.

[1.] Losses for Christ are here supposed. Christ had told them that his disciples must deny themselves in all that is done to them in this world; now here he specifies particulars; for it is good to count upon the worst. If they have not forsaken all, as the apostles did, yet they have forsaken a great deal, houses suppose, and have turned themselves out, to wander in deserts; or dear relations, that would not go with them, to follow Christ; these are particularly mentioned, as hardest for a tender gracious spirit to part with; brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children; and lands are added in the close; the profits of which were the support of the family. Now,

First, the loss of these things is supposed to be for Christ's name's sake; else he doth not oblige himself to make it up. Many forsake brethren, and wife, and children, in humour and passion, as the bird that wanders from her nest; that is a sinful desertion. But if we forsake them for Christ's sake, because we cannot keep them and keep a good conscience, we must either quit them, or quit our interest in Christ; if we do not quit our concern for them, or our duty to them, but our comfort in them, and will do it rather than deny Christ, and this with an eye to him, and to his will and glory, this is that which shall be thus recompensed. It is not the suffering, but the cause, that makes both the martyr and the confessor.

Secondly, It is supposed to be a great loss; and yet Christ undertakes to make up, for he is able to do it, be it ever so great. See the barbarity of the persecutors, that they stripped innocent people

of all they had, for no other crime than their adherence to Christ! See the patience of the persecuted; and the strength of their love to Christ, which was such as all these waters could not quench!

[2.] A recompence of these losses is here secured. Thousands have dealt with Christ, and have trusted him far; but never any one lost by him, never any one but was an unspeakable gainer by him, when the account came to be balanced. Christ here gives his word for it, that he will not only indemnify his suffering servants, and save them harmless, but will abundantly reward them. Let them make a schedule of their losses for Christ, and they shall be sure to receive,

First, A hundred-fold in this life; sometimes in kind, in the things themselves which they have parted with. God will raise up for his suffering servants more friends, that will be so to them for Christ's sake, than they have left that were so for their own sakes. The apostles, wherever they came, met with those that were kind to them, and entertained them, and opened their hearts and doors to them.

However, they shall receive a hundred-fold, in kindness, in those things that are abundantly better and more valuable. Their graces shall increase, their comforts abound, they shall have tokens of God's love, more free communion with him, more full communications from him, clearer foresights, and sweeter foretastes, of the glory to be revealed; and then they may truly say, they have received a hundred times more comfort in God and Christ than they could have had in wife, or children.

Secondly, Eternal life at last. The former is reward enough, if there were no more; cent. per cent. is great profit; what then is a hundred to one? But this comes in over and above, as it were, into the bargain. The life here promised includes in it all the comforts of life in the highest degree, and all eternal. Now if we could but mix faith with the promise, and trust Christ for the performance of it, surely we should think nothing too much to do, nothing too hard to suffer, nothing too dear to part with, for him.

Our Saviour, in the last verse, obviates a mistake of some, as if pre-eminence in glory went by precedence in time, rather than the measure and degree of grace. No; Many that are first, shall be last, and the last, first, v. 30. God will cross his hands; will reveal that to babes, which he hid from the wise and prudent; will reject unbelieving Jews and receive believing Gentiles.

The heavenly inheritance is not given as earthly inheritances commonly are, by seniority of age, and priority of birth, but according to God's pleasure. This is the text of another sermon, which we shall meet with in the next chapter.

Then shall "the mountain of the Lord's house be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Isaiah 2:2.

- *Isaiah 2:2 And 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 unto it.*

Special Note. One of the great tragedies of dispensational teaching is its failure to see how many Old Testament prophesies have been fulfilled by the coming of Christ and the growth of the early

church. Many nations did come to Jerusalem following the death of Christ and were converted. The gospel has gone forth unto the ends of the earth.

- *Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*
- *Romans 10:18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.*

Jesus is not king of the church. He is her bridegroom, her husband. Ephesians 5.

Special Note. One of the most unworthy teachings of Dispensational theology is the concept that Christ is not king of the church. Indeed He is for He is King of kings and Lord of lord. *Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

But He is the King of Israel.

- *Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*
- *John 1:49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.*

He was prophesied as King of the Jews.

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

He was born King of the Jews.

- *Matthew 2:2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

He said He was King of the Jews.

- *Matthew 27:11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.*

He was crucified as King of the Jews. Matthew 27: 37.

- *Matthew 27:37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

“The Lord God hath promised to give Him the throne of his father David and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever.

- *Luke 1:33 The Lord God hath promised to give Him the throne of His father David and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever.*

Special Note. Peter speaks of Christ being given the throne of David as being a present reality in contrast to dispensational teachers which sees this promise as something still in the future.

- *Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

Yes, the King shall come, and the kingdom shall be restored to Israel.

- *Micah 4:8 And thou, tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.*

Israel shall "arise and shine." They shall "flow together." "The ships of Tarshish shall bring thy sons from far." "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls." "The wealth of the nations" shall be brought unto them and "their kings led captive." The "nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly waste." **Isaiah 60.**

- *Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*
- *Isaiah 60:5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.*

- *Isaiah 60:9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.*
- *Isaiah 60:10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.*
- *Isaiah 60:11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.*
- *Isaiah 60:12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

Israel shall bud and blossom and fill the face of the world with fruit.

- *Isaiah 27:6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*

It is objected that the kingdom is to be established by the preaching of the gospel, which is to work like leaven until the nations are converted to righteousness. By such reasoning, men eliminate the "glorious hope" of our Lord's return (Tit. 2:11-13) and the restoration of Israel and the literal government of this world by Jesus and the saints of the Most High.

- *Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

What a gloomy vision this puts before us.

Why! at the same rate of progress, which has been made in the past 1800 years, it would take 7400 years to make the world nominal Christians; and they would all die one generation after another two hundred times.

And how long would it take for a nominally Christian world to become truly and wholly converted to Christ! Alas! We have no data for such a computation. The history of the world presents no such result. The trend is all the other way. Not even a backslidden church has ever been wholly revived. Much less has a nominally Christian nation ever been wholly converted. On the contrary, both are today reckoned as great fields for evangelical missionary effort. Strange indeed, that men will hold and advocate such a hopeless, pessimistic view.

Special Note. It is one's personal shame that what is condemned in others is permitted in self. Mr. Blackstone declares the optimistic post-millennial view "hopeless" and "pessimistic" because he is historically impatient, while he embraces a theological construct that declares the

church will apostatize, there will a great tribulation period, and an anti-Christ shall yet arise to destroy the Jews and lead the world to Armageddon. It is the dispensational view that is pessimistic and teaches God's people to be afraid of the future.

But what saith the Scriptures.

The tares and wheat shall grow together unto the end (of the aion). Matthew 13:30.

- *Matthew 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.*

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." 2 Timothy 3: 13.

- *2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Perilous times are coming. 2 Timothy 3: 1.

- *2 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

The great tribulation is before us. (Matthew 24: 21),

- *Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

Special Note. Once more Mr. Blackstone is wrong as a prophetic teacher. It is not true that the "great tribulation is before us". Jesus told the generation to which He spoke that they would not pass away until all He had spoken of regarding the great tribulation would come to pass. Jesus did not lie.

- *Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*

"the day of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7),

- *Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.*

the apostasy and the coming of the "man of sin,"

"the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

4 Who 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, shewing himself that he is God.

Satan will yet make his herculean effort to hold the nations in the grasp of his deceptions.

What is God's method to overthrow the empire of evil? Is it the slow process of the leaven? Nay verily. What saith the Scriptures?

"Wait ye upon me saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation ... for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Zephaniah 3: 8.

- *Zephaniah 3:8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.*

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone time and again decries a theological position that involves a long period of time to advance the kingdom of God, while suddenly appealing to a passage this is now more than 2630 years unfilled, according to dispensational teaching. Zephaniah the prophet was the son of Cushi. He prophesied against Judah and Jerusalem in the days of King Josiah (Zephaniah 1:1), about 630 BC.

So why does Mr. Blackstone appeal to this particular passage? The reason is simple. The language of Zephaniah conveys a sense of urgency. Dispensational theology constantly speaks of the "imminent" return of Jesus Christ which heightens the religious rhetoric of expectation.

By appealing to Zephaniah 3:8 Mr. Blackstone "twists" the Scripture to fit his theological paradigm. The apostle Peter predicted men would do this.

- *2 Peter 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

It will be quickly done, for He saith, "A short work will I make upon the earth." "He will ... cut it short in righteousness." Romans 9: 28.

- *Romans 9:28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*

God revealed, through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, by a colossal image, the whole course of Gentile government — Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman. It covers the entire history, from the suspension of the Theocracy to its restoration, when it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms.

Special Note. It is a trick of dispensational teachers to slip in a major theological construct in a simple statement as if it is fact. Notice the mention of the word “restoration”. Mr. Blackstone believes national Israel shall once more enjoy a theocracy which fails to embrace the rule and reign of God in the affairs of men today through His church. There is something else. The idea that God shall one day in the future break “all these kingdoms”, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman, fails to take into consideration the historical reality that all of these empires have already fallen, and Rome in particular to the church.

How does it break them in pieces? By some slow process? Nay. A stone smites the image on its feet and the whole mass becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carries them away forever.

Note that the Smiting is not in the hips — the strength of the Roman Empire, when Jesus came to be crucified — but on the feet, when He shall come again in power and glory.

Special Note. Dispensational theology postulates a Revived Roman Empire, which again is just nonsensical and finds no support in Scripture. In his massive work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, English historian Edward Gibbon offers a series of explanations for why the Roman Empire fell. These reasons included barbarian invasions, the gradual loss of civic virtue among its citizens, a moral weakness leading to effeminacy in the form of homosexuality and lesbianism, and an unwillingness to live a more manly military lifestyle. In addition, Gibbon noted the large role that Christianity played in destroying the Roman Empire, though he does not cast the work of the church in a positive light. He believes that the church created a belief that a better life existed after death, which encouraged an indifference to the present world among Roman citizens, thereby depleting their desire to sacrifice for the Empire. He also believed the emphasis on Christian love and the practice of pacifism undermined the traditional Roman martial spirit. The observations of Mr. Gibbon are valid. Had he viewed history through the eyes of God’s prism and not that of an Enlightenment perspective, he would have seen the hand of God against Rome, and prophecy fulfilled. It is this inability of dispensational teachers to see that God has kept His word that leads them to embrace a Revived Roman Empire.

What will He do to the nations? Listen to the Psalmist: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm 2: 9.

- *Psalms 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

Note carefully that this is when He sets His King upon His holy hill of Zion, and gives to Him the nations for His inheritance. See verses 6 and 8.

- *Psalms 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*
- *Psalm 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

Special Note. Following the resurrection of Christ, Jesus did ask and He did receive His inheritance.

- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*
- *Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

Only by ignoring prophecy being fulfilled in the Person and work of Christ, ripping prophetic passages out of context, pretending history will repeat itself such as a Revived Roman Empire, and embracing a secular hope in the form of Zionism, can dispensational theology advance.

There is no slow nor gentle process about this. But He will deal gently with those that love Him. "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth * * * it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zephaniah 2: 3.

- *Zephaniah 2:3 Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers ... hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Isaiah 26: 20.

- *Isaiah 26:20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.*

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12: 32.

- *Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

Yes. He shall give them the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. But note carefully they do not inherit it until the Son of Man sits in the throne of His glory and the nations have been gathered and judged. "Then" (and not till then) "shall the King say unto 'them: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:31-34

- *Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then*

shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Special Note. It is simply not true that the kingdom is a future reality. The King has come. The kingdom of heaven has come. John preached the kingdom. Jesus preached the kingdom. The apostles preached the kingdom, not as a future hope but as a present reality. “Come to Christ the King. Come to the kingdom”. That is the Christian message today.

- *Acts 20:25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.*
- *Acts 28:31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*

Such, beloved is a small portion of the Scripture testimony which affirms the coming of the King, the re-gathering of Israel and the restoration of the Theocratic kingdom. And as the kingdom immediately follows this dispensation, it can be none other than the “*aion to come*,” that seventh day of God's great week of Millenniums.

Special Note. All questions of eschatology must be answered by appealing to the New Testament. There is not a single word in the New Testament teaching that national Israel shall be re-gathered. Rather, the emphasis is upon the discipline of national Israel, and their spiritual blindness and need of salvation. There is not a single word about the restoration of the Theocratic kingdom in the dispensational system. There will be a more visible manifestation of the kingdom on earth and the Theocratic rule of Christ for at the Second Coming there will be a general resurrection, judgment, and the creation of a new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. But of the rule and reign of Christ, there is and will be no end.

POLITICS

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulders: ... Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9: 6, 7.

