

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. V MAY 1, 1922 No. 9.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, JUNE 3, 1922

WE are now giving the official notice of the regular annual business meeting of the INSTITUTE, which, according to its Charter, should be held the first Saturday in the month of June, unless by a vote of the members the meeting is postponed to another date. The object of this annual meeting, as is generally known to the brethren, is to furnish an opportunity for the members to come together in an official capacity, to receive a general report of the INSTITUTE'S activities, which report is rendered by the Trustees or Directors. Such a meeting furnishes opportunity for bringing before the members whatever business it may be thought wise by any member for consideration. The meeting this year will be held on June 3rd, in the Tollner Block, corner Bedford Avenue and Madison Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The business of chief importance to come before the brethren annually is that of the election of a new Board of Directors, as the Charter provides that the Directors shall hold office for the space of one year only, and the office of all seven Directors therefore expires the first Saturday of every June.

It should be known by all that any member of the INSTITUTE is eligible for nomination and election as Director; so that the matter of who shall serve in the capacity of Directors or Trustees of the INSTITUTE is left entirely in the hands of the membership. At this annual meeting at which the election takes place, any member has the liberty of making any nomination he or she chooses. In addition to this, it was at the annual meeting last year resolved on motion made by one of the Directors then serving, that the INSTITUTE shall publish annually in the HERALD, at the time of the announcement of the annual meeting, the name and address of any member of the INSTITUTE nominated by any Ecclesia as candidate to be voted on at

the election. Up to the present time there have been no nominations received from any of the Classes, and hence there are none to publish in connection with this announcement of the annual meeting. The following are the names of the brethren who have served as Directors during the past year, and whose term of office expires June 3rd:

I. I. MARGESON I. F. HOSKINS

E. J. PRITCHARD H. C. ROCKWELL

P.L.GREINER F. H. MCGEE

J.L.COOKE

The regular report of the INSTITUTE'S activities will this year be given at this annual meeting, covering the year from June 4, 1921, to June 3, 1922. This report, we believe, will be of interest to all who are sympathetic with the cause of the ministry, and who, as far as they are able, are giving support to it.

The Directors who have been serving during the past year feel deeply appreciative of the privilege they have had of ministering to the cause of the Lord, the Truth and the brethren in this way. They have endeavored to realize the responsibility of the positions they were called upon to fill as Directors, and have repeatedly sought guidance of the Lord and the spirit of Heavenly wisdom by which to fulfill their offices acceptably to the Lord as well as to those who elected them. Each of these who has been serving as Director feels keenly his personal insufficiency and need of the Divine wisdom promised; and while all are indeed conscious of having rendered imperfect service, yet they rejoice to note some evidences of blessing, and strength from the Lord in connection with their humble endeavors, also evidences of the Lord's guidance and overruling in connection with what has been done; so that they feel there is truly substantial reason for encouragement and thanksgiving to the Lord for His assisting grace.

Briefly, we would say that it will no doubt be of keen interest to the friends everywhere to be assured of general harmony in the Board of Directors, as well as in the Editorial Committee of the HERALD: in fact, we could scarcely imagine how any company of brethren could act with greater unanimity and oneness of mind and purpose than that which has pervaded the meetings of the Board of Directors throughout the year, in the transacting of various items of business, and in the carrying forward of such policies and activities as have been much blessed of the Lord. This unison of mind has indeed contributed

greatly to the pleasure and profit of the brethren as they have come together--generally once a month throughout the year. While peace and harmony are not to be regarded as the first consideration, yet they are most desirable, and in fact, essential to the success and prosperity of any movement; and surely peace and harmony amongst brethren who are in positions of special responsibility in the ministry are most necessary and constitute good reasons for earnest thanksgiving--especially in these days, when the spirit of strife and contention and criticism appears to be so rampant, in both the world and the Church.

While it has ever been the earnest desire and aim of both the Directors and the Editorial Committee to serve in such a way as to fully please all the friends with whom they are associated, yet both of these committees have been keenly awake to the fact that they should first and chiefly seek to please the Lord; and there they are content to rest the matter, and leave the results in His hands.

In connection with this announcement of the annual meeting of the INSTITUTE, there are certain important items of which the friends are already aware, but which we will again note by way of remembrance. The Charter and by-laws contain the following provisions:

(1) Only those holding voting Certificates of Membership will be eligible to take part in the annual meeting or in the election (though others may be present). If you have made a donation of Five Dollars at one time to the funds of the INSTITUTE, and have not received a Certificate of Membership, you should notify us regarding the matter.

(2) No voting Membership Certificate is transferable.

(3) Any voting Membership Certificate in order to be valid for voting on June 3rd must have been issued in the office of the INSTITUTE not later than 20 days prior to the election, which this year would be not later than May 14th.

(4) It is not necessary for one holding a voting Certificate to be present in order to cast his vote. If any so choose, they may send in their proxy to the Secretary, or to another in attendance, but in so doing they must state on the proxy the names of the exact seven brethren for whom they wish to cast their votes for Directors, so that no discretion is left to the one using the proxy as to the person for

whom the vote is to be cast. A proxy form will be mailed to each member prior to the election. Please be sure to fill in each blank space, including the name of the one whom you desire to cast your vote for you.

While we could wish that all the brethren might attend this annual meeting, yet we know that not all will find it convenient; in fact, it will be impossible for many on account of the long distance and as indicated in item 4 above, those unable to be present may have a voice in the election of the seven Directors to serve: another year by giving their proxy to another to act for them.

It seems to us that all who are interested in this ministry and who appreciate that the INSTITUTE may be a means of much blessing, in enabling the friends to unite their various talents, powers, and opportunities in the advancement of the cause of the Truth and in building up one another, will recognize the importance of taking part in this annual meeting, either by being present personally or in a representative manner, as indicated above.

THE CONVENTION AT SPRINGFIELD, MAY 27-30

THE General Convention which has already been announced for Springfield, Mass., May 27-30, bids fair to be an excellent occasion, on which the brethren may well hope for rich spiritual blessing, and we do not see how there can be any disappointment in this regard. It is remembered that it was at this same season, two years ago, that there was a Convention in the city of Springfield which proved in every way most successful and was an occasion of spiritual uplift to the brethren.

There are several factors which should make this Convention a splendid success. The season of the year could not be more agreeable. Then, one of the days mentioned being a legal holiday, in addition to the Saturday and Sunday, constitutes this choice of dates very acceptable. Besides this, and perhaps one of the most important factors, is the fact that the Class of Associated Bible Students in Springfield is amongst those that are most alive, energetic, and zealous in the cause of the Master, and in striving to build up one another in the new life. Our experience is that the favor of the Lord is bestowed more abundantly upon those who, out of a full and sincere

consecration, lift up holy hands and hearts in the Divine service, and such brethren always impart a blessing to all with whom they come in contact.

The dear friends of the Springfield Class extend a most cordial welcome to their brethren far and near to join them in a holy convocation unto the Lord, in making a joyful noise unto His name, and to gather with them in sacred communion concerning the things of the Kingdom of God. And who are the brethren thus invited to come together? All who are trusting in the merit of the precious blood, unto conversion and reformation of life, and who have consecrated their all to the Lord, to live in obedience to His will, having resolved to be faithful unto death. All such are promised that they shall have sweet fellowship one with another. How much the Lord's people need such fellowship and help from one another at this time because, as the Apostle declares, "the days are evil." Hence he exhorts that they forsake not the assembling of themselves for mutual comfort. The purpose of this Convention, then, is as usual, to take counsel together concerning matters that pertain to our Heavenly hopes and promises--how we may make these more fully our own and come more fully under their power and influence.