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*
- *Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

"It should be recognized much more than it is, that the Bible is a political Book rather than anything else; that the promises and the warnings and the prophecies of the Old Testament, and in a large measure also of the New, are political; that Christ Himself is a political Character, and that religion is only the highest form of politics. This will be readily understood when we consider that the word "politics" signifies the science of Government, and that it includes the government of a household, of a city, of a province, of a Kingdom, of an Empire, and finally of the Heavens and all they contain. God is therefore the greatest of all Political or Governing Beings, as He is the Head of all Power and Government, whether in Heaven or Earth, and that He has committed all power unto the Son, i. e., to Christ (Isaiah 9:6, 7; Matthew 28:18; John 5:22; Col. 2:9, 10; Revelation 12:10). The fact that men forget, ignore, or fail to "recognize this, does not alter the great fact"

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*
- *Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*
- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*
- *John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*
- *Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
- *Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

What men call "natural laws" are simply the uniformity of God*'s action, in material and temporal affairs. "He alone spreadeth out the heavens ... maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades * * * doeth great things past finding out." Job 9:8-10. But He also cares for the minutest animalculae [forms] and not a "sparrow falls on the ground without Him." Matthew 10:29.

- *Job 9:8 Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. 9 Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. 10 Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.*
- *Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.*

It is often asserted that it would be beneath the dignity of our Lord to attend to the politics of this world. This is based upon a mistaken idea of His divine character. His omniscience and omnipresence are most forcibly shown in the minutia of detail care. He will "rule the nations

with a rod of iron." Revelation 2: 27. And He will also care for all the wants of the poor and the needy.

- *Revelation 2:27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.*

"In His days shall the righteous flourish." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea", "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." Psalm 72:7-11.

- *Psalms 72:7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. 8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. 9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. 10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. 11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.*

THE RESURRECTION

We have an unanswerable argument based upon the words of the Scriptures, concerning the resurrection.

The Scriptures teach that all the dead will be raised. "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." John 5: 28-29.

- *John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

But the expression, "General resurrection," is not in the Scriptures. It is man-made. On the contrary, the Scriptures most clearly teach a difference in time for the resurrection of those "that have done good" as contrasted with those "that have done evil."

Special Note. It is a unique feature of dispensational theology to see distinctions in Scripture where none exist, and to appeal to passages that teach the exact opposite of the point being made. Here is a perfect example. Mr. Blackstone denies a “general resurrection” and yet cites a passage that speak of “the hour” in which “all that are in the graves” shall hear the voice of Christ and “shall come forth”, to life or judgment.

Only in dispensational theology can such a passage be turned into multiple resurrections. The great challenge is to determine just how many resurrections dispensational teachers embrace. According to dispensational teachers such as Mr. Blackstone there are multiple resurrections.

Orthodox Belief

- There is the resurrection of Christ which all Christians agree upon.
- There will be the resurrection of the dead, which all Christians agree upon.

Non Orthodox Teaching

- There is the resurrection of the Church Age saints only at the Rapture.
- There is the resurrection of the tribulation saints and Old Testament saints only at the Second Advent.
- There will have to be another resurrection following the thousand year reign for Satan is loosened and people die.

Dispensational theology has bodies popping up all over the place in the *aions* to come.

The first class are raised unto life but the other class are raised unto Judgment, One is "the resurrection of the Just (Luke 14:14) while the other is the resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12: 3.

- *Luke 14:14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*
- *Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.*

Special Note. The words of Daniel 12:2 must be included in order to understand Daniel 12:3.

- *Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

"It must be meant of the general resurrection at the last day: The multitude of those that sleep in the dust shall awake, that is, all, which shall be a great many. Or, Of those that sleep in the dust many shall arise to life and many to shame. The Jews themselves understand this of the resurrection of the dead at the end of time; and Christ seems to have an eye to it when he speaks of the resurrection of life and the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29); and upon this the Jews are said by St. Paul to expect a resurrection of the dead both of the just and of the unjust, Acts 24:15" (Matthew Henry).

The one is connected with reward, but the other with punishment. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order" (or band) "Christ the first fruits; then (afterward) they that are Christ's at His coming.

Then (afterward) cometh the end." 1 Corinthians 15: 22-26. The Greek *ita*, which is here translated "then," means next in order, but not necessarily immediate, as will be seen by its use in Mark 4:17, 2; 1 Timothy 2:13.

- *1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*
- *Mark 4:17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.*
- *1 Timothy 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

The whole figure is taken from the marching of an army — each in their own band or cohort. As there has been eighteen hundred years between the resurrection of Christ and the band at His coming, so there can be centuries between the first and second bands.

This is exactly what is stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "The dead in Christ shall rise first."

- *1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

We know that the adjective, first, relates to those saints who are alive on the earth at the coming of the Lord. But that it also refers to a "first resurrection," as compared with those who will be raised later, is evident from the following: If the resurrection of the righteous is to occur centuries before that of the ungodly, it logically follows that the first class would be spoken of as being raised from the dead.

We rejoice in the fact that the Scriptures emphatically make this distinction.

The resurrection of the dead (*ton nekron*) is applied to all classes (see Matthew 22:31, etc.*), but the resurrection from the dead (*ek nekron*) is never applied, in the Scriptures, to the ungodly. It is always applied to the righteous.

Special Note. Despite listing many passages of Scripture, the dramatic distinction Mr. Blackstone is trying to make here is without warrant. It is sufficient to say, "*There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both the of the just and unjust*" (Acts 24:15).

- *Matthew 22:31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,*

*See also the following Scripture.

- *Matthew 22:31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,*
- *Acts 17:32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.*
- *Acts 23:6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.*
- *Acts 24:15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*
- *Acts 24:21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:*
- *1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

and especially

- *John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

The force of this may be seen by a very simple illustration. If ten apples are taken out of a basketful and afterwards the rest are taken, all will be taken, but only ten are taken from the rest.

This expression (Gr. *ek nekron*) from the dead, occurs 49 times in the New Testament, to wit: 34 times of Christ's- resurrection, whom we know was thus raised (*ek*) out of or from the dead,

**See also the following Scripture.

Mat. 17 :9 ; Mark 9 :9, 10 ; Luke 24 :16 ; John 2 :22 : 20 :9, 21. 14 : Acts 3 :15 ; 4 :10 ; 10 :41 ; 13 :30, 34 ; 17 :3, 31 ; 26 :23 : Romans 1 :4 : 4 :24 ; 6 :4-9 ; 7 :4 ; 8 :11 ; 10 :7, 9 ; 1 Corinthians 15 :12. 20 ; Gal. 1 :1 : Ephesians 1 :20 : Col. 1 :18 ; 2 :12 ; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Timothy 2:8 ; Hebrews 13 :20 ; 1 Peter 1:3, 21.

- *Matthew 17:9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.*
- *Mark 9:9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.*
- *Mark 9:10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.*
- *Luke 24:16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.*
- *John 2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*
- *John 20:9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.*
- *John 20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*
- *John 20:14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.*
- *Acts 3:15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.*
- *Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*
- *Acts 10:41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.*
- *Acts 13:30 But God raised him from the dead:*

- *Acts 13:34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.*
- *Acts 17:3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.*
- *Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*
- *Acts 26:23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.*
- *Romans 1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*
- *Romans 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*
- *Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*
- *Romans 7:4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*
- *Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*
- *Romans 10:7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)*
- *Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?*

- *1 Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.*
- *Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead ;)*
- *Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*
- *Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*
- *Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*
- *1 Thessalonians 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*
- *2 Timothy 2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:*
- *Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*
- *1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*
- *1 Peter 1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*

3 times of John's supposed resurrection, whom Herod thought, had been thus raised out of the dead.

***See also the following Scripture.

- *Mark 6:14 And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad :) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.*
- *Mark 6:16 But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.*

- *Luke 9:7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;*

****John 12:1, 9, 17

- *John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.*
- *John 12:9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.*
- *John 12:17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.*

3 times of the resurrection of Lazarus, who was raised out of the dead, 3 times figuratively of spiritual life out of the deadness of sin.

It is used in Luke 16: 31, "Though one rose from the dead and in Hebrews 11: 19, expressing Abraham's faith that God could raise Isaac from the dead.

- *Luke 16:31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*
- *Hebrews 11:19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

And the remaining four times, it is used to express a future resurrection out of the dead, namely, in Mark 12: 25, where Jesus says: "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven."

- *Mark 12:25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.*

In Luke 20: 35-36. "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (aion), and the resurrection which is from among the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die anymore." No second death for these "For they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

- *Luke 20:35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: 36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

In Acts 4: 1-2 we read that "the Sadducees were grieved because Peter and John 'preached through Jesus the resurrection which is from among the dead'."

- *Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*

In Philippians 3: 11 the emphasis is remarkable. The preposition *ek* is twice repeated, "*teen exanastasin teen ek nekron.*" The King James translation "of the dead" is corrected in the Revised Version to "from the dead." But the literal translation is "the resurrection out from among the DEAD."

- *Philippians 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.(KJV)*

Olshausen declares that the "phrase would be inexplicable if it were not derived from the idea that, out of the mass of the dead, some would rise first."

Special Note. Hermann Olshausen (August 21, 1796 – September 4, 1839) was a German theologian.

It is the resurrection of a select class only. Paul as a Pharisee, believed in the fact of a universal resurrection (Acts 23:6-8), but we see, from the foregoing, why he counted all things but loss — "if by any means he might attain unto this resurrection from among the dead; and he calls it the "better resurrection." Hebrews 11: 35. It is the resurrection of LIFE. John 5: 29; Daniel 12: 2.

- *Acts 23:6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. 7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. 8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.*
- *Hebrews 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:*
- *John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*
- *Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

But there is also to be a "resurrection of Judgment." John 5: 29. It is the resurrection of the unjust. Acts 24: 15; Daniel 12: 2. It is the completion of the resurrection of the dead (*ton nekron*). Hence we see that there is a difference in time, as well as in character, in these orders, or bands, of the resurrection.*

- *John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

- *Acts 24:15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*
- *Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

*The same distinction is made in the Old Testament.

* The true rendering of Daniel 12: 1-3 in connection with the context, is

And (at that time) many (of thy people) shall awake (or be separated) out from among the sleepers in the earth dust. These (who awake) shall be unto life everlasting, but those (who do not awake at that time) Shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting. So the most renowned Hebrew doctors render it."

- *Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.*

"The 'Those'* who do not awake, at that time, are the wicked dead. Isaiah 26:14. They include the "Slain of the Lord," Isaiah 66:16, whom the Hebrew teachers called "Shear Hammerthim" i.e., 'the Remainder of the Dead.' ... "Many out from among* cannot mean 'all that are in.'" ...

Daniel 12: 1-3 teaches only the 'First resurrection.* as does Isaiah 26:19, its Old Testament companion piece, as Delftssch calls it. ... In Rabbinic terms the Resurrection out from (min) the dead is called "*Techiyath Tsadikim*," The making alive of the _____

- *Isaiah 26:19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

And now comes the question, How long is this difference in time? Jesus said in John 6: 39, 40, 44, 54, speaking of believers, "I will raise him up at the last day," and it is objected that, if the righteous are to be raised in the last day, there can be no other day for the resurrection of the ungodly.

- *John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

But a moment's reflection upon Peter's admonition, that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years" not only sweeps away the objection, but, in conformity with these great lines of Scripture

teaching, shows us that this last day is the "day of the Lord," the thousand-year day, the sacred day of rest of God's great week of aions. It begins with the resurrection of the righteous, and closes with the resurrection of the rest of the dead. The just and the unjust. And this thousand year day, of rest and resurrection, is the Scriptural Millennium.

"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished." Revelation 20: 5.

- *Revelation 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

THE JUDGMENT

There is another similar argument, based upon the words of Scripture, concerning the Judgment. Men talk of a "General Judgment," but there is no such term in the Word. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell of at least five distinct Judgments.

1. Of believers, as to character, upon the cross of Christ, so that we shall not come into the judgment of condemnation. John 5: 24.
 - *John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

2. Of believers, as to works, at the Judgment seat of Christ. 1 Corinthians 4:1-5: 3:13, 15; 2 Corinthians 5:9, 10; Romans 14:10, 12.

- *1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. 4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*
- *1 Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*
- *1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*
- *2 Corinthians 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*
- *Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*
- *Romans 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

Righteous, or “Techiuvath Hammethim,” “The making alive of the Dead;” and differs from the “Amdath Hammethim / or mere “Standing up of the Dead.” See Revelation Nathaniel West, D. D., In "The Thousand Tears In Both Testaments."

Note carefully that the Hebrew expression "Shear Hammethim" means "Rest of the Dead." the very words used by John, Revelation 20 :6, to designate those who rise not until the thousand years are finished, and who after the thousand years Stand before God. Revelation 20:12.

- *Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

3. Of the living nations, at the beginning of the Millennium. Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5.

- *Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*
- *Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*
- *2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;*
- *1 Peter 4:5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*

4. Of the "rest of the dead" at the close of the Millennium, before the great white throne. Revelation 2: 12-15.

- *Revelation 2:12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

5. The Judgment of angels. 1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6.

- *1 Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*
- *2 Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;*
- *Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

SUFFERING AND GLORY

Let us add, to the foregoing arguments, the important statement of the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Peter. The prophets "sought and searched diligently, — searching what time, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the suffering of Christ, and the glories that should follow them." 1 Peter 1: 10-11 R. V.

- *1 Peter 1:10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. (KJV)*

Mark it carefully, that the glory follows the sufferings. The term "Christ" includes head and body (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23; Revelation 12:5) and the body is allotted to suffering, as well as the head, so that "all, who will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3: 12.

- *Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*
- *Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*
- 2 Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

We "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Col. 1:24; 2 Corinthians 1:5-6; Philippians 3:10; 2 Timothy 1:8; 2:12. Not only does the New Testament teach this, but nineteen hundred years of experience, through faggot, flame, stripes and ostracism, prove that suffering is inevitable to the Godly in his dispensation.

- *Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*
- *2 Corinthians 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*
- *Philippians 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*
- *2 Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*
- *2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*

Hence we see that there is no place for the glory in this evil age (Mal. 1:4), and therefore it must follow in the promised Millennium.

REVELATION

Thus far, we have scarcely referred to the book of Revelation, because it is often asserted, by superficial scholars, that the doctrine of a Millennium has no foundation in any other part of Scripture, except in this book. The folly of such an assertion is readily seen. Why, as we have already stated, the doctrine of the Millennium was held by Jewish scholars, long before the book of Revelation was written.

It was commonly taught in the Talmud that the Messianic Kingdom would last for one thousand years; and this was based entirely upon the Old Testament Scripture. And now, having shown that the doctrine rests on God's Holy Week, and is interwoven with the other great cardinal doctrines, throughout the whole of Scripture, let us come to this book of Revelation, of which it

is said, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein." Revelation 1: 3.

No other book in the Scriptures has such a blessing pronounced upon it.

Satan hates to have Christians read this book more than any other, because it so fully and plainly tells of his down-fall and their triumph. It describes how God "shall bruise Satan under" our "feet shortly." Romans 16:20.

- *Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

In the very first chapter, we are told that Jesus Christ — the ruler of the kings of the earth — hath made us to be a kingdom and priests unto His God and Father. In the 5th chapter we are told that we shall reign upon the earth. This word earth (Gr. Gee) always means the physical earth, the land or ground.

Note this. The kingdom is not some imaginary, ethereal, "spiritual" (so-called) dominion, but a literal reign of righteous government upon the earth,

In the 7th chapter the twelve tribes of Israel are included. For these, Jesus has promised thrones to be occupied by each of His twelve apostles. Matthew 19: 28.

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

In the 12th chapter is revealed The Christ, Jesus the head — caught up to Gk) and His throne eighteen centuries ago, and the church — His body — to be caught up at the Rapture. Then shall there be war in heaven. Then shall Satan and his angels be cast out into the earth. Then shall the Heavens rejoice, but the earth shall wail because Satan is come down, having great wrath, knowing his time is short. He immediately begins his persecution of the woman, Israel, out of whom Christ-head (Jesus) and body (the church) has been taken.

We must remember that the Church was begun with a little band of Jews — the faithful remnant (Acts 1:14-15; 2:1-4; Romans 9:27; 11:4), and we gentiles, are wild olive branches grafted in among them. Romans 11:17, So that the Church is also out of the woman — Israel.

- *Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)*
- *Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues*

like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- *Romans 9:27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:*
- *Romans 11:4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*
- *Romans 11:17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

The 13th chapter reveals the mastery efforts of Satan to stamp out all worship of God from the earth and inaugurate the worship of himself. He will seize and control commercialism, so that no man can buy or sell unless he has the mark of the beast.

There will be only one trust then, and it will be world-wide. He will seize all political power, and bring forth his two great wild-beasts of Satanic dominion. He will seize apostate Christendom and use it for a little, until it becomes so corrupt that his secular powers tear it to pieces.

Then he will bring forth his antichrist and set up his image and kill all those who will not worship it. Note this carefully, for these are the tribulation saints, of whom we read in the 20th chapter.

The 17th chapter is a description of the great harlot, apostate Christendom.

The 18th chapter is a description of rebuilt, literal Babylon, which Satan will make his capital.

That the old city of Babylon is to be rebuilt is evident, because it has never been destroyed, in the sudden and overwhelming manner which the Scriptures describe. See Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 50:40; Revelation 18:21.

Special Note. If dispensational teachers were subject to a medical examination, the doctor might diagnose them with diplopia which is the medical name for double vision. Dispensational theology “sees” a kingdom of God *and* a kingdom of heaven; an old Babylon *and* the old city of Babylon to be rebuilt; a historical Roman Empire *and* a Revived Roman Empire; a Rapture *and* a Second Advent; the New Covenant given to the Church *and* to a restored national fleshly Israel etc. Once more Mr. Blackstone rejects the testimony of history regarding the destruction of Babylon in order to advocate a future Babylon.

THE HISTORICAL DECLINE OF BABYLON

James E. Smith

Professor of Old Testament

Florida Christian College

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Because of considerations of space only a brief outline of the stages in the decline of Babylon can be given here.

A. The Persian Period

1. The capture of Babylon by Cyrus (539 B.C.). The armies of Babylon were crushed at Opis on the Tigris. The seizure of Babylon itself was relatively peaceful. The city remained a great metropolis.
2. The capture of Babylon by Darius (522-21 B.C.). Herodotus (III. 151-159) reports a siege of almost two years. Darius destroyed one of the three broad walls which guarded the city and tore down the hundred gates of which Babylon was so proud.
3. The capture of Babylon by Xerxes (482 B.C.). The temple E-sagila was torn down. Quarters of the town that had been pillaged remained uninhabited and fell into ruins. Commerce dwindled; industry flagged. So thoroughly did Xerxes ravage Babylon that barely a half-dozen tablets have survived from the remainder of his reign over that city. Babylonia lost its identity through incorporation with Assyria and was henceforth ferociously taxed.
4. Under the later Persian kings Babylon experienced a brief revival but was not completely restored.

B. The Greek Period

1. Alexander the Great attempted to restore Babylon in 331 B.C. With the death of that great king the project was abandoned.
2. In the twenty-five years after the death of Alexander Babylon was sacked and put to the torch at least seven times.

3. The founding of Seleucia sometime between 307 and 300 BC by Seleucus Nicator I (312-281 B.C.). The new city, some ninety miles away from Babylon, was populated with colonists from Babylon.
4. Between 160 and 140 B.C. the city was taken by rival armies at least four times. With the capture of the city by the Parthian king Mithridates I, the period of Greek dominance in Babylonia came to an end.

C. The Parthian Period

1. Nine years after the Parthians gained control of Babylonia the city fell once again, this time into the hands of Antiochus VII Sidetes (130 B.C.).
2. In 127-26 B.C. Babylon was conquered by Hyspaosines, the fifth conquest of the city since July 141 B.C.

3. Between 126 and 123 B.C. Himeros, a Parthian, dealt a death blow to the ancient city. He burned the marketplace of Babylon and some of the temples and completely destroyed the better part of the city. Many of the inhabitants were sent to Media as slaves.

4. In 122 B.C. Mithridates II recaptured the city.

The preceding survey has indicated that subsequent to the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. that city suffered innumerable sieges, captures and calamities. No fewer than eighteen times did Babylon "fall" to an enemy. With few exceptions each successive conqueror treated the mighty metropolis with more severity than did his predecessor.

At 10 B.C. all primary information about the city of Babylon disappears. From this time on classical historians, geographers, naturalists, travelers and commentators must supply the information concerning the city of Babylon. The Greek historian Diodorus Siculus in the first century B.C. relates that only a small part of ancient Babylon was inhabited in his day (11.9.9). Strabo the Greek geographer (63 B.C. - 19 A.D.) describes Babylon as being "in great part deserted" (XVI. 1.5).

Pausanias the Greek traveler and geographer of the second Christian century declares that nothing remained of Babylon except the temple of Belus and the walls of the city (VIII. 33.3). Lucian (ca. 129-180 A.D.) the Greek sophist and satirist says that Babylon will soon have to be searched for like Nineveh of which not a trace remained on his day.

Among the Latin writers the testimony concerning the condition of Babylon is similar. Pliny (23-79 A.D.), the Roman polymath, states that while the temple of Bel is still standing "in all other respects the place has gone back to a desert." The Roman historian Dio Cassius describes Trajan's visit to Babylon in which he found only "mounds and stones and ruins."

Jewish sources confirm the picture of the desolate state of Babylon in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. Josephus describes how the Jews at Babylon were subjected to persecution by the native people and abandoned the city in the middle of the first Christian century (Ant. XV. 9.8, 9). The Talmud prescribed certain benedictions which one was to utter when he saw the ruins of Babylon.

In Christian literature Babylon is mentioned in I Peter 5:13. This passage has been used to prove that Babylon in the first century was a thriving city with a Jewish population sufficiently large enough to demand the ministry of the apostle Peter.

For a number of reasons it is best to reject the literal interpretation of Babylon in this passage and to regard "Babylon" here as a cryptogram for Rome. The only Christian reference to Mesopotamian Babylon is found in Jerome's commentary on Isaiah. He makes reference to the fact that Babylon in his day had been made a game preserve by one of the Parthian kings.

- *Isaiah 13:19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*

- *Jeremiah 50:40 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.*
- *Revelation 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

The 19th chapter [of Revelation] describes the return of Jesus, with the Church, which will have been caught up to meet Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and the armies of heaven following Him.

- *I Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

He smites the nations, the beasts, and the kings of the earth are overthrown and cast into the lake of fire. Then in logical order the 20th chapter [of Revelation] gives us the climax — the binding of Satan himself and the Millennial reign of the saints, with Christ, for a thousand years.

Let us read this passage carefully, remembering that it is Scripture, God's Holy Word. Revelation 20:1-8:

- *Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.
2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.
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4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.
6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.
7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.
8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Six times repeated in this passage, we have the plain expression "Thousand years" (Latin Millennium) as the measure of the time during which Satan is bound and the saints reign. The doctrine of the Millennium is so plainly taught in this Scripture that "wayfaring men shall not err there- in." Isaiah 35:8.

- *Isaiah 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*

We might consistently rest the whole argument here, for, in the face of such definite language, how can anyone have the temerity [unreasonable attempt] to claim that the Scriptures do not teach the doctrine of a Millennium?

Special Note. This is a misrepresentation of what others claim. Both the Post-millennial and the Amillennial position advocate a millennial reign of Christ. What is controversial is the nature of the reign of Christ, its duration, and the form it expresses itself in. The dispensational millennial demands the exaltation of national Israel over other nations on earth, death, sin and suffering

after the return of Jesus and during the millennial reign, a rebuilt temple, and the reinstitution of bloody animal sacrifices.

Those who do so, usually proceed upon one of two methods. One is to attack the Apocalypse — this blessed book of Revelation — as not authentic, or as being uncanonical and uncreditable.

God have mercy upon such sacrilege.

The other method is a process of, so-called, "spiritualizing" interpretation, by which men substitute their own imaginary conceptions for the Word of God. It recklessly opens the way for all the vagaries of Swendenborgianism, or the havoc of destructive criticism.

Special Note. Mr. Blackstone mentions Swendenborgianism which deserves some attention. The New Church (or Swedenborgianism) is the name for a religious movement developed from the writings of the Swedish scientist and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). Swedenborg claimed to have received a new revelation from Jesus Christ through continuous heavenly visions which he experienced over a period of at least twenty-five years. In his writings, he predicted that the Lord would establish a "New Church" following the Church of traditional Christianity, which worships God in one person, Jesus Christ—thereby denying the doctrine of the trinity. The New Church doctrine is that each person must actively cooperate in repentance, reformation and regeneration of one's life. Salvation is not so much the gift of God based on free grace, but the well deserved reward of a good life. The movement was founded on the belief that God explained the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures to Swedenborg as a means of revealing the truth of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ which is not physical, bodily, and literal, but spiritual in nature. Followers believe that Swedenborg witnessed the Last Judgment in the spiritual world, along with the inauguration of the New Church. While Swendenborgianism is denounced by Mr. Blackstone, it is interesting that at least one unique main teaching of Emanuel Swedenborg found fruit in dispensational thinking. Both Swedenborg and Mr. Blackstone teach the church has passed through different ages or dispensations, each ending with a "judgment". Mr. Blackstone speaks of seven; Swedenborg spoke of four.