We believe that all the brethren can be well assured that a very good program will be arranged for this Convention; and as a word concerning this feature, we can perhaps do no better than use the same language that was used in connection with a former Convention:

"It is our desire to have brethren serve on the program at this Convention as far as possible who are of sound doctrine, and who are deeply spiritual--brethren, therefore, who will not preach themselves, nor their own works, neither words of envy and strife; nor will they be expected to preach their own vagaries, theories, speculations or uncertain 'new light.' On the contrary, our hopes are that all the messages given at the Convention will be according to 'sound doctrine' and in accordance with the example of St. Paul, as well as his admonition to Timothy: 'For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;' 'Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned *and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them.*'--1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:14."

We are arranging that the program will provide for a special session at this Convention at which the regular annual report of the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE will be presented to the friends. Our

reason for this is that, not planning to hold a General Convention this year in connection with the annual business meeting to be held in New York, the first Saturday in June, we thought there would be some in attendance at Springfield who would be unable to attend the business meeting at New York the following Saturday; hence the arrangement to give the Convention this report in advance.

Let the friends as they assemble at this Convention earnestly seek the Divine blessing--that preparation of heart, and that filling with the spirit of the Lord, which is so essential if we would be an instrument of blessing to others, as well as receive the Divine benediction in our own hearts.

All sessions of the Convention will be held in the G. A. R. Memorial Building, 44 State Street. Any desiring that accommodations be engaged for them should address the Class Secretary: G. E. Miller, 34 Brunswick Avenue, Springfield, Mass.

ANNUAL CONVENTION AND WORLD CONFERENCE, LONDON, ENGLAND

THE Annual Convention of Bible Students in Great Britain and Ireland (arranged by the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE) will be held in London this year on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, August 5th, 6th, 7th

and 8th. Full particulars can be secured from the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, 23 High Street, Marylebone, London, W. I., Eng.

One important feature of the program will be the holding of a Conference, which will be open to all of God's consecrated people scattered abroad, both far and near. This Conference is the outcome of a suggestion made last year by a brother in Australia, and the idea is supported by brethren from many other countries, who evidently feel that the opportunity for free and frank discussion upon any subject affecting the welfare of God's people may be very profitable just now; thus to survey the interests of the Lord's work in all parts of the world, and to discover the necessities and also the possibilities of mutual service and helpfulness. The BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE have thought favorable of having such a conference in connection with their General Convention, and have undertaken to make the necessary provision for it in their Convention program for the year.

In order to economize time, and to insure everything being done decently and in order, it is suggested that the subjects which brethren desire to have considered at the Conference, be forwarded in good time to the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE at above address.

Classes in any part of the world are invited to send representatives to the Conference, and individual brethren will be welcome, whether they represent others or not.

As has already been stated in these columns, the idea of the special Conference commends itself to the directorate of the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, who have earnestly desired that the brethren in America be represented at the Conference. This desire led us to bring the matter before the friends in these columns a short time ago; for, of course, with our limited treasury, the sending of representatives to Great Britain is considerable of an undertaking and could only be effected by a general cooperation among the friends. It is with a good degree of satisfaction that we now announce that the way looks very favorable to our being represented at the London Conference. While still waiting upon the Lord to make the necessary provision, and to note positive indications from Him as to what should be our final decision, yet in view of the hopeful outlook, our Board of Directors have felt that they might reasonably take steps looking in the direction of sending at least two representatives to be present at the Convention in London and also at the Conference.

Recent advice from the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE makes mention that visiting delegates from America will be invited to make some general pilgrimage through Great Britain and Ireland for a few weeks following the Convention, and they express the assurance that the friends in those countries will desire to meet the expenses incurred in connection with such Pilgrim work. Accordingly, the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE suggest that all Classes in Great Britain and Ireland desiring to be included in such Pilgrim visits, should send their applications to the Committee's office in London. They would like to have all applications before them at an early date; that, having at hand all necessary information, they can proceed to prepare schedules for the Pilgrim tours. We believe this suggestion from the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE is quite in order, and we recommend that the friends cooperate accordingly.

The brethren in London also suggest that owing to the congested state now existing in their city, very little accommodation is available among the friends, but steps are being taken to secure good hotel accommodation at reasonable rates; and all visiting friends are requested to make early application for same to the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, so as to prevent any disappointment.

THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES NOW READY

THE task that our INSTITUTE set forth to accomplish about three months ago--that of publishing THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES--has now been accomplished, and we have received from our printers the new volumes. They are bound in what is called "Decker's Special Embossed Linen"--Royal blue, with gold lettering stamped on the cover. The paper, too, is of good, durable quality. We believe the book is neat and attractive, and it is our trust that it will please the friends who have faithfully cooperated in making it possible for the INSTITUTE to issue this new edition.

We have been much encouraged in the evidence of the Lord's blessing upon the efforts put forth. A number of difficulties have had to be overcome; for, in addition to the fact that the cost of printing, labor, materials, etc., is far beyond what it was a few years ago we have had to make an entirely new production of the volume. No plates that had been formerly used were available. All the matter, therefore, had to be reset, and new plates made. These plates are now the property of the INSTITUTE; thus another edition of the volume can be gotten out much easier than this first edition.

In this connection we are glad to mention that the brethren of Great Britain and Australia are also deeply interested in the project of circulating the volume in their countries. The questions of the high rate of exchange and the cost of transporting the books across the ocean have presented serious objection to our supplying those countries the book from America; and this has led the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE of London to undertake to print THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES in that city, by which they will be enabled to supply not only the friends in Great Britain, but also those of Australia. And thus we all rejoice to realize that the spread of the Truth is to go on upon this larger scale.

In publishing THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, no material changes were made in the subject matter. It was deemed of advantage by the directorate of the INSTITUTE that the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE as publishers should prepare a new foreword for this new edition--not with the thought of improving on what the original volume contained, but because of the change in the time, conditions, and circumstances since PASTOR RUSSELL'S death, it was considered of signal advantage, and in the interests of the project in general, that this new edition of the volume should contain a fresh statement in the way of a foreword presenting a brief review of matters up to date.

When suggestion was first made regarding the publishing of the volume last September, it was stated that we hoped to be able to get the book printed so as to supply them at 75 cents postpaid for single copies, and 60 cents each, in lots of not less than 25. We are glad that we can now announce that we do not need to advance these prices. Stating the matter in a little different form now, we make the following rates:

To all HERALD subscribers, the price will, be 75 cents per copy, carriage charges prepaid, on any order of less than 25 copies.

To all HERALD subscribers ordering 25 copies or more at one time, the book will be supplied at 60 cents per copy, carriage charges *collect*.

To those who desire to do colporteur work, we have arranged to make a special price of 50 cents per copy, carriage charges *collect*.

Colporteurs are authorized to sell the volumes to the public at \$1.00 per copy. This is not suggested as a mercenary proposition, but merely as a matter of making reasonable provision for necessary expenses of the colporteur.

Various are the ways by which THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES can be placed in the hands of the public. Many of the friends still have fresh in mind the methods practiced in former years while BROTHER RUSSELL was with us. These methods can still be followed. The colporteur method is, of course, the most effective in the distribution of the book. This method is that of calling upon people at

their homes and introducing the volume, explaining briefly its value as a true exposition of the Sacred Scriptures; the customary procedure being to take the order and deliver the books at a later date. Probably some general helpful suggestions and instructions may be prepared soon for those who could not engage in colporteur for the volume.