Our modern destructive critics have hurled their chief efforts against the Apocalypse of Daniel in the Old Testament and the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament.

These attacks are not new. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria [d. November 17, 265] raised the question of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, and in the course of the fourth century it was removed from the sacred canon, "and thus," says a learned historian, "the troublesome foundation on which Chiliasm might have continued was gotten rid of."

For many centuries the Greek Church kept the Johannic Apocalypse out of its canon. But "the old Book" stood, and was finally restored late in the middle ages.

And it stands still, beloved, and will stand, when the "destructive critics," like the "vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth." (Jas. 4: 14), have passed away.

- *James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

It is the Word of God, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him, to show unto His servants." Based upon such apostolic foundation, the doctrine of the Millennium was received by the entire Apostolic Church.

The early fathers, Papius [of Hierapolis, c. AD 70-155], Justin [Martyr, AD 100-165], Cerenthius [perhaps Cerinthus (?), c. AD 100], Irenaeus [died, c. AD 202], Hippolitus [AD 170- 236], Tertullian [c. AD 160-220] and others all believed and taught it. Justin speaks of Chiliasm as a necessary part of complete orthodoxy.

Special Note. It is a favorite ruse of dispensational teachers to seek to find support for their teachings in the Apostolic Church and the early church fathers such as those mentioned. Those Christian contemporaries who opposed premillennialism, such as Origen [c. AD 185-254], are not noted.

Even when appealing to select church fathers for their support, dispensational teachers such as Mr. Blackstone fail to distinguish between the dispensational view of the millennium and the chiliasm view of the millennium. There is a vast difference between the two. To be specific by way of illustration, Irenaeus was not looking for a Jewish kingdom as dispensationalist. He interpreted Israel as the Christian church, the spiritual seed of Abraham which is more consistent with amillennialism and post-millennial theology.

Also, care should be taken to be discerning in what the church fathers taught. Cerinthus, for example, distinguished between the man Jesus and the Christ. He denied the supernatural birth of Jesus, making him the son of Joseph and Mary, and distinguishing him from Christ, who descended upon him at baptism and left him again at his crucifixion. Cerinthus is also said to have taught that Jesus will be raised from the dead at the Last Day, when all men will rise with Him.

When the early church fathers disagree with dispensational teaching, they are not appealed to. Concerning the prophecy of Daniel is a case in point. Tertullian contends that by the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks the time of Christ's incarnation, as well as of His death, is foretold. He gives an extensive sketch of the chronology of the seventy weeks of years, starting them from the first year of Darius, and continuing to Jerusalem's destruction by the Romans under the command of Titus. This was to show that the seventy weeks were then fully completed, the vision and prophecy thus being sealed by the advent of Christ, which he places at the end of the sixty-two and one-half weeks. Dispensationalism denies Daniel's seventy weeks was fulfilled. Mr. Blackstone teaches that God still owes the Jews seven years of human history based on Daniel's seventy week prophecy.

When the church formally met to discuss chiliasm or the millennium issue, The Council of Nicea [AD 325] and Augustine of Hippo [AD 354-430] both opposed this belief, and it came to be considered heretical or one of extreme error.

But "the spirit of philosophical and theological speculation and reflection, which began to spread through the churches in the third and fourth centuries, did not know what to make of the old hopes of the future." A mighty conflict was developed, and Satan found agencies to undermine

the faith of God's people in this blessed doctrine of the Millennium. Origin and his school, introduced the "spiritualizing" methods of interpreting eschatology.

"Augustine, in the western church, who once believed in Chiliasm, changed with the downfall of the Roman Empire, and was the first to teach that the Catholic Church, in its empirical form, was the Kingdom of Christ, that the Millennial Kingdom had commenced with the appearing of Christ, and was therefore an accomplished fact."*

We know the sad result, in the centuries of dark ages which followed.

Special Note. The term "dark ages" is a misnomer for this was the era of Machiavelli, Michelangelo, Raphael, Copernicus, and Columbus. The Western World was alive with art and literature, court intrigue and political upheaval, the discovery of new worlds, and the rebirth of learning.

But how much more grievous it is to find that men will advocate the same mistaken methods now. They tell us that Revelation is a symbolical book and therefore we cannot take its plain statements. Literally. They say that because the horns, lions and beasts are figurative, therefore the thousand years must be figurative and mean any indefinite time we choose.

Special Note. Notice how the phrase "thousand years" is used elsewhere in Scripture in a figurative way to denote completion.

- *Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;*
- *1 Chronicles 16:15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;*
- *Psalms 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.*
- *Psalms 50:10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*

Such reasoning is most fallacious and destroys all foundation for conveying definite ideas by any language.

As well might we call Jesus Christ a mere figure, because he is represented by a "shoot," a "branch," "the morning star," the "sun," or a "Lamb." No portion of the Bible is more strongly figurative than the first six chapters of Zechariah. But who would be so foolish as to claim that Zerubbabel, Judah and Jerusalem were figurative because they are mentioned therein?

But, says the objector, this is the only place in Scripture where the thousand years is mentioned. We are surprised that any student should make such a statement.

Special Note. In reality, no Post-millennialist or Amillennial would or does make such a statement. What both would argue is that Revelation 20 is the only place in Scripture where a time frame is placed on the reign of Christ. Furthermore, both would argue that the time frame is not to be taken in a limited literal way, but speaks of the complete rule and reign of Christ for the Scripture teach that of the Lord's government or reign "there shall be no end".

- *Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*
- *Luke 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

Can they be willingly ignorant of Psalm 90, and 2 Peter 3:8? But suppose it was the only place. Is not that enough, if it is the Word of God?

- *Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*
- *2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

The most important event in all human history is the incarnation — the hypostatic union of the Divine and the human, in our Lord Jesus. And yet the plain prophecy of His birth without a human father, rested for seven centuries upon the single passage in Isaiah 7: 14.

Likewise a single passage told of His birth at Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), His entry into Jerusalem on a colt (Zech, 9:9), and many other events, foretold by a single prophecy, have all come to pass.

Just so surely shall this six fold prophecy of the thousand years be fulfilled, for our God hath spoken it.

Some have stumbled over the word *souls*, as though only spirits were meant, forgetting, or overlooking, the fact that the same word, *psukee*, is used to designate persons or individuals. See Acts 2: 41; 7: 14; 27: 37; 1 Corinthians 15: 45, etc.

- *Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*
- *Acts 7:14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.*
- *Acts 27:37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

Again, it is objected that only the martyrs are spoken of in this passage.

But this is a mistake. Read the first part of verse four again: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them."

- *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

Nothing is said here about the resurrection of these. And why not? Because they had been raised long before, at the Rapture of the church. 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18; Revelation 12: 5.

- *1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*
- *Revelation 12:5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

Special Note. This is outrageous. Revelation 12:5 says nothing about a Rapture or resurrection while 1 Thessalonians 4:13 deals with the Second Coming of Christ according to promise in Acts 1:11 and Hebrews 9:28.

They had escaped the great tribulation. Luke 21: 36; Revelation 3: 10.

- *Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*
- *Revelation 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

Special Note. The “great tribulation” took place AD 66-70 with the siege and fall of Jerusalem.

They had been married to the Lord and came with Him to overthrow Satan and his empire. Revelation 19:5, 14.

- *Revelation 19:5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*
- *Revelation 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

And now they sit upon the thrones promised in Mat. 19: 28; Luke 22: 30, and Judgment is given into their hands.

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*
- *Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

See also Daniel 7: 9-28.

- *Daniel 7:9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. 12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. 15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. 17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. 18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. 19 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; 20 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. 21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. 23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. 24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall*

subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. 26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. 28 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

And who are these martyrs spoken of in the remainder of the verse? Why! They are the tribulation saints, who will be slain under the reign of antichrist. Revelation 13.

- *Revelation 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. 11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

See how plainly they are described: "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had" (note it carefully and compare with

Revelation 13 [verse 15]) "not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they live and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

"This is the first resurrection," that is, the completion of the first resurrection.

Christ the first fruits.

Then the great ingathering at the Rapture.

And now, these tribulation saints, as the gleanings, completes the first resurrection.

"And the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished."

Men may interpose idle questions and conundrums [difficult questions]; they may try to mislead us with flippant remarks and even ridicule; they may bombard this stronghold with subtle arguments and man-made conclusions; all to their own sorrow.

But let us reverence the Word of God and heed the promise He gives us. "To this man will* I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." Isaiah 66:2.

Let us hold sacred and precious this book of Revelation, which begins and closes with a special assurance of blessing to those who keep the words of its wonderful prophecy.

This Scriptural doctrine of the Millennium cannot be shaken. Its root is in the Sabbath of Genesis; and its fruit is in the Thousand-year kingdom of Revelation. It shines throughout the Word of God as a glorious hope for the nations.

Shine on, blessed Revelation of God, and the Lord stamp upon our hearts the warning that, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life."

THE PROPHETS

And now, let us reiterate the fact that this doctrine of the Millennium is taught all through the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation. "*We have seen that it is God's great Millennial Sabbath; that it is his Seventh *aion*; that it is inwrought into the great doctrine of the Resurrection, so that those who rise from the dead are separated by a thousand years from those who stand before the great white throne. That it is intertwined with all the teaching concerning the Kingdom, as the period when Israel, according to the Scripture, shall reposess their land and enjoy the restored Theocracy.

In short. Scripture prophecy is a progressive revelation of the coming Messianic Kingdom.

The seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15) is limited to Noah (Genesis 5:29),

- *Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
- *Genesis 5:29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.*

to Abraham (Genesis 12:3),

- *Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

to Isaac (Genesis 17: 19),

- *Genesis 17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.*

to Jacob (Genesis 27: 33),

- *Genesis 27:33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed.*

to the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49: 8-10),

- *Genesis 49:8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? 10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

to David's House (2 Sam. 7: 8-16),

- *2 Samuel 7:8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: 9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, 11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he*

shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

to a virgin of whom the Son, Immanuel, should be born (Isaiah 7: 14),

- *Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

who should have the throne of His father David and rule over the house of Jacob for the aions (forever). Luke 1:32-33.

- *Luke 1:32 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: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

The earlier prophets seem to have seen but one end of Gentile times and then the Messianic Kingdom.

For instance, Moses in Leviticus 26 tells of the punishments upon Israel and the desolations of their land for the great period of Seven Times and then Israel's repentance and God's remembrance of His covenant and the Land.

Lev 26

In Deuteronomy 31 and 32 Moses again depicts the rebellion of Israel and what shall befall them in the latter days, (31: 29; 32:20, 29.)

- *Deuteronomy 31:29 For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.*
- *Deuteronomy 32:20 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.*
- *Deuteronomy 32:29 O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!*

He speaks of death and resurrection (32:39),

- *Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.*

of Judgment (V. 41)

- *Deuteronomy 32:41 If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.*

and the overthrow of the enemy (V. 42),

- *Deuteronomy 32:42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.*

and then the rejoicing of the Nations and His people, when He will be merciful unto His land and His people. (V. 43.)

- *Deuteronomy 32:43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.*

Note, that here are the same (*eschata*) last things, to-wit, resurrection, Judgment and overthrow of the enemy (Satan), preceding the rejoicing, as are given by John in Revelation, which precede the Millennium.

This is more distinctly set forth 800 years later by the Holy Spirit, through the prophet Isaiah. In chapter 24 he gives a picture of the awful judgments that shall come upon the earth, so that it "shall reel to and fro like a drunkard" (verse 20),

- *Isaiah 24:20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.*

and in that day "the Lord shall punish the host of high ones, on high" (verse 21),

- *Isaiah 24:21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.*

that is, Satan and his hosts (see Ephesians 6: 12; Revelation 12 and 19), as well as the Kings on the earth.

- *Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

And they shall be shut up in prison many days (verse 22).

- *Isaiah 24:22 And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.*

This many days corresponds to the thousand years of Revelation 20. The same last things precede it; and the same reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, follows it (verse 23),

- *Isaiah 24:23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.*

when the light, of the moon and the sun, shall not be needed for the Lord Himself shall be the light thereof. Revelation 21:24.

- *Revelation 21:24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*

About 200 years later, in the prophecy of the Seventy Sevens (weeks) we get a glimpse of two ends. It is 69 weeks — 483 years — to the coming of the Messiah who should be "cut off" and the city destroyed (Daniel 9:26),

- *Daniel 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

which brings the first end. Then follow desolations unto another end. Jerusalem is to be trodden down until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke 21: 24.

- *Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

Then comes a covenant (Antichrist with Israel) for one week and then the overthrow of the desolator. From Daniel 2: 44 and 7: 14, 26, 27, we know that the Messianic Kingdom follows.