Another way of distributing the book is that which comes more nearly under the heading of what in former years has been termed "Pastoral Work"--that of making either special or general calls and endeavoring to loan the volume. Some may find opportunity of following this method who could not take up the general colporteur.

Then there is still the more general method of circulating THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES in which all who desire may have a part--that of speaking to neighbors, friends, relatives, and all with whom we come in contact, that is, at proper and opportune moments, and endeavoring to interest them in the study of the Truth, thus preparing the way to place the volume in their hands, either by selling, loaning or giving, them the book.

However, let none become seized with the propaganda spirit. We have no propaganda, in the ordinary acceptance of that term. We have no plan nor scheme of our own to work out. We have no earthly organization, system or institution to bolster up. Nor are any of our brethren laboring under the impression that they have an extraordinary unction from God to do a special work, either that of judging, smiting or of conquering others, with the thought of bringing them into a fold of our own creation. Nay, verily: in the midst of all the din, conflict and confusion of the present hour, let us go back to the great Founder of Christianity, and in humility at His feet, receive once more the lessons of the primitive simplicity and purity. Doing this, we learn that all consecrated believers in Christ are commissioned to bear testimony to the Truth; that as ambassadors of the Heavenly King, such are to be humble messengers of peace and good will, and never of strife and contention; that all such faithful ambassadors are authorized to announce "Jesus and the Resurrection"--the great Redeemer and His work; and to declare to men all who have ears to hear, the Divine purpose of salvation, with all that this embraces of exposition of the principles of Truth and Righteousness.

Thus it is because we have in the volume, THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, the great and essential truth of the Bible set forth in such clear, concise and beautiful form, that we have undertaken to republish this

book, that it may furnish opportunities for all the friends of like mind to share more largely in the ministry of the Divine Message. Truly in this volume God's eternal purpose is unfolded, and the vision is written down upon tables, that all can read it fluently (Hab. 2:2); and the truths therein have been a powerful inspiration to thousands of Christians and honest skeptics. As Jesus prayed, the Truth alone has sanctifying power, and "Thy Word is Truth." Let this be the inspiring motive, therefore, in our taking up the work of distributing THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. There are still those who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. There are still hearing ears--we may still work while it is called day; and we know of no reason why we should not in these days continue to apply the words of Jesus: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." (Matt. 9:38; John 4:36.) "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."--Psa. 126:6.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY CXXIII--MAY 7

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF BABYLON (Cont.)--REV. 18:10-24.

(666) What general picture are we to have before us in interpreting the language describing Babylon and those associated with her? H '20-299.

(667) Who are the "merchants," "shipmasters," and "sailors" mentioned in connection with the overthrow of Babylon; and what is signified by their "mourning," and "standing afar off"? H '20-299.

(668) What is suggested by the articles of merchandise? Explain verse 14, "the fruits that thy soul lusted after." Does the "one hour" (vs. 17, 19) refer to a definite period of time? H '20-299.

(669) Who is the class represented by the term "Heaven" (v. 20)? How is their attitude described as they witness the destruction of Babylon? H '20-299.

(670) Give a brief description of the symbols of verses 21-23 and their significance. What is the lesson to be drawn from the closing description of the fall of this great city? H '20-299, 300.

STUDY CXXIV--MAY 14.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF BABYLON (Cont.)--REV. 18.

(671) By way of a brief review, What is the evidence that the events portrayed in chapter 18 have not yet been fulfilled? H '20-309.

(672) Give a brief review of what is comprehended in the term Babylon, including a description of the various aspects. H '20-309.

(673) Do the various symbolic pictures lead us to suppose that the different phases or divisions of Babylon would all be destroyed at the same time? Why? H '20-309.

(674) Do the destructive judgments pictured in chapter 18 have reference to the entire system of Babylon or merely to, the "Mother"? What are the reasons for our conclusions? H '20-309, 310.

(675) What is the relationship between the great time of trouble with which this Age ends, and the fall and final destruction of Babylon? H '20-309.

MORE STUDY IN THE CHRONOLOGY

A FRIENDLY CRITICISM

Dear Brethren of the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE:

Having studied the articles appearing in the HERALD on Chronology carefully and prayerfully, I trust that you will permit the following friendly criticism on points in the articles which, so far, I have not been able to see. Knowing that your desire and your intention are to

grant Christian liberty to all, I feel that such a presentation will receive your courteous consideration.

In Lev. 26:31-35 the Lord warned the Israelites that because of their not keeping the Sabbatic years, He would desolate their land by driving them into their enemies' land, and their land would keep her Sabbaths while they were out of it. In Jer. 29:10 there is a prophecy concerning 70 years to be fulfilled at Babylon. In 2 Chron. 36:20, 21 this *warning* and this *prophecy* are brought together in the statement that those who escaped the sword at the time of Zedekiah's overthrow were taken to Babylon, where they were servants to Nebuchadnezzar and his sons till the reign of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the Lord by Jeremiah and to let the land rest to fulfill 70 years. Though we might have a difference of opinion in regard to the *prophecy*, one claiming that the whole 70 years were fulfilled at Babylon (as the word "*male*" in the original indicates), and another claiming that 19 of these years were spent at home and only 51 at Babylon, it would not be possible to treat the *warning* of Lev. 26 that way, and claim that 19 of these years were kept; for the Lord says in the 35th verse that they did not keep those Sabbaths. Therefore we can understand why 2 Chron. 36:21 introduces the fulfillment of the warning of Lev. 26; viz., to assure us beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was 70 years from the overthrow of Zedekiah to the first year of Cyrus the Persian.

In regard to the relation of a shortage of crops to the desolation, we find from Hag. 1 :7-11 that it was *after* their return from Babylon; and the Lord Himself asks the question, Why? and answers it, telling them it was because of their not building His house, though they had laid the foundation shortly after returning from Babylon.--Ezra 3:11.

The following Scriptures show how thoroughly the warning of Lev. 26 came true in making the land desolate of her inhabitants: Jer. 44:2; 34:22; 33:10; Dan. 9:2.

Now, dear brethren, let us consider certain things affected by this thought on chronology. We would call to mind the word of the Lord in Isa. 40:2; Jer 16:18; Zech. 9:12; where we are assured of a *Double* for Israel. Using the new chronology, Israel's Age, the Jewish Age, would be 1845-19, or 1826 years long, With this as our unit of measure we are unable to find evidences of a Double, but with the 1845-year measure we find evidences too plain to be disputed. The four best known we will mention:

- (1) The going forth of the "Wise Men" about Oct. 1st, B.C. 2: 1845 years later the Millerite Movement, about Oct. 1, 1844.
- (2) The First Advent of our Lord, A.D. 29: 1845 years later, the Second Advent in A.D. 1874.
- (3) The Jews cast off, 33 A.D.: 1845 years later, favor returning as per the Berlin Congress of Nations, 1878.
- (4) Resurrection of our Lord, 33 A.D.: 1845 years later, the Resurrection of the sleeping saints, 1878.

To our mind these things are very wonderful and prove the authenticity of the Scriptures.