- *Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*
- *Daniel 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*
- *Daniel 7:26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

These two ends, of the *aions*, are shown, even more clearly, 150 years later, by the prophet Zechariah. The first is when the Messiah comes, just and lowly, riding "upon a colt" (Ch. 9:9),

and the second, when He comes to stand upon the Mount of Olives causing it to cleave asunder. Ch. 14:4.

- *Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*
- *Zechariah 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

The first time He is wounded in the house of His friends (Ch. 13: 6) and the second time, they look upon Him "whom they have pierced." Ch. 12: 10.

- *Zechariah 13:6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*
- *Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

At the first end, the chariot is cut off from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the Messiah turns to speak peace to the heathen. Ch. 9: 10.

- *Zechariah 9:10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*

At the second end, Jerusalem is again destroyed, the Lord God comes with all His saints (14:2-5)

- *Zechariah 14:2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. 4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. 5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from*

before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

and becomes King over all the earth. (14: 9.)

- *Zechariah 14:9 And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.*

Great changes occur in the land and Jerusalem is safely inhabited (verses 10-11) and there shall be no more utter destruction.

- *Zechariah 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. 11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.*

All nations shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts and to keep the feast of tabernacles, and even on the bells of the horses (Verses 16, 20) shall be the words, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.

- *Zechariah 14:16 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.*
- *Zechariah 14:20 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 bowl's before the altar.*

"HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD."

These two ends, of the two aions, Jewish and Christian, were a puzzle to the prophets themselves. They were like the Holy Spirits' utterances of a suffering Messiah and of a King reigning in worldwide glory and majesty. They could not reconcile them. Peter tells us that they "searched diligently" — "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ" did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11.

It is just so to-day. An orthodox Jew, who still looks for the coming of his Messiah, cannot explain how He can come meek and lowly riding on a colt (Zechariah 9:9),

- *Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*

and also in the clouds of heaven. Daniel 7: 13.

- *Daniel 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*

He does not understand that He must come twice. One of the best arguments to convince the Jew that Jesus is the Messiah is to show him, that, as He has come once on a colt (Mat. 21: 1-11),

- *Matthew 21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. 3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. 6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, 7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. 8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. 9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. 10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.*

so, according to His promise (John 14:3),

- *John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

will He come again in the clouds of heaven. Mat. 26: 64.

- *Matthew 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

We point the Jew to the literal fulfillment of prophecy, by Jesus at His first coming, as a conclusive evidence that He

Is the Messiah:

- **Born of a Virgin. Isaiah 7: 14.**

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

- **At Bethlehem. Micah 5: 2.**

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

- **Called out of Egypt. Hosea 11: 1.**

Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

- **Sold for thirty pieces of silver. Zechariah 11: 12.**

Zechariah 11:12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

- **Spit on and scourged. Isaiah 50: 6.**

Isaiah 50:6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

- **Not a bone broken. Psalm 34: 20.**

Psalms 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

- **Hands and feet pierced, Psalm 22: 16, and many others.**

Psalms 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

How stultifying for us to deny the literal fulfillment of the multitude of passages, concerning His coming again, especially those which tell us that He shall have the Throne of David (Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:32),

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*
- *Luke 1:32 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:*

that Israel shall be restored, Zion built up (Psalm 102:16),

- *Psalms 102:16 When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*

the apostles sit on twelve thrones, over the twelve tribes of Israel (Mat. 19: 28)

- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

that His throne shall be in Jerusalem (Jeremiah 3:17),

- *Jeremiah 3:17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.*

that He shall rule all nations (Psalm 2:8-9; Revelation 2:27),

- *Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

and the kingdoms of this world become His kingdom (Zec. 9:10; Revelation 11: 15),

- *Zechariah 9:10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*
- *Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

that God will make an end of all the nations, but He will not make an end of Israel. Jeremiah 46: 28.

- *Jeremiah 46:28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.*

In that wonderful passage in the prophet Micah (Ch. 4), concerning the last days and mountain of the Lord's House being established; and the people flowing unto it; and the law going forth of Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem; we read (verses 6 and 7) of the restoration of Israel and "the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth forever.

- *Micah 4:6 In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted 7 And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.*

Just here, let us call special attention to the expression "In that day," Isaiah 24: 21.

- *Isaiah 24:21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.*

It is used about fifty times by this prince of prophets, as also by many of the other prophets. See Isaiah 2: 11 and the references.

**In that day" evidently means the thousand-year day. It is *'the day of the Lord." Isaiah 2: 12.

- *Isaiah 2:12 For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:*

Read carefully the context of the passages where it occurs, especially Isaiah, Chs. 2:4; 11; 12; 24; 25 ; 26 ; 27 ; 28 ; 29 ; 30 ; 52, etc., and see how the events agree with the judgment, the overthrow of the adversary ; and the reign of Christ and His saints as described in Revelation 19 and 20.

- *Isaiah 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*
- *Isaiah 2:11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.*
- *Isaiah 12 And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. 2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. 3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. 4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. 5 Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. 6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.*
- *Isaiah 24 Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. 2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. 3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. 4 The earth mourneth andfadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. 5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. 6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. 7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry hearted do sigh. 8 The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. 9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. 10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in. 11 There is a crying for wine in the streets;*

all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. 12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. 13 When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. 14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. 15 Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea. 16 From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. 17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. 18 And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. 19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. 20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. 21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. 22 And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. 23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

- *Isaiah 25 O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. 2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built. 3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. 4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. 5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. 6 And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. 7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. 9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. 10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. 11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands. 12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.*
- *Isaiah 26 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. 2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. 3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. 4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the*

Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: 5 For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. 6 The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy. 7 The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just. 8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. 9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. 10 Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. 11 Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. 12 Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. 13 O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. 14 They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. 15 Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. 16 Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. 17 Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. 18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. 19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. 20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. 21 For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

- *Isaiah 27 In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea. 2 In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. 3 I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. 4 Fury is not in me: who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. 5 Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me. 6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. 7 Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? Or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? 8 In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind. 9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up. 10 Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. 11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour. 12 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the*

stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. 13 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

- *1 Samuel 28:1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men. 2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever. 3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. 4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. 5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. 6 And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim, nor by prophets. 7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. 8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. 9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? 10 And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. 11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. 12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? For thou art Saul. 13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. 14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. 15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. 16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? 17 And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: 18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. 19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. 20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. 21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. 22 Now*

therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way. 23 *But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.* 24 *And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:* 25 *And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.*

- *Isaiah 29 Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices. 2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. 3 And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. 4 And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. 5 Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly. 6 Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. 7 And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. 8 It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion. 9 Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. 10 For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. 11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: 12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. 13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: 14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. 15 Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? And who knoweth us? 16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? 17 Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? 18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. 19 The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. 20 For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: 21 That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. 22 Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not*

now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. 23 But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. 24 They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

- *Isaiah 30 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: 2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! 3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. 4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. 5 They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach. 6 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them. 7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still. 8 Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: 9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: 10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: 11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us. 12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: 13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. 14 And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit. 15 For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. 16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. 17 One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill. 18 And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him. 19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. 20 And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: 21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. 22 Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstrual cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence. 23 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. 24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. 25 And there shall be upon every high*

mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. 26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound. 27 Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: 28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. 29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel. 30 And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones. 31 For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod. 32 And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. 33 For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

- *Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. 2 Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. 3 For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. 4 For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. 5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. 6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I. 7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! 8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. 9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. 11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord. 12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward. 13 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15 So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.*
- *Revelation 19 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2 For true*

and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. 3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. 4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

- *Revelation 20 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the*

second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Look also at the many passages which speak of the "Great Day," the *'Day of Judgment," "Day of the Lord."

Oh! How can anyone read the Word of God and not see and accept its plain statement of this great dispensational truth of the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom?

SPIRITUALIZING INTERPRETATION

A method of so-called "spiritualizing interpretation" is often resorted to in order to eliminate from the Scripture teaching of the Kingdom, the King, the throne, the Jews and all literal earthly government of the race of mankind.

Texts of Scripture are quoted such as, "The Kingdom of God is within you," and * * The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Luke 17: 20-21), and upon these imperfect translations of the original texts, the superficial advocate proceeds to construct a kingdom after his own fancy, with subjects and territory ranging all the way from simply the Christian Church to the universe.

- *Luke 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

This he does in blind contravention of hundreds of texts, and the whole sweep of prophecy, which declares and assures, upon the oath of God Himself (Genesis 22:17; Jeremiah 31:35-49),

the restoration of Israel and a literal reign of the saints upon the earth. Revelation 5:10; Daniel 7:27; Amos 9:11-15.

- *Genesis 22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;*
- *Jeremiah 31:35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. 37 Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. 38 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. 39 And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.*

Such reasoning and conclusions are as forceful as the colored preachers' argument, who said he could prove that Jesus was a little man, very small, and that he could prove it from the Bible. When the text was demanded, he replied, with evident assurance: "Doesn't it say, 'Lo, I am He'?"

A moment's reflection will show the fallacy of using those texts, in Luke, to support the chimera of such a so-called "spiritual kingdom."

Special Note. There is a physical expression to the kingdom of God which is the church for Christians live and breathe, have children, own property, and building homes and temples of worship. But the spiritual dimension of the kingdom cannot be denied.

- *Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Did Jesus tell those wicked Pharisees that the Kingdom of God was within them? No, indeed! The correct translation is "among you," and that was literally true. The King was there. His disciples were there and He was ready to establish the Kingdom, had they been willing to receive Him. But, seeing they rejected Him, the Kingdom became like a nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and return. Luke 19: 12.

- *Luke 19:12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.*

Again, "not with observation" is literally "not with scrupulous watching". They would not need a microscope to find it, for it would appear like the shining of the lightning in heaven, Luke 17: 24.

- *Luke 17:24 For as the lightning, that lighteth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.*

Romans 14:17 is just as illogically quoted. For, while "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink," it is definitely stated that we shall eat and drink in the kingdom of God. Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25.

- *Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
- *Matthew 26:29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*
- *Mark 14:25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*

Of a similar character are the arguments built upon the parables, given to illustrate the mysteries of the Kingdom. Matthew 13:11.

- *Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.*

Our Lord says there are mysteries of the Kingdom. We live in an age (*aion*) of mysteries, an evil age. Gal. 1:4. There is the mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3: 16);

- *1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*

the mystery of iniquity (2 Thessalonians 2:7),

- *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

the mystery of Christ (Ephesians 3:4);

- *Ephesians 3:4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)*

the mystery of the Church (Ephesians 5: 32);

- *Ephesians 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

the mystery of the Gospel (Ephesians 6: 19; Col. 1: 26);

- *Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,*
- *Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:*

the mystery of the blindness of Israel (Romans 11: 25);

- *Romans 11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*

and the mystery of God. Revelation 10: 7.

- *Revelation 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

And though these mysteries are now made known, instead of being hid (Col. 1:26),

- *Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:*

yet they are still mysterious, "in which are some things hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3: 16), and we see them as "in a riddle." 1 Corinthians 13: 12, margin.

- *2 Peter 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*
- *1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

But some teachers profess to understand all about the kingdom, and they tell us that the leaven (Matthew 13:33) represents the spread of righteousness in the world, instead of corruption, in the Church.

- *Matthew 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*

In the numerous other passages where it is used it always represents corruption. See Matthew 16:6-12; Gal. 5:9.

- *Matthew 16:6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. 7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. 8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? 9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? 12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*

- *Galatians 5:9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

They tell us that the mustard tree (Matthew 13: 32) shelters the righteous, whereas the birds of the air, which lodge in it, are likened to Satan himself, catching away the Words from the hearts of men.

- *Matthew 13:32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.*

See Luke 8: 5, 12.

- *Luke 8:5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.*
- *Luke 8:12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

Such reasoning and methods of interpretation are equal to the sophistry of the Jewish contentions against the Messianic claims of Jesus our Lord.

God forbid that we should allow them to rob us of the glorious hope of the Kingdom, stated in plain and simple language, like the Thousand Years of Revelation Twenty.

LITERAL FULFILLMENT

The Bible is a peerless book, especially on the subject of prophecy. The Koran, the Vedas, the writings of Confucius, and the books of other great religions, express many lofty sentiments, and many excellent rules for human conduct. Even the "Golden Rule" was stated negatively by Confucius. But the Bible surpasses them all, containing the revelations of the true God and reaching that pinnacle of ethics, expressed in the simple words, "Love your enemies."

Mohammedans, Hindus and Confucianists will all admit one feature of superiority in our Bible, and that is prophecy.

Their sacred books can depict the state of "Nirvana," "the Western Paradise" and other blessings in heaven. This is easy, for no one can return from an investigation, to affirm or deny.

But when it comes to prophecy, concerning events upon the earth, events to be fulfilled in the history of nations, and the experiences of man in this life, they are all silent. But our Bible, the Word of God, triumphantly sets forth its supernatural origin, by definite and specific prophecies, concerning the affairs of this life.