The most important of all the proofs, let us now consider, viz.: The time of our Lord's Second Advent. Unless we can prove our Lord's Presence as the Head Reaper, we have no right to speak of the work under PASTOR RUSSELL as reaping or Harvest Work, nor of PASTOR RUSSELL as "that servant," or to differentiate between this movement and the Millerite Movement. PASTOR RUSSELL pointed out to us four proofs of the time of our Lord's Second Advent, viz.:

- (1) Acts 3:21. The Types and Shadows teaching that Times of Restitution would begin to count at the end of 6000 years; this Scripture stating that our Lord would return at that time; chronology showing the 6,000 years ending with 1874 A.D.
- (2) The Parallel already mentioned showing from our Lord's First Advent that His Second Advent would follow 1845 years later in 1874 A.D.
- (3) The jubilee cycle of 2,500 years, ending in 1874 A.D.
- (4) The 1,335 days of Daniel pointing to 1874 A.D.

The Pastor tells us he received the light in regard to the time of the Lord's Second Advent from Acts 3:21. As we consider it, we see why. Acts 3:21 is the only Scripture in the Bible referring directly to the time of that event and is therefore the key to the others, for although the others point to 1874, not one of them explains what was to take

place at that date. Therefore it does not seem right to us to hold on to the light this Scripture gives and to accept at the same time a chronology which carries the 6,000 years on to 1893 A.D. and thus nullifies the force of Acts 3:21.

Before the Harvest Work could be conducted intelligently it was necessary to *know* of the Lord's Presence, and. PASTOR RUSSELL credits this Scripture with conveying that information. Moreover, this new line of chronology practically destroys the Second and Third Volumes of *Scripture Studies*. We believe God is too wise an economist of Time and Means to allow of so much time and means going to waste as was spent by so many on those Volumes.

We would also call your attention to an error in the HERALD contained in a diagram concerning the Jubilees. The diagram shows Israel's reaping years from the middle of the week of years preceding the jubilee to the middle of the week of years following the jubilee, and gives them six years of reaping. But if the diagram would begin with the 50th year and run to the next seventh year, it would show the 50th year as a Rest year and the 7th year as a Rest year, and that would allow the Jews only five years to reap the land in the first seven years following the jubilee, counting the jubilee or 50th year as the first one of the next seven.

Well, dear brethren, I am afraid this is being lengthened out too much, though we have omitted many Scriptures and arguments. However, the Lord's will be done, and may His blessing be with you all.

Your brother by His grace,

H. S. Cox.

EDITORIAL REPLY

We publish the above friendly criticism and our reply to the same, thinking that there may possibly be others who still have similar difficulty in dealing with the points mentioned.

There is this to be said, first of all: Nearly all the points and objections mentioned in the foregoing letter have been quite fully examined and dealt with in previous issues of this journal, particularly the April,

May, June and November numbers of 1921; and it seems to us that a careful re-reading of these might prove helpful. However, we are undertaking to at least briefly review the points in question, hoping thereby to assist to a clearer, understanding of the matter.

The first point dealt with concerns the length of the period of time--from the overthrow of Zedekiah to the first year of Cyrus, and the Brother, in the second paragraph of his letter, mentions Lev. 26:31-35, Jer. 29:10 and 2 Chron. 36:20, 21, as proof that both the predicted period of captivity, and the period of desolation or Sabbath-keeping, began with Zedekiah's overthrow and ended with the first year of Cyrus.

This is the way we have all reasoned in the past, supposing that the prophecies concerning Israel's servitude to the king of Babylon could not begin to be fulfilled--that the seventy-year period of captivity could not begin to count--until Zedekiah's overthrow; and we have all reasoned that as of course, the prophecies had plainly stated that there was to be seventy years of this servitude, therefore there must have been seventy years from the fall of Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem to 536 B.C., and we have used 2 Chron. 36:20, 21 to prove this. It reads: "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath to fulfill threescore and ten years."

If we accept this Scripture as teaching that it was seventy years from Zedekiah's fall to the first year of Cyrus, and understand, as we must, that the other references in Jer. 29:10; 25:11, 12, where seventy years are mentioned, refer to the same period of time, we meet with a contradiction that is absolutely impossible to explain. To demonstrate that this is so, we quote Jer. 29:10: "For thus saith the Lord, That *after* seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."

THE BEGINNING OF THE 70 YEARS SERVITUDE

The question to be determined is: Where do these seventy years begin? It will be seen in the context (Jer. 29:1-9) that these words were a part of a comforting message sent by Jeremiah to the captives *already*

living in Babylon, namely, those of the "*residue* of the elders [which word, "residue," implies that there had been a prior captivity--evidently those carried away about eight years before, in the third year of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1: 1-3)] which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets [Ezekiel being one], and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem, to Babylon, (after that Jeconiah [Jehoiachin] the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem)."

Let it be kept in mind that these words of comfort to the captives were uttered in the *early days of Zedekiah's vassal* reign, some ten or eleven years before his dethronement, and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple; and it cannot be questioned that the seventy years mentioned in this passage (Jer. 29:10), to be accomplished at Babylon, begin with the *first* deportation of captives, in the third year of Jehoiakim, when Daniel and others were taken to Babylon. This occurred in the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar's suzerainty over the Jewish nation. Zedekiah's overthrow took place in his (Nebuchadnezzar's) nineteenth year. This settles the point that from the third year of Jehoiakim and the *first* of Nebuchadnezzar unto the first year of Cyrus, was seventy years. This being true, it is, of course, absolutely impossible to get seventy years from Zedekiah's overthrow, in his eleventh year, and Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year, to Cyrus, in 536. Indeed, we can only find fifty-one years.

Coming next to examine Jer. 25:11, we are compelled to arrive at the same conclusion. In considering this, we again ask the reader to bear in mind that the words we are about to quote were given by Jeremiah in the *fourth year* of Jehoiakim, full eighteen years before Zedekiah's overthrow, which was in Nebuchadnezzar's first year (Jewish reckoning). The context shows that this prophecy of Jeremiah describes in a *general* way *all* the judgments that were to come to the kingdom of Judah. The first part of verse 11 sums up in a brief statement the culmination of these judgments as they would affect the land of Judah. This statement is: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment." Let it be noted, however, that no mention is made here of how *long* this desolation should continue. It is in the closing part of the verse that the seventy years are mentioned, and, as will be seen, they have reference to the *servitude*. The words are: "And these nations shall *serve* the king of Babylon seventy years," In Jer. 27.1-7 we have recorded the names of the nations that were to serve the king of Babylon, as Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Tyre. In 2 Kings 24:2 we learn that some of the nations had not only been subdued, but were serving the king of Babylon in the subjugation of

Jerusalem on the occasion of Jehoiakim's rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, which was, of course, before Jehoiachin was placed on the throne in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year.

The next verse, Jer. 25:12, informs us *when* these seventy years of servitude on the part of these nations *should cease*: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished [from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's suzerainty], 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." This establishes the matter as to when the seventy years *begin* and *end*; the beginning being in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's suzerainty over the Jewish Kingdom, 606 B.C. (Jer. 25:1), and the end being seventy years *after*, in the first year of Cyrus, 536 B.C. This makes the Babylonian kingdom, from Nebuchadnezzar's suzerainty, to be seventy years in length, and not *eighty-nine* years, as it would be if it began in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year.

From the foregoing it will be seen that whatever way we interpret 2 Chron. 36:20, 21, concerning the *desolation* of the land, we can find only about fifty-one years of it, if we begin with the dethronement of Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and end it with 536 B.C. Thus: $536 + 70 = 606$ B.C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's suzerainty; $536 + 51 = 587$ B.C., the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar and overthrow of Zedekiah. And this is in harmony with all the great authorities found in our libraries, for without exception they place the overthrow of Zedekiah between 589 and 586 B.C.

DESOLATE WITHOUT INHABITANTS

The following are all the passages in Jeremiah that refer to the desolation or a desolation of the land, without inhabitants: Jer. 2:15; 4:7; 9:11; 10:18, 25; 12:11; 25:11, 18; 26:9; 33:10; 34:22; 44:2, 22. An examination of all these passages will discover that in none of them is there mention made of the *length of time* that the land would be desolate, *without an inhabitant*; and while there were various statements made to the effect that the state, of desolation would last seventy years, as well as the state of servitude, yet there is no Scripture that states that the land of Israel was to be desolate, *without an inhabitant*, seventy years. In our former treatment of this subject (see H '21, pp. 121, 165) we called attention to the Scriptural evidences that there were people found in the land some years after Zedekiah's

overthrow, and that while the land was in a state of depopulation for a considerable portion of seventy years, yet there is nothing to show that it was totally devoid of inhabitants for that length of time.

The language of 2 Chron. 36:14-21 is more retrospective than specific to the events during Zedekiah's reign alone. It is a summing up of events after very brief mention had been made of the last three kings of Judah. For several generations the prophets had been rising up early and warning them of coming disaster. (See Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 32:33; 35:15; 44:4.) For a long time those prophets had been misused. Consequently the bringing of the king of Babylon against them as a means of punishment would not, apply solely to Zedekiah's overthrow, but would include the whole series of his invasions against Jerusalem. Certainly there were invasions, as we have seen foregoing, which preceded that in the end of Zedekiah's reign, as shown by 2 Kings 24:1-2, 10-16 and Dan. 1:1. At those times there were not only captives taken to Babylon, but the Temple at Jerusalem was desolated to a certain extent, and when Nebuchadnezzar got through with his pilfering at the time he took Jehoiachin's company, there was not much left to make mention of, only the poorest of the land. That was the great captivity, and the one from which some authorities begin the count of the seventy years.

ALL OF ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENTS FORETOLD

The 26th chapter of Leviticus does not relate, as a prophecy, to the Babylonian captivity *exclusively*. It includes not only earlier punishments, but also, and preeminently, the greatest of all captivities and desolations--that which followed the year A.D. 70. The 34th verse may refer primarily to Babylon's time, but there is room for believing that verse 43 is looking forward to the future days in the A.D. period. The Babylonian captivity and desolation was only a prelude to the later one, a premonitory click, as it were, by the clock of the ages. See our Lord's reference in Luke 21:24 to this later captivity; also note that Ezekiel (16:53) cannot refer to the Babylonian captivity. In connection with the prophecies of a coming time of punishment, captivity and desolation, wrought by the hand of the king of Babylon, there is intertwined the thought of the greater and more prolonged period of punishment in the future, after they should have rejected the Son of Man. See how Jeremiah in that 25th chapter undoubtedly refers to the greater time still future; also note Jer. 29:14; 30:3; 33:4-16. In Lev. 26:33 it was stated that "I will scatter you among the heathen" and that would refer not merely to Babylon, but to all nations where they have

been scattered during the Gospel Age, when they have been "led away captive into all nations." The *desolations* from A.D. to 70 onward are undoubtedly referred to in Matt. 23:38; Dan. 9:27 and Isa. 61:4-6. Since that time the land of Palestine has been, until late, nothing but a desert, where there has been scanty rainfall, or none at all, and where agricultural pursuits have been well nigh abandoned.

The "Sabbaths" which were not kept, on account of which the land was desolated, would refer not merely to the Jubilees, but especially to the seventh-year Sabbaths, which were to be more numerous. The seventh year was, in fact, primarily a Sabbath, while the jubilee year was only incidentally so. Those seventh-year Sabbaths were not kept, at least not acceptably to the Lord, and the desolations of the land, *including the desolations during the Gospel Age*, come about on account of their failure to properly observe those Sabbaths.

With these broader views of the matter, we can with profit analyze the language of 2 Chron. 36:20, 21, that seemingly associates the seventy years with the desolating indignation. Surely this passage does not conflict with these other clear, definite statements. It is quite clear that if we take 2 Chron. 36:20, 21 as teaching that there are seventy years from Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year, when Zedekiah was overthrown, to the first year of Cyrus, it is impossible to make this harmonize with these plain statements we have considered in Jeremiah.

DESOLATION OR SABBATH -KEEPING ANOTHER PERIOD

In our previous examination of this phase of the subject (see H '21, p. 166), attention was called to various statements in the records, showing that whereas the period of desolation or Sabbath-keeping commenced near the time of Zedekiah's overthrow, approximately 590 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar's army invaded the land and laid siege to Jerusalem, causing agricultural pursuits to cease, the period of captivity and servitude had been running on for some seventeen years prior to that, and that there would be a corresponding difference in the ending of these two periods--one, that of the captivity, ending 536, and the other, that of the desolation, or Sabbath-keeping, ending about 520 B.C.

To us, the Scriptures to which we called attention (Hag. 2:15-19 and Zech. 1:12) clearly pointed out that the desolation did not end in 536

B.C., when Cyrus issued his proclamation of liberty. Even though the Jews began to return to their land at that time, the Lord's blessing was not upon them and the land. It still did not bring forth, but the desolation continued on till the second year of Darius, 520 B.C. We urge careful attention again to the plain statement found in Zech. 1:12, in the inquiry of the angel of the Lord: "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" This last clause, "these threescore and ten years," is rendered in the Douay Version, "This is now the seventieth year." What could be more certain, therefore, than that the desolating indignation of seventy years was at this particular time just ending? The words were spoken on the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Darius.--Zech. 1:7.

"UNTO THE REIGN OF THE KINGDOM OF PERSIA"

Now, let us look again at the statement made in 2 Chron. 36:20, 21: "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him [Nebuchadnezzar] and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years." Again we ask, What word of Jeremiah was fulfilled by the carrying away of Israel to Babylon and making them servants to Nebuchadnezzar? The answer is that it was those prophecies of Jeremiah that we have already considered above, found in chapter 29:10, and 25:11, 12. And what did those prophecies say? We reply, that Jeremiah, as the Lord's mouthpiece, had said that Israel, amongst other nations, was to serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And when did the seventy years commence? As we have just pointed out, the seventy years of this servitude or captivity commenced in Nebuchadnezzar's first year and in King Jehoiakim's third year, which was about nineteen years before Zedekiah's overthrow and the destruction of Jerusalem. This statement in 2 Chron. 36 is therefore telling us that the various captivities of Israel, commencing with the first siege against Jerusalem, when Daniel and his associates were taken, all happened or were brought to pass in fulfillment of Jeremiah's words which had predicted those captivities; for he had declared that they would serve the kingdom of Babylon, which kingdom would reach unto the reign of the kingdom of Persia.

But does not 2 Chron. 36:20, 21 mean that the seventy years of desolation or Sabbath-keeping also ended at the beginning of the reign of the kingdom of Persia; and since these years of desolation or Sabbath-keeping did not begin till near the time of Zedekiah's overthrow, would not this prove that there were seventy years from the capture of Zedekiah to the reign of the kingdom of Persia? Our answer is that this expression in 2 Chronicles with regard to the Sabbath-keeping must be interpreted in harmony with what we have found to be the facts; and since, as we have presented foregoing, the evidences are that the desolating indignation, wherein the land enjoyed her Sabbaths, continued on some seventeen years beyond 536, we cannot conclude otherwise than that at the beginning of the reign of the kingdom of Persia the seventy Sabbaths or desolation period had only partly been fulfilled. So far as the seventy years of servitude and captivity are concerned, the words by the mouth of Jeremiah had been fulfilled at the beginning of the reign of the kingdom of Persia, it is merely the Sabbath feature that ran on for some seventeen years later. Thus, it could very properly be said that the various captivities were permitted of the Lord for the purpose of fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy; for indeed it was these various captivities that finally brought about the desolation and prolonged it unto 536 B.C., and then on, as we have shown, to approximately 520 B.C., when the Lord blessed the building of the Temple and prospered their land so that it brought forth as in the former times, and thus ended the desolation or non-producing condition.