We have already referred to several Messianic prophecies fulfilled in the first coming of our Lord. [See REVELATION].

Over 500 years before the event, a prophet of Israel had set the price upon the Messiah at "thirty pieces of silver" and "cast them to the potter." Zechariah 11: 12, 13.

- *Zechariah 11:12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.*

Who could have been more desirous to have prevented this from becoming an evidence, to the claims of Jesus to be their Messiah, than the Chief Priests of the Jews, and yet, in their blind haste and madness, they actually covenanted with Judas for those exact 30 pieces of silver, and when Judas returned the money, they doubled the evidence by finishing the fulfillment in buying the "potters' " field. Matthew 26: 15; 27: 7.

- *Matthew 26:15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.*
- *Matthew 27:7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.*

Again, those coarse and brutal Roman soldiers, utterly indifferent to anything except their own personal advantage, divided his garments among them and cast lots for his vesture, the seamless coat, literally fulfilling the words of the Psalmist, uttered a thousand years before. Psalm 28: 18.

Special Note. There is no Psalm 28:18. Perhaps Psalm 22:18 is meant.

- *Psalms 22:18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

It was the duty of these same soldiers to break the legs of the criminals whom they crucified; and they did so to the two thieves. But, behold! When they came to Jesus, because He was already dead, they broke not His legs. Who but God could have foreseen such unexpected action and put into the mouth of the Psalmist, a thousand years before, those memorable words, "He keepeth all His bones, not one of them is broken." Psalm 34: 20.

See also the "smiting" and the "spitting," which was to be on the "cheek" and in the "face," foretold by Isaiah, over seven centuries before it occurred.

There are twenty-five detail facts concerning the trial and crucifixion of Jesus recorded by the prophets from 500 to 1,000 years previously, which were all literally and exactly fulfilled on that one eventful day in Jerusalem.

How can one read these without "trembling before the **WORD OF GOD?**"

Cyrus, the king of Persia, was called by name, by the prophet Isaiah (Ch. 44:28; 45:1) nearly two centuries before he was born. Instead of accepting this as a marvelous evidence of the literal fulfillment of prophecy, the so-called "higher critics" endeavor to twist it into an argument for bisecting the prophet.

- *Isaiah 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.*
- *Isaiah 45:1 Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;*

We believe that God is pleased with all reverent, critical study of His Word, but we pity those who will surely meet His Judgment for their arrogant and presumptuous "destructive criticism."

This marvelous Bible, with its sixty-six books, written by forty-two authors, in such a perfect unity, as one book, that we are compelled to revere it, as the product of one controlling mind, the Holy Spirit of God, this Wonderful Word, is full of prophecies, similarly exact, about the people of Israel, whose very existence, scattered over the world to-day, is a living witness to the literal fulfillment of its prophetic utterances.

And there are scores of other, prophecies concerning the nations, cities, governments and even commercialism. We are familiar with the fulfillment of many of these in the history of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, etc., but we are apt to overlook those which pertain to our own times. Zephaniah 2: 1-2 is being fulfilled in the present Zionist movement, in which the Jews are making a purely secular effort to regain Palestine.

- *Zephaniah 2:1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; 2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.*

Special Note. When Mr. Blackstone wrote his 65 page booklet, *The Millennium* in 1904, the Zionist Movement was well underway as a political enterprise. Zionism, or the Zionist Movement, in its sense, called for the self determination of the Jewish people in a sovereign Jewish national homeland. The political movement was formally established by the Austro-Hungarian journalist Theodor Herzl in the late 19th century following the publication of his book *Der Judenstaat* (German, *The State of the People*).¹ The movement sought to encourage Jewish migration to the Ottoman Palestine and was eventually successful in establishing a homeland for the Jewish people in Israel on 14 May 1948, following the atrocities of World War II. Today roughly 40% of the world's Jews live in Israel. Nearly as many live in the United States.

"Gather yourselves," says the Almighty, as though He stepped aside and let them exhibit the foolishness and calamitous results of their purely national movement. Dr. Herzl, their leader, is reported to have said, at the first congress in Basle, in 1897, "We must buy our way back to Palestine, salvation is to be by money."

Special Note. Theodor Herzl (May 2, 1860 — July 3, 1904) was an Austro-Hungarian journalist and the father of modern political Zionism and in effect the State of Israel.

And one of the first speakers at that same congress said of the Sultan, "If his majesty will now receive us, we will accept him as our Messiah."

It is a godless movement and the prophet tells us that it will bring upon them the "day of Jehovah's anger." Zephaniah 2:2.

- *Zephaniah 2:2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.*

Over thirty-eight centuries ago God said to Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Genesis 12:3), and this special divine protection was repeated to Israel, Abraham's seed. Genesis 27:29; Exodus 23:22; Numbers 24:9.

- *Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
- *Genesis 27:29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.*
- *Exodus 23:22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.*
- *Numbers 24:9 He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.*

The literal fulfillment of this has been demonstrated in the history of the nations, with whom Israel has come in contact. We are inclined to regard this as all past and overlook its verification in our day. The most fearful calamity which the Jews have suffered, since the destruction of Jerusalem, was their expulsion from Spain, in 1492. Hundreds of thousands were driven out, under the edict of Ferdinand and Isabella, spurred on by Torquemada, that monster of the inquisition. A recitation of the cruelties they suffered will make the ear tingle and melt the hardest heart.

But what of Spain? From her exalted position, with a prospect of being the first nation of Europe, she has gone down and down, losing all her South American colonies, and other possessions, until Admiral Dewey one May morning shot off what there was left, and proud Spain is writhing upon her own peninsula, almost in the throes of anarchy.

Special Note. George Dewey (December 26, 1837 – January 16, 1917) was an admiral of the United States Navy. Many historians called him the "Hero of Manila." He is best known for his victory, without the loss of a single life of his own forces due to combat though one man died of heat stroke, at the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War in 1898. In 1899 by a

special act of Congress, George Dewey became the only person in the history of the United States to have attained the rank of Admiral of the Navy which is the most senior rank in the United States Navy.

And what of Russia — mighty Russia — whose anti-Semitic hand has been so ruthlessly turned upon the congested millions of Jews in her borders? Are not her disasters and fatalities in the present war (1904) with little Japan another evidence that the God of Israel will curse them who persecute His ancient people?

If one wishes to see the prophetic picture of Russia's final overthrow, let him read carefully the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, in the revised version. The very names of the central divisions of the empire are given. Rosh, Mesheck and Tubal, i. e., Russia, Moscow and Tobolsk.

Special Note. Again, this is nonsense. God knows how to spell and Russia is not mentioned once in the Bible. It is sheer speculation to link Rosh, Mesheck, and Tubal with Russia, Moscow, and Tobolsk.

It is a remarkable picture of the mighty hordes of the north, which, in the last days, shall sweep down upon re-gathered and defenseless, Israel, to meet an unprecedented destruction. Gomer (Germany) and all his bands are to be with them. This gives special significance to the present friendliness of Germany for Russia. O, Lands of the North, Beware! God Himself will fulfill His Word and protect His people.

"Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first and the last; and besides me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me since I established the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and that shall come to pass, let them declare. Fear ye not, neither be afraid; have I not declared unto thee of old, and showed it? And ye are my witness. Is there a God beside me?" Isaiah 44:6-8.

Beloved! Will not such a God literally fulfill those blessed THOUSAND YEARS in the twentieth chapter of Revelation?

Special Note. It is wrong to interpret Scripture in light of modern headlines. It is wrong to take ancient prophecies, declare them to be unfulfilled, take a modern day map, lay it over the ancient lands and predict future events in the name of the Lord. And yet, this is exactly what is being done. In 1904, when Mr. Blackstone wrote *The Millennium*, Russia was a great empire and on the rise. By 1989 the "evil empire" was broken up. While dispensational teaching postulates the rise of an anti-Christ and a one world government, both the Word of God and history argues just the opposite. The world is not moving towards unity. Rather, there are more democratic nations on earth now than ever before. This is because of the boundaries God puts on the nations, and no man, and no alleged Anti-Christ can alter the known will of God.

- *Acts 17:26 And [God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;*

QUESTIONS

Many questions arise about the characteristics of the Millennium, which are much more easily asked than answered. Questions in regard to the manner of life, food, apparel, abode, etc., of the raised and changed believers; and their relation to restored Israel, and the ordinary inhabitants of the earth.

Questions in regard to the methods of government and how the laws of the kingdom will be enforced.

Questions as to the longevity and consequent increase of population and fruitfulness of the earth.

Questions as to dates, "times and seasons," especially in regard to the definite time, of the six days, equal 6,000 years, to the beginning of the Millennium.

These, and many others, are promptly, and often boastfully asked, by opponents of the doctrine of the Millennium.

They also cite passages of Scripture, some of which are, and others which appear to be, difficult to explain in harmony with the doctrine. Such for instance as Matthew 16: 28, "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

Matthew 24: 34, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

Special Note. This "generation" refers to the generation to whom Jesus was speaking. This prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70.

They demand of us answers to their curious questions; and explanations of all the difficult passages, before they can accept this scripturally founded doctrine of a Millennium.

This is both unfair and unreasonable. No man has yet been able to satisfactorily explain all the symbols, mysteries and wonders of the book of Revelation. But is that any reason for our rejecting its plain statements," and to destroy the hope and comfort which even its most enigmatical symbols give to the patient, toiling and often persecuted heaven-ward pilgrim ?

As well might we justify the Jews in rejecting Jesus, because of the enigmas of Old Testament Messianic prophecy.

We accept and present the overwhelming Scripture proof of the Millennium, but we deny that there can be any just burden of proof on us to explain all the detail of such a vast and far-reaching subject.

Much can be understood now that could not, in the days of Israel's prophets. This is clear from 1 Peter 1: 10-12.

- *1 Peter 1:10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*

Revelation has been progressive and so has interpretation.

Special Note. Herein is a special danger in dispensational theology and which allows for "the System" to keep changing with current events. In contrast the church is to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Question. "How can the church contend for "the faith" if it keeps changing or, worse yet, was not even known until around 1830"?

This has been peculiarly true in the past four hundred years. Every century since the Reformation has increased our understanding of prophecy. The present Zionist movement among the Jews is like the handwriting upon the wall, to those who will heed the "signs of the times." Luke 21: 25-28, And Ezekiel 37:1-14.

- *Luke 21:25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. 27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*
- *Ezekiel 37:1 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, 2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. 3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. 4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and 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. 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. 8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.*

Our God will make all to be clear in due time. All He asks of us is implicit trust and confidence in HIS WORD. "We walk by faith."

Spécial Note. Dispensational teachers tend to deny what they affirm and then affirm what is denied. The System affirms to "walk by faith" but then seeks for signs of the time. It denies teaching a third coming of Christ and then proceeds to inject the Rapture which teaches the coming of Christ for His saints seven years prior to the "Second" [Third] Coming of Christ with His saints. In the end The System is nonsensical and convoluted.

Fulfilled prophecy stimulates us to expectant confidence as to the unfulfilled. So, while we lament, as frivolous, the queries of the curious, and reject, as unreasonable, the detail demands of the catechist, we do recognize, as consistent and important, the propriety of reverent inquiry on the part of those who "tremble at the Word of God." Isaiah 66: 2.

- *Isaiah 66:2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

It is often asserted that expositors of prophecy' do not agree and therefore the whole subject should be shelved. How unreasonable! Such a method would shelve every doctrine of Scripture. The history of the church records a continuous, ecclesiastical battle, and that upon doctrines, like repentance, faith and works, baptism, foreordination, regeneration and sanctification, which pertain to our every-day life and experiences.

Then why shall we demand exact agreement upon a subject which sweeps throughout all the future?

The inconsistency of such opponents is glaringly emphasized by the total disagreement among themselves.

Agnostics, skeptics and infidels present us with a perfect hotchpotch of man-made theories and fanciful conclusions.

Post-millennialists and anti-millennialists are equally divergent in their so-called "spiritualizing" interpretations of prophecy. One who boldly asserts what the plainest millennial text of Scripture does not mean, is frank to admit that he does not know what it does mean, and yet he says he knows "just as much about it as anyone else does." A convenient mixture, this, of negative positivism with positive negativity.

It is not surprising that such an one should be, as he says, "neither pre nor post but anti." He fails to agree with either of the two great bodies of prophetic students, Premillennialists or Postmillennialists. He is *sui-generis* in prophetic study.

Special Note. *Sui-generis*, is a Latin expression, literally meaning *of its own kind or genus* or unique in its characteristics. The expression is often used in analytic philosophy to indicate an idea, an entity, or a reality which cannot be included in a wider concept.