70 YEARS FULFILLED "AT BABYLON"

The Brother in the second paragraph of his letter gives special emphasis to the fulfilling of the entire seventy years "at Babylon;" and he draws the conclusion that all of Israel must have been out of their own land and captives at Babylon seventy years in order to be consistent with the words "fulfilled at Babylon." But we believe that this position cannot be sustained. It would not be necessary for all of the Jews to be out of their land and at Babylon in order to fulfill the prediction that they would serve the king of Babylon seventy years. When in his first year, Daniel and others were taken captive and Nebuchadnezzar began his suzerainty over Israel, from that point forward it can very properly be said that they were in servitude at Babylon." There were Daniel and his companions, the first representation of the captivity "at Babylon," in the very beginning of the seventy years. Then, about eight years later, there was what appeared to be the largest of the captivities, when Jehoiachin was carried away. Then, about eleven years later, the final captivity

occurred. But it was just as true that the Israelites were fulfilling their servitude "at Babylon" before the second and third captivities took place, as it was afterwards, because from the time that Nebuchadnezzar assumed control, in his first year, Israel had lost his sovereignty. From that time forward they were a vassal kingdom, and from that time forward, even though many of them still remained in that land till Zedekiah's overthrow, they were fulfilling their servitude "at Babylon" in that the government of Babylon was ruling over them.

HARMONIZING ISRAEL'S DOUBLE

The Brother in his criticism calls our attention to the Scripture that predicts the double of disfavor for Israel, and he states that using the new chronology, Israel's period of favor would be shortened nineteen years, making it only 1826 years, from Jacob's death until our Lord's crucifixion, A.D. 33, instead of 1845 years; and, of course, he reasons that beginning Israel's period of disfavor at A.D. 33, the 1826 years, or double, would take us to approximately 1859, as the time when we should look for their disfavor to end, instead of 1878. In reply to this reasoning, we freely concede that the discrepancy of nineteen years shortens what we have heretofore considered the period of Israel's favor from 1845 years to 1826, but we would ask the author of the above criticism, as well as all our readers, to consider again the suggestions that were offered in these columns. (H '21-334, 335.) Taking a comprehensive view of the entire situation in the light of the discrepancy of the nineteen years, it seems indeed reasonable to think of Israel's period of favor as extending beyond our Lord's crucifixion, even to A.D. 70; for while in a sense their Age or period of favor ended A.D. 33, and then in a still further sense, in A.D. 36--the end of the seventieth week--yet the facts show that the harvesting of the Jewish nation continued on, and to them as individuals Divine favor was extended. There is no doubt that there were many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Jews brought to receive Gospel favors after A.D. 33 and 36, until A.D. 70; in fact, it was not until the latter date that the destruction of their polity and city took place.* Counting, then, the period of time from Jacob's death to A.D. 70, we have a period of approximately 1864 years as the length of Israel's favor, instead of 1826 years. Then, counting a similar period of 1864 years of disfavor, or double, commencing at A.D. 70, brings us to approximately 1934 as the time of the end of their double of disfavor, at which point we might reasonably expect to see something of a very pronounced character in the way of the blessing of the Lord upon them.

SUNDRY OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

The Brother mentions the incident of the wise men going forth in October, B.C. 2, and the correspondency of the Miller Movement, about October, 1844. We see nothing in these events to prove the error of our conclusions

*As for the prophecy "even today do I declare that I will render double unto you" (Zech. 9:9-12): This is seen to have been fulfilled by our Lord when He rode into Jerusalem in the sense that He uttered the prophecy of the desolations of Jerusalem and its Temple, which was fulfilled in A.D. 70, at which time the latter half of their double began to count.

presented foregoing. There is nothing in these incidents upon which we can build anything so far as chronology is concerned.

The Brother refers to our Lord's First Advent in A.D. 29, and mentions that 1845 years later, the Second Advent, 1874, took place. Again we must affirm that there is no evidence in this connection to disturb the conclusions that we have reached concerning the nineteen years and the beginning and end of the Times of the Gentiles.

Mention is made again that the Jews were cast off A.D. 33, and that 1845 years later favor is seen returning, as per the Berlin Congress of Nations, 1878. We can only repeat former affirmations that we see nothing here to discredit the foregoing conclusions.

The resurrection of our Lord is referred to 33 A.D. and 1845 years later the resurrection of the sleeping saints, 1878. We reply again that whatever the number of years between 33 A.D. and 1878, this can have no bearing upon nor interfere with what we have shown foregoing as established facts regarding the length of Israel's history, the 70 years captivity, the beginning of Gentile Times, etc.

The criticism next refers to the time of our Lord's Second Advent, the Harvest work, etc., and mentions four propositions that are said to be proofs of the time of our Lord's Second Advent; first, "Acts 3:21. The Types and Shadows teaching that Times of Restitution would begin to count at the end of 6000 years; this Scripture stating that our Lord

would return at that time; chronology showing the 6000 years ending with 1874 A.D."

We have only to say that we believe there is too much assumed here. The Brother is basing his conclusion on a premise that is unproved, saying "chronology showing the 6000 years ending with 1874 A.D." The careful examination which has recently been given the subject does not show that 6000 years ended 1874; for with nineteen years shortage in the period of the Kings, we must logically place the ending of 6000 years later on. Supposing that all the other periods that go to make up the chronological chain are correct, we must be compelled to place the end of the 6000-year period around 1891.

The Brother states that Acts 3:21 tells us that our Lord would return at the end of 6000 years. We would, of course, be unable to concur in this conclusion, for there is no information whatever in Acts 3:21 to indicate the time when our Lord's Second Advent would take place. This Scripture merely tells us what is to follow the Second Coming of Christ--what the object of His Advent is--and is entirely silent with regard to just when that Advent takes place. There is nothing in the text even to intimate that it must happen at the end of 6000 years.

THE LORD'S SECOND PRESENCE AND 6000 YEARS

The criticism goes on to say that BROTHER RUSSELL received the light in regard to the Lord's Second Advent from Acts 3:21. We know of no place in his writings where he makes any such explanation. He does truly acknowledge that Acts 3:21 is a very significant statement, but BROTHER RUSSELL never used this text, so far as we are able to find, to establish anything with regard to time. Whenever he dealt with this Scripture, it was to show what was to take place during the Second Presence of Christ on earth. It is quite true that he did believe that the Times of Restitution chronologically were due to begin around 1874, but he also taught that there were preliminary features of God's Plan to be worked out in the end of this Age, that there was to be an overlapping of the Ages; hence it was not his expectation that the Times of Restitution in the full sense were to be ushered in until the Times of the Gentiles had fully passed away, and the Kingdom had been established. But as far as receiving the light regarding the Lord's Second Advent from Acts 3:21: We not only do not find any statement from BROTHER RUSSELL to this effect, but we do find that he plainly tells us that his attention was called to the time features concerning our Lord's Second Advent by a Mr. Barbour, who, with others

(Adventists), had indicated that date as the time of Christ's Second Coming.

The brother in the above criticism states that it does not seem right to hold on to the light given in Acts 3:21, and to accept at the same time a chronology which carries the 6000 years on to 1893 A.D.; for this, he says, nullifies the force of Acts 3:21. In reply, our claim is that our discerning the end of the 6000-year period in 1891 or 1893, as the case may be, has nothing whatever to do with nullifying the force of Acts 3:21; for, as previously indicated, there is no definite Scripture testimony to the effect that our Lord's Presence must take place at exactly the end of 6000 years. In the past we have been accustomed to thinking of the 6000 years of sin as ending with the Parousia of Christ, but the Parousia evidently does not start his thousand-year, reign, for the Church will all reign with Him. (Rev. 20:4.) Now it seems most reasonable to suppose that He comes in advance, in the days of earth's kings, and still in the days of the 6000 years of evil, to set up His Millennial Kingdom.

In what we have presented in the past of a chronological character, we have never undertaken to show that the Second Presence of Christ was not due to occur in 1874; and granting that that date marked about the time of His Parousia, it would be a proper enough thought to consider that point also as marking chronologically the beginning of the Times of Restitution; the completion of the Church, and the dissolving of the present order of things constituting preliminary features prior to the full introduction of the Restitution processes themselves.

The criticism states that the Types and Shadows teach that Times of Restitution would begin to count at the end of 6000 years. We do not know of anything definite in the Types and Shadows specially teaching this. The Types and Shadows do indeed indicate the nature of the work to follow the close of the completion of the Atonement Day sacrifices, but they do not contain any chronological data. We do indeed draw the inference, which is a reasonable one, that the provision in the Law for working six days and resting on the seventh is strongly suggestive of the labor and toil of mankind during six great thousand-year days, and that the seventh will be the great Sabbath of rest or deliverance for humanity. Nothing in what we have presented on the subject of chronology disturbs this thought.

The criticism states that the Parallel shows from our Lord's First Advent that His Second Advent would follow 1845 years later, in 1874

A.D. We believe it is sufficient to remark on this that there is no parallel that could be used as a proof of this fact. Nor do we believe that BROTHER RUSSELL ever made use of the parallel to locate the time of the Second Advent. He looked elsewhere for the proofs concerning the time of Christ's Second Advent, as we must also do.

THE JUBILEE FEATURE

The criticism refers to the jubilee cycle of 2500 years ending in 1874 A.D. On this we have only to say that while there is nothing in the Bible to specially authorize our looking for a 2500-year cycle, yet we explained, in dealing with the Jubilee feature, that our method of calculating the matter did not disturb our former conclusions regarding this, and that as we presented the matter, the 2500-year cycle was found to end approximately in 1874, as formerly seen.

Again we have reference to the 1335 years of Daniel, pointing to 1874 A.D. Replying to this: We have found nothing in our calculations to disturb the former conclusions we have had with regard to the fulfillment of the 1335 days of Daniel and their ending in 1874 A.D.

One of the closing features of the above criticism has to do with the subject of the Jubilees, and the Brother states that the HERALD is in error in presenting the matter as it does in one of the diagrams. On this we would reply that in our examination of the jubilee feature we found that the reckoning of Jubilees was based upon the Sabbatic system. Every seven years was to be a Sabbath, and seven of these cycles was to end with a jubilee. We pointed out that there was to be no break in these sabbatic cycles; no allowance was made for the skipping of a year for any reason. The conclusion therefore seemed reasonable that the jubilee was in some sense an overlapping year, and that at the end of the seven sabbatic cycles, making 49 years, the first of the next sabbatic cycle was to commence counting, thus constituting the jubilee cycles actually but 49 years each.

We will not here go into this feature further in our review of the above criticism, for the reason that more or less recently a number of suggestions and points have been raised by the brethren concerning the jubilee matter, which fact has led us to have in process of preparation a further review of this subject which will deal with the objection the Brother mentions. This we hope to publish in these pages a little later;

hence, we are deferring any further discussion of this matter for the present.

NO TRUTH DISCARDED

The Brother in his criticism states that this new line of chronology practically destroys the Second and Third Volumes of *Scripture Studies*. Here again, we must dissent from any such conclusion. No essential feature, whatever, contained in these Volumes is destroyed. In fact, by far the greater amount of the expositions set forth in Volumes II and III is not seriously disturbed. It is well remembered that BROTHER RUSSELL near his death, freely admitted the possibility of failure in some of the chronological deductions--even to the extent of being in error 25 years, but he assured the brethren that this should not disturb our confidence in the great truths we had learned. Note his pointed statement to this effect:

"If in the Lord's providence the time should come *twenty-five years later*, then that would be our will. This would not change the fact that the Son of God was sent by the Father, and that the Son is the Redeemer of our race; that He died for our sins; that He is selecting the Church for His Bride; and that the next thing now in order is the establishment of the glorious Kingdom at the hands of this great Mediator, who during His Mediatorial Reign will bless all the families of the earth. These facts remain the same. The difference would be merely that of a few years in the time of the establishment of the Kingdom."--Z '14, p. 4.

Surely we get his thought from this statement that the change of time even as much as twenty-five years would not destroy any of the truths in the Second, or Third, or in any of the Volumes.

Again we have another statement from him, made in connection with the discussion of the time features, and he says:

"If any be disposed to dispute the exactness of these figures we need have no quarrel, but simply say that any difference in the calculation must of necessity be but small--possibly one year, possibly twenty years--but in so long a period [as the 2520 years] how trifling would be such a variation.

"What we are specially interested in is the facts of the case, and what will occur when this long period terminates."--Z '11, p. 238.

FORMER EXPECTATIONS UNFULFILLED

The Scriptures truly admonish that the Lord's people possessed of the Holy Spirit shall use the spirit of a sound mind at all times. As we do this in connection with our study of the Divine Word, it means that whenever any point is recognized to be erroneous it will be discarded. There are certain conclusions that we have formed in our study in past years, that circumstances and the present situation compel us to abandon; as for instance, according to our chronological calculations in the past there were several very important developments and events that were expected to be in evidence before 1914 or 1915:

Before that date the Federation of Christendom and the alliance with the civil powers was to have been an accomplished fact.

By that date the Times of the Gentiles were to have ended in the last and final sense.

By that time the present order of things on earth was to have passed away, and all the kingdoms of this world dissolved.

By that time Jacob's trouble (Ezek. 38) was to have been over, and the Jews fully established in their own land.

By that time the Ancient Worthies were to have appeared and demonstrated themselves to be the recognized and visible authorities on earth.

By that time all the members of the Church were to have finished their course and to have been glorified together with Christ.

By that time the Kingdom of God was to have been fully established and the reign of Christ begun.

All we can say now, nearly eight years beyond that date, is that none of these things have been realized. We must, of necessity, change our conclusions somewhat. But still there is no room for real discouragement on the part of any with respect to these things for which we have been looking; for these events we have expected will surely come to pass. They are positively referred to in the Divine Word. We merely conclude that our calculations in the past have not been quite accurate as to the exact time of these important events; and, as BROTHER RUSSELL has most logically reasoned, it becomes a matter of our looking for these things a little later; and the postponing of them he said, twenty-five or even fifty years should not distress any of the brethren, for it is the events themselves that are of importance to us; and we can well afford to leave with the Lord the matter of the exact time, and continue trustfully serving Him.