Prophecy is like the view of a mighty landscape. Pre-millennialists are remarkably agreed upon the mountain peaks of the outlook, such as, the Return of our Lord, the Resurrection, the

overthrow of Satan and his kingdom, the gathering of Israel, and the Millennial Kingdom. You will find no destructive critics among them. They venerate the Word of God and give it the most patient and reverent critical study. They recognize and affirm that we know nothing of the future, except as revealed in Scripture prophecy, and that only the Holy Spirit Himself can enable us to rightly interpret it. John 16: 13.

- *John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

Oh! How small we all are in the sight of Him, who hath given us His Wonderful Word. Isaiah 40: 15-17.

- *Isaiah 40:15 Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. 16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. 17 All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.*

If the following, presented, we trust, in "humility and a contrite spirit" (Isaiah 66:2) shall be of instruction, or comfort, to any who fear the Lord and think upon His name, the writer will rejoice.

- *Isaiah 66:2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

EXPLANATIONS

"This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Matt 24: 34.

There are two explanations of this. One that "generation" designates the whole nation of Israel throughout their entire history. See Psalm 22: 30. "A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation;" also Matthew 23: 36. "All these things shall come upon this generation," and verse 33, "Ye generation of vipers." "All these things" evidently cover and include the entire preaching of the Gospel to Israel (see verse 34); the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion and re-gathering of Israel. See verses 38 and 39. So that the pronoun "ye" and "your" designates the whole body corporate of Israel. Israel shall not pass away until all be fulfilled.

- *Psalms 22:30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*
- *Matthew 23:36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.*

- *Matthew 23:33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*
- *Matthew 23:35 That upon you may come all the righteous bloodshed 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.*
- *Matthew 23:38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

Another explanation is that the "ye" of Ch. 24 designates the whole body corporate of the church. Verses 1, 2, 33, etc. A generation was to come which would "see these things begin to come to pass." Luke 21: 28. Mark is specific about "those days" (13:24) and "then" (v. 26 and 27) and "when" (v. 28, 29), indicating that the "generation" which should specifically see "the abomination of desolation (v. 14) would see all these things come to pass, for the Lord would "shorten the days" (v. 20) and make "a short work" ... upon the earth" (Romans 9:28), when He shall "rise up to the prey." Zephaniah 3: 8.

- *Matthew 24:1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.*
- *Matthew 24:2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*
- *Matthew 24:33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*
- *Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*
- *Mark 13:24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,*
- *Mark 13:26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.*
- *Mark 13:28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: 29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.*
- *Mark 14:20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.*

- *Romans 9:28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*
- *Zephaniah 3:8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.*

Surely either of these explanations is sufficient to make this text harmonize with the great body of Scripture truth concerning the Millennium.

Special Note. It is true that the two explanations provided are sufficient to support Mr. Blackstone's view of the Millennium. But there is a third explanation which, if taken in context would explain the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:34 – and destroy his prophetic scheme. By letting Scripture interpret Scripture the meaning of what Jesus said in Matthew 24:34 is made clear. The following passages should be studied to find out how the phrase “this generation” is used.

- Matthew 1:16 “whereunto shall I liken this generation?”
- Matthew 12:41 “shall rise in judgment with this generation.”
- Matthew 12:42 “rise up in the judgment with this generation”
- Matthew 12:45 “shall it be also unto this wicked generation”
- Matthew 23:36 “things shall come upon this generation”
- Matthew 24:34 “This generation shall not pass, till all”
- Mark 8: 38 “shall no sign be given unto this generation”
- Mark 13:30 “that this generation shall not pass, till all”
- Luke 11:29 “He began to say, This is an evil generation.”
- Mark 11:31 “the men of this generation and condemn”
- Mark 11:30 “also the Son of man be to this generation”
- Mark 11:32 “with this generation and condemn it”
- Mark 11:51 “It shall be required of this generation”
- Mark 17:25 “and be rejected of this generation”
- Mark 21:32 “This generation shall not pass, till”
- Acts 2:40 “yourselves from this untoward generation”

Summary

When the word of God wants to indicate another generation than the present one the proper language is used as in Hebrews 3:10 where the Lord says He was grieved with “that generation.” Everyone understands that the generation the Lord was not pleased with was the Exodus generation. To contend that in Matthew 24:34 Jesus was speaking of things to come in a future generation is confusing at best and a violation of the normal usage of language. Jesus spoke many things that would come to pass in the generation in which the disciples lived and history confirms that what the Lord said would happen did indeed happen.

"There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matthew 16:28.)

- *Matthew 16:28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*

Or, "kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1);

- *Mark 9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*

or, "kingdom of God" (Luke 9:27).

- *Luke 9:27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.*

The explanation of these texts is clear and simple. Why, within eight days thereafter the three favored disciples witnessed the transfiguration.

The power and glory of Jesus shone forth in overwhelming brightness. Moses and Elias, representatives of the Law, the Prophets and the holy dead, were there, the Disciples representing poor, blind Israel were there, Heaven was opened and God the Father shone out of the (*Shekinah*) cloud; and His own voice established the divinity and authority of our Lord. Peter afterward bore testimony to it, as a manifestation of the honor, glory, power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1: 16-18.

- *2 Peter 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man." Mark 13: 32, 33; Matthew 24: 42; 25: 13; Luke 12: 40.

- *Mark 13:32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. 33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.*
- *Matthew 24:42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*
- *Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*
- *Luke 12:40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

A reference to the diagram will quickly make this clear.

Special Note. This is circular reasoning here. Mr. Blackstone first draws his diagram setting out his view of eschatology and then invites his readers to consult it as proof of what the Bible teaches.

The Rapture, when the church is caught away to meet the Lord, in the air, may occur at any moment. We have no date for it. We are to live with "our loins girded" and our "lights burning" like unto men that wait for their Lord. Luke 12: 35-36.

- *Luke 12:35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; 36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.*

But the Revelation, when the church shall return to the earth, with our Lord, is a subsequent event and pertains especially to Israel and the nations.

Mark well, that this is not two comings, but only two stages or phases to the one coming. At the first stage the Lord pauses in the air, and, like a mighty magnet, draws the waiting ones up unto Himself. 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

- *1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

Special Note. Here is where logic shuts down and normal language becomes nonsensical. No rational person would speak of going to Dallas, Texas a second time but in two "phases" or "stages" while moving in the opposite direction over a period of seven years. Also, Dispensational theology does not teach the Lord "pauses" in the air. No, no. The System teaches the Lord returns seven years later. No dispensational writer teaches the church greets the Lord and is suspended for seven years over the earth until there is a forward progress. The System teaches a back and forth and back again coming. The System teaches a third coming and there is no way around it logically. Here again the System denies what it affirms and affirms what it denies. It denies teaching a third coming and then affirms the first advent, the Rapture, and seven years later the Revelation. The System and its teachers are dishonest and deceptive not to mention being contrary to sound doctrine and the historic faith when they use the language that Mr. Blackstone has used.

The meeting, the presentation of the bride (Ephesians 5: 27) and the marriage (Revelation 19:7) takes a period of time, the length of which is not known. It may be seven years, the last week of Daniel 9, or forty years, like the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness, or even more. We know not the time.

- *Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*
- *Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

So we see how clearly the texts point to the uncertain time of our Rapture. May the Lord increase our watchfulness.

"My kingdom is not of this world." John 18: 36.

- *John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

"The kingdom of God is within (among) you." Luke 17:21.

- *Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink." Romans 14:17.

- *Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 15:50.

- *1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

[THREE MAIN CHARGES AGAINST DISPENSATIONAL DOCTRINE]

"The doctrine makes the gospel a failure."

"It disparages the work of the Holy Spirit."

"The gospel has not been preached in all the world."

For refutation of these, and other similar assertions, space compels us to refer the reader to the books "Jesus Is Coming" and "Satan, His Kingdom and Its Overthrow," published by F. H. Revell & Co., Chicago and New York.

Briefly, we may state here, that the Holy Spirit came, according to promise, to "reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment," and, by His regenerating and sanctifying power, to win and prepare a bride (the church) for the Lord. John 16:8, etc.

- *John 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

When He, as the hinderer of Satan, is taken away (2 Thessalonians 2:7) He will, quickly, like Abraham's servant (Genesis 24), catch away the church to meet the Lord in the air.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*
- *Genesis 24 And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3 And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. 5 And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? 6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. 7 The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. 8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again. 9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter. 10 And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. 11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. 12 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. 13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: 14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. 15 And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. 16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. 17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. 18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. 19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. 20 And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw*

water, and drew for all his camels. 21 And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. 22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; 23 And said, Whose daughter art thou? Tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? 24 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. 25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. 26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord. 27 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren. 28 And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things. 29 And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. 30 And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. 31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. 32 And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him. 33 And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. 34 And he said, I am Abraham's servant. 35 And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. 36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. 37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: 38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. 39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. 40 And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: 41 Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath. 42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go; 43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; 44 And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed out for my master's son. 45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. 46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. 47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. 48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son. 49 And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. 50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak

unto thee bad or good. 51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken. 52 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. 53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. 54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master. 55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go. 56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master. 57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. 58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. 59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them. 61 And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. 62 And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country. 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. 64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. 65 For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself. 66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. 67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

No one will call the gospel a failure, when we see the church, the body of the Lord, completed and glorified as a Holy Temple (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16) built for the habitation of God in the Spirit. Ephesians 2:20-22, R. V.

- *1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*
- *1 Corinthians 6:19 What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*
- *2 Corinthians 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*
- *Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (KJV)*

We shall then all understand why the Holy Spirit himself put that last hastening prayer into the mouth of the beloved John: "AMEN; COME, LORD JESUS." Revelation 22:20.

- *Revelation 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

The gospel has already been preached in nearly all the world (*oikoumene*, habitable earth). Matthew 24:14.

- *Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Only God can decide as to when the witness is complete.

While the church remains, she should make the evangelization of the world the one work given her to do. It is simple obedience to the last command of the Master. Thank God! The task is nearly completed. Only Tibet, Afghanistan and the Soudan remain untouched, and even these have some testimony, and their closed doors are unlatching.

But, it may be that the witness will be finished, after the church is caught away, by the Tribulation saints and the two witnesses (Revelation 11:3; 13:15; 20:4), and "the angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Revelation 14:6.

- *Revelation 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*
- *Revelation 13:15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*
- *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*
- *Revelation 14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*

“TIMES AND SEASONS”

And now we take up the delicate subject of dates. Certainly there are prophetic dates, "times and seasons" in Scripture, and they all pertain to Israel.

Great disrepute has been brought upon the "blessed hope" of our Lords' return by setting dates for it.

As we have before emphasized, the church has no date for the coming of our Lord. We only know that the Rapture precedes the Revelation. Whatever events indicate the approach of the latter, are signs to us that the Rapture is nearer. And this is assured to us. We are "to see the day approaching." Hebrews 10: 25.

- *Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

See, also, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; Luke 21: 28.

- *1 Thessalonians 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*
- *Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*

Even the oncoming apostasy is to stimulate us to watchfulness. 2 Thessalonians 2: 3, 15 *, Luke 18: 8.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*
- *2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*
- *Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

But Israel's history is all pre-written and their "times" are measured.

God told Abraham that his seed should be strangers and afflicted 400 years. Genesis 15: 13.

- *Genesis 15:13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;*

There was 430 years from the covenant to the Exodus (see Gal. 3:17), 400 of which was affliction (see Acts 7:6), and the deliverance was on the "self -same day." Exodus 12:40.

- *Galatians 3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*
- *Acts 7:6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.*
- *Exodus 12:40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.*

Moses then gave them the great period of seven times. Leviticus 26. Four times over he designates a punishment for seven times. Verses 18, 21, 24, 28.

- *Leviticus 26:18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.*

From a comparison of the several passages, "A time, times and a half (Daniel 7:25; 12:7),

- *Daniel 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.*
- *Daniel 12:7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.*

"forty and two months" (Revelation 11:2; 13:5),

- *Revelation 11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*
- *Revelation 13:5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

"a thousand two hundred and sixty days" (Revelation 11:3; 12:6 and 14),

- *Revelation 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*
- *Revelation 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*
- *Revelation 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

we know that a time is 360 days, that is, a Jewish year.

See Genesis 7: 11, 24; 8: 3, 4.

- *Genesis 7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*
- *Genesis 7:24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.*
- *Genesis 8:3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.*
- *Genesis 8:4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.*

Five months equal 150 days, therefore 12 months equal 360 days. A time, times and a half equal 360+720+ 180 equal 1,260. The Hebrew for, a time, signifies the interval from a festival to its recurrence, that is, a year.

There are two views with reference to the fulfillment of these prophetic periods. The futurist, which construes them literally, as three and one-half years, to be fulfilled in the coming last week (Daniel 9) of Israel's history.

The historical view regards them as symbolical periods, which are being fulfilled, on the basis of "a day for a year."

Some hold both views, that is, a literal fulfillment in the future, during Israel's great tribulation, under antichrist, and a symbolical fulfillment on the year-day basis, as though the image of antichrist (Revelation 13:14, 15) cast his shadow backward over Israel's pathway.

- *Revelation 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*
- *Revelation 13:15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

These may be briefly explained as follows:

Futurists make no use of the "seven times" (of Leviticus 26),

- *Leviticus 26:18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.*

- *Leviticus 26:21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.*
- *Leviticus 26:28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.*

but they do agree with historians, that the "seventy weeks" (of Daniel 9) cover 490 years of Israel's history.

- *Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

The Hebrew term is seventy sevens. Futurists hold that these sevens stand for sevens of years and are therefore literally, 70×7 equal 490 years.

Historists hold that they stand for sevens of days, the ordinary week, and that they therefore are interpreted on the basis of "a day for a year."

Literally, the "sevens" stand for either days or years, but days is by far the most commonly understood.

See Genesis 29: 27, 28; Exodus 34: 22; Numbers 28; 26; Deuteronomy 16: 9, 10, 16; 2 Chr. 8: 13; Jeremiah 5: 24, where the same word is used.

- *Genesis 29:27 Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.*
- *Genesis 29:28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.*
- *Exodus 34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.*

- *Numbers 28:26 Also in the day of the first fruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the Lord, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work:*
- *Deuteronomy 16:9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn.*
- *Deuteronomy 16:10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee:*
- *Deuteronomy 16:16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty:*
- *2 Chronicles 8:13 Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.*
- *Jeremiah 5:24 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.*

In Ezekiel 45: 21 and Daniel 10: 2, 3, days are added, i. e., weeks days, in the original.

- *Ezekiel 45:21 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.*
- *Daniel 10:2 In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.*
- *Daniel 10:3 I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*

The historians also base their year-day interpretation on the Scripture statements, that with God a day is "as a thousand years" (2 Peter 3:8), while with Israel a day stands for a year. Numbers 14: 34; Ezekiel 4: 1-6.

- *2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*
- *Numbers 14:34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

- *Ezekiel 4:1 Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem: 2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about. 3 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. 4 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 that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. 5 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. 6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.*

THE SEVENTY WEEEIS

These were to begin "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." Daniel 9: 25.

Four different decrees were issued:

1. By Cyrus, B. C, 536, which was only "to build the house" — temple. Ezra 1:1-5.
 - *Ezra 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at*

Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. 5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.

2. By Darius, B. C, 519, to continue the building of "the house." Ezra 6:1-12.

- *Ezra 6:1 Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. 2 And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: 3 In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; 4 With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: 5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God. 6 Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: 7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. 8 Moreover I made a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. 9 And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: 10 That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. 11 Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. 12 And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.*

3. By Artaxerxes, BC 457. Ezra 7. At first sight this also "seems to be only for "the house," but note that Ezra is to do whatever shall seem good to him (Ezra 7: 18), and in his prayer (Ezra 9:9) he specially mentions the "wall" in Judah and Jerusalem.

- *Ezra 7:18 And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God.*

- *Ezra 9:9 For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.*

This would indicate that the building of the city was included in the King's decree.

4. "Letters" were given to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes, B. C. 446, that he might go and "build" the city. Nehemiah 2:5-8.

- *Nehemiah 2:5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. 6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? And when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. 7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; 8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.*

These letters seem to be merely authority to Nehemiah to carry out the decree of B. C. 457, and not a formal issue of a new decree. Beginning with this date, 457 B. C., the 69 weeks,— 69 x 7 equal 483 years,— run to AD 26, when Jesus, who was born BC 4, was in His thirtieth year, or accurately, to His baptism, when He was "anointed" by the Holy Spirit, and announced by God to be His Son. Matthew 3:13-17.

- *Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

This remarkably literal fulfillment of the prophecy ought to have convinced the Jews that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

After the 69 weeks, Messiah (the anointed) was to be "cut off" (Daniel 9: 26), and then the city was to be destroyed and war was to continue "to the end".

- *Daniel 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

This is held to cover the whole Christian dispensation, during which the Jews are scattered throughout the world. It is the same as the "many days" of Daniel 11: 33.

- *Daniel 11:33 And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.*

See this "time of the end," Ch. 11: 35, 40; 8: 17, 19.

- *Daniel 11:35 And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.*
- *Daniel 11:40 And 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 like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.*
- *Daniel 8:17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.*
- *Daniel 8:19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.*

Then comes the seventieth week, or last seven years. In this, a covenant is made between Israel and the antichrist. It is not the covenant with Christ (Isaiah 42: 6; 55: 3) for it is made with one who comes "upon the wing of abominations." Daniel 9:27, R. V.

- *Isaiah 42:6 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;*
- *Isaiah 55:3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*
- *Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (KJV)*

Special Note. The problem with this whole section and Mr. Blackstone's chronology and dates is that it contradicts Jesus who said that "scripture cannot be broken".

- *John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;*

Using a different calculation the seventh week does follow the sixty-ninth week of Daniel's prophetic utterance and the Scriptures are fulfilled, not broken. (Write for *The Greatest Prophecy Ever Fulfilled*, Dr. Stanford E. Murrell)

It is called by Isaiah a "covenant with death" and an "agreement with Sheol." Isaiah 28: 18.

- *Isaiah 28:18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.*

In the midst of the week, antichrist will take away the sacrifice and oblation (Daniel 9:27), and bring upon Israel their unparalleled time of trouble.

- *Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

Special Note. This is one of the most disturbing teachings of The System. A prophetic passage that for centuries was understood by the church to refer to the glorious work of Christ, in the hands of dispensational teachers becomes a passage ascribed to anti-Christ. But here is the truth. While "confirming the covenant" in fulfillment of Daniel 9:27, the Messiah was able to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. With these words, the prophecy was made that the Messiah would make an end to all the Old Testament sacrifices, if not in literal practice, at least as to their necessity. Hebrews 8-10 sets forth in great detail and with great emphasis the abolishing of the demands of the Law of Moses with all the sacrifices and ritual. For the Christian community the sacrifices of bulls and goats have ceased. Hebrews 10:9 is the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27. The reality of the death of Christ dispels the shadows forever.

See Daniel 12: 1; Jeremiah with His church. 30:6-7; Matthew 24:21.

- *Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*
- *Jeremiah 30:6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.*
- *Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

From this they are delivered by the return of the Lord

This last half of the seventieth week, three and one-half years, is the time of the fulfillment, according to the futurists, of the "time, times and a half," "forty and two months" and "thousand two hundred and three score days;" that is, each measuring 1,260 literal days.

As for the Historical interpretation of the fulfillment of the several periods to wit: the "seven times" (Leviticus 26), the 1,260, 1,290, 1,335 and 2,300 days of Daniel and Revelation, it is only necessary here to say, that they all terminate within the limit of the six thousand years.

These six thousand years measure from Anno Mundi, the year of the world, so called.

It is really from the year of Adam, that is, 130 years before the birth of Seth. Genesis 5: 3.

- *Genesis 5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:*

According to accepted chronology, we are already in the last century of these six thousand years.

There is much uncertainty as to the true Adamic date. Some hold that a score or more of years should be added to the ordinary. Bishop Usher, date of 4004 B. C. If so, the expiration of the 6,000 years is that much nearer accomplished.

And now, let us again emphasize our previous statement, that we have no date for the Rapture. All dates pertain to Israel's history. We would not be at all dogmatic in regard to them. On the contrary, we would commend that they be studied with great caution, and especially as to assigning the events which they may designate.

But we do believe they are sufficiently significant, in the light of Isaiah 42: 9 and Luke 21: 28, to stimulate us to great hopefulness and constant watchfulness, for "Now is our Salvation (much) nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand." Romans 13: 11, 12.

- *Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.*
- *Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*
- *Romans 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*
- *Romans 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

There are many Scriptural signs corroborative of this, such as:

1. The prevalence of Travel and Knowledge, Daniel 12: 4.

- *Daniel 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*

2. Perilous Times. 2 Timothy 3:1.

- *2 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*
3. Spiritualism, 1 Timothy 4:1.
- *1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*
4. Apostasy, 2 Thessalonians 2:3.
- *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*
- 5: World-wide Evangelism, Matthew 24:14.
- *Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*
6. Rich Men, James 5:1-8.
- *James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*
7. The Arbitration Tribunal, 1 Thessalonians 5:3. And especially.
- *1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

Special Note. The Arbitration Tribunal may be a reference to the Hague Tribunal. This was the name for the Permanent Court of Arbitration established in 1899 by a convention of the First Hague Peace Conference to facilitate arbitration and other forms of disputed resolution between states. Its headquarters are at The Hague, the Netherlands.

8. Zionism, The Reviving of Israel. Luke 21: 28-31. God hath given us these, that we may be stimulated to "watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5: 6. One would be significant, but, when so many stand together in this our day, how important that we heed the warning.

- *Luke 21:28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. 29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*

THE PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

There is a solemn responsibility laid upon the ministry of the church, regarding the subject of our Lord's return, the Millennium and kindred dispensational truths, which occupy so large a portion of the Bible. God by His Holy Spirit hath commanded them to "speak" of "these things" (Titus 2: 15), therefore comfort (exhort) one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4: 18; 5: 11.

- *Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*
- *1 Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

- *1 Thessalonians 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*

But, strange to say, these subjects are almost entirely ignored. I have taken an expression in congregations, large and small, in all parts of our land, asking how many had ever heard a single sermon on the subject of our Lord's return, and I have been astonished to find that usually less than one-fifth could respond in the affirmative. A Methodist minister, in Florida, said he had never heard but five sermons on the subject, and he said he preached them all himself.

Now, as a result of this indifference to, or intentional elimination of, the subject, some irresponsible enthusiast comes along, preaching these truths. The people like to hear them and they flock to his services. Then he tucks on his tangents of soul sleeping, annihilation, restoration, time setting and other unscriptural adjuncts, by which he leads the people off into all sorts of fanatical vagaries, developing into Princism, Millerism, Mormonism and the like.

Special Note.

Princism. I can find no information on Princism.

Millerism. William Miller (February 15, 1782 – December 20, 1849) was a Baptist lay preacher who predicted the Second Coming of Christ would occur sometime between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844. March 21, 1844, passed without incident, and further discussion and study led to the setting of a new date, April 18, 1844. April 18 passed without Christ's return. William Miller responded publicly, writing, "I confess my error, and acknowledge my disappointment; yet I still believe that the day of the Lord is near, even at the door." In August 1844 at a camp-meeting in Exeter, New Hampshire, Samuel S. Snow presented a message that became known as the "seventh-month" message or the "true midnight cry." In a discussion based on scriptural typology, Snow presented his conclusion also based on the 2300 day prophecy in Daniel 8:14 that Christ would return on, "the tenth day of the seventh month of the present year, 1844." This date was determined to be October 22, 1844. Once more, God's people were disappointed.

Mormonism. Followers of the self appointed prophet, Joseph Smith Jr. (December 23, 1805 – June 27, 1844).

Oh, brethren in the ministry! Heed the warning. You are responsible for these things. If you would conservatively preach these truths, with a frequency and emphasis proportional to their importance in the Scriptures, you could save the people from these tangents and fanaticisms, which are flooding the land. It is idle to taboo these subjects. They are part of the Word of God, the "meat" which is to be given "in due season." Matthew 24: 25.

Special Note. The reference is not Matthew 24:25 but Matthew 24:45.

Matthew 24:45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Preach them. Preach the Word. Preach these things. Rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

- *2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Give "the meat in due season" and receive the promised reward: "Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." Luke 12: 43.

- *Luke 12:43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

1918

And now in this new edition, after fourteen years of the world's history, culminating in the present, unprecedented tragic, conditions let me again implore you. Oh, my Brethren in the Ministry, to heed the foregoing admonition.

God's rebuke of the nations Isaiah 17: 12-14;

- *Isaiah 17:12 Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! 13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a*

rolling thing before the whirlwind. 14 And behold at evening tide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

the dashing in pieces of Psalm 2:9;

- *Psalms 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

the smiting of the Image, Daniel 2: 34-35;

- *Daniel 2:34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

the sudden destruction of 1 Thessalonians 5: 3, I do believe are all, as one event, immediately impending.

- *1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

What will you say to the King of Kings, our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appears, if you refuse to obey the divine injunctions, "these things speak;" "Comfort (exhort) one another with these words?"

Special Note. While we agree with Mr. Blackstone that the church must always preach His return, we must not preach the dispensational version of Scripture. The exhortation is to contend for the historical faith of the church, not a speculative system that keeps changing with world events. Dispensationalism, in as far as its distinctives are contended for, is a discredited and unbiblical system of theology.