As a concluding remark in our reply, we ask all to again consider that whatever views any may choose to hold regarding any of the chronological lines, and however much our views may differ in this respect, no tests of fellowship whatever should be made in this connection. Nor should our differences be permitted to engender the spirit of controversy or strife. The spirit of love should still continue, which will mean that full liberty will be granted to all with regard to lines of thought and interpretations that do not interfere, with the foundation of our faith or the foundation of our fellowship.

HILKIAH'S GREAT DISCOVERY

--MAY 21-2 CHRON. 34:14-33--

Golden Text.--"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path."--Psa. 119:105.

MANASSEH'S son, Amon, succeeded him as king of Judah. Born and reared during the period of his father's blind idolatry, he seems not to have shared in his father's repentance and reformation: his short reign of two years was full of wickedness and endeavor to reestablish idolatry, and ended with his own assassination by his servants. He was followed in the kingdom by his son Josiah, a lad of eight years, who developed a very different character, became a true servant of God, and one of the greatest reform kings upon the throne of Israel. We are not to regard this as a miracle, but rather to expect and look for natural causes, as having something to do with it. We find some suggestion along this line in his name, for in olden times names were given to indicate the characters hoped for, and thus at least became a

manifestation of the attitude of the parental heart. The name Josiah signifies, "Jehovah will support." He was born during the period of his grandfather's reformation movement. His mother was doubtless, according to the custom of that time, chosen by his grandfather, Manasseh. Her name indicates that she was of godly parentage--Jedidah signifying the beloved of Jehovah;" and her mother, the king's grandmother, was by name Adiah, "The honored of Jehovah." From such good parental stock, on the maternal side at least, we should expect the foundation of a good character, and developments substantiate this.

This religiously inclined boy, we may reasonably infer, was under the counsel of his religious mother, and his state counselors were probably those whom Manasseh had gathered about him after his reformation, and who were evidently rejected by Amon. Josiah's sixteenth year dates his conversion--the date at which the chronicler says, "He began to *seek after* the God of David, his father." And this brings to our attention a fact that is lost sight of by many; viz., that it is one thing to be well-born and well-disposed, and another thing entirely to consecrate the heart to the Lord and this last step many morally inclined, "good" people, neglect to take to their own permanent disadvantage. It is not sufficient that we be well-disposed, moral; it is necessary that we become the Lord's, devoting ourselves wholly to His will, and then seek after Him to know His will that we may do it. It is only to those who thus draw near to the Lord that His promise extends--"Draw near unto Me, and I will draw near unto you."

BREAKING DOWN IDOLS OF THE HEART

The result of the king's thus seeking the Lord culminated four years later, when he was twenty, in a determination to use his influence and power for the complete overthrow of idolatry throughout the kingdom; and the next six years of his reign were devoted to this work. He prosecuted it not only in Jerusalem and throughout Judah, but extended his influence over a large portion of the territory once ruled by the ten-tribe kingdom, and pushed the work of reformation and destruction of idols as far as Naphtali on the Sea of Galilee. Apparently there was a certain amount of opposition to this reform work, which required six years for its accomplishment; moreover, it seems to have required the king's presence with his servants, to insure thorough, destruction of the symbols of idolatry which apparently abounded in every district.

It was on the king's return to Jerusalem, after having seen to the accomplishment of the cleansing of the land of its idols, that looking about for the next proper step to the service of God, he determined that it should be the repair of the Temple. Although his grandfather, Hezekiah, had cleansed the Temple, repairing its doors, etc., it would appear that it had subsequently been entirely neglected, so that many of the rafters were broken, and thorough repairs were requisite. Accordingly, money donations were invited for the repair of the Temple, and the work was carried to completion.

As it was with Josiah's public work, so it should be with the heart work of all who present themselves to the Lord: they should first begin by breaking off their sins in righteousness, by utterly destroying the fleshly idols of the heart, selfishness in various forms, as the Apostle suggests. "Put away all filthy communications out of your mouths." "Put away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit [mind], perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." (Col. 3:8; 2 Cor. 7:1.) After having thus become servants of righteousness in our own hearts and lives, we may properly begin to look out for other conquests, fields of usefulness and service to the Lord. We may *then* begin to lend a hand in building up the true Temple of God, the Body of Christ, the Church—in cleansing it from defilements and in instituting in it the proper reforms. But all reform should begin with our own hearts first. He who has not sought the Lord personally, and then, obedient to the Lord's leading, broken down the idols of his own heart, and begun a thorough cleansing work in his own life and heart, has no business whatever to take hold of the repairs of the great antitypical Temple.

Josiah's repairing of the Temple was over two hundred years after the very similar repairing made by king Jehoash, and brought to light a very ancient manuscript of the Law, probably the book of Deuteronomy. Presumably this was the copy of the Law which Moses wrote with his own hand, and commanded to be placed in the side of the Ark, with the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. Quite probably the Ark, as the most sacred and most valuable of the Temple's furniture, had been secreted at the time the Temple was denuded of much of its golden ornamentations to pay tribute to invaders, and was now discovered. We are to remember, too, that books were little in that day, and that few could either write or read them, and that the Law of Moses was communicated to the people orally by the priests, from memory.

THE LAW BROUGHT TO LIGHT

It is not surprising, therefore, that when the Book of the Law was found by the priest Hilkiah, it was esteemed a treasure, delivered to Shaphan, the king's secretary, and read in the king's hearing. Its delineations of the law of God incumbent upon His people Israel, were so different from what the people had been taught by the priests, by word of mouth, that the king was astonished, and rent his garment (an expression of dismay). Nor could we expect otherwise, when we remember that idolatry had flourished to a considerable extent for over three hundred years, with only occasional reformations, and that during all that time the priests and Levites who had in any degree remained faithful to the Lord were without support from the people; for they had no land of their own, and were largely dependent upon the tithes, and consequently during the period of idolatry would be obliged to engage considerably in secular employment.

Realizing how far short Israel had come of the demands of the Law, and noting the punishments prescribed in that Law for unfaithfulness, the king was greatly troubled. Accordingly, he sent several of his court officers with the high priest, to inquire of the Lord, through a prophet, respecting the status of the case, and respecting what should be done by Israel to escape the punishments which he realized justly belonged to the nation under the conditions of that Law Covenant. The Prophets Jeremiah and Zephaniah were then living and prophesying, but the king for some reason sent his messengers to a prophetess, Hulda, daughter-in-law of one of his court officers. Why the king passed by two prominent prophets, to make inquiry at the mouth of one otherwise unknown in the

Scripture narrative, we can only conjecture: (1) It may have been that, of a woman, the king might hope to receive a softer and more peaceful message than from a man, especially as this woman, through her father-in-law, was connected with his own court, and would therefore be disposed to give as kindly a message as possible. (2) Another suggestion is that Jeremiah and Zephaniah may have been absent from Jerusalem, on preaching tours, and thus could not be readily communicated with. (3) An additional and even more forceful suggestion is that Jeremiah and Zephaniah had been prophesying in the name of the Lord publicly--foretelling the judgment of the Lord about to come upon the nation, and that their preaching probably had somewhat to do with the reformation which Josiah had inaugurated. Thinking favorably of his own reforms, the king doubtless thought their predictions unwarranted and extreme. He felt, therefore, that he *knew* what answer these Prophets would make to his questions, and desired to hear through still another channel which he might hope would be less severe. (4) Besides, Jeremiah was the son of the high

priest, Hilkiah; and Zephaniah was the king's own cousin. The king's desire, therefore, would seem to be to obtain an outside testimony, and as favorable as possible.

APPLICATIONS TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

A moral may be drawn from this part of the lesson, applicable to individual cases. At first, when we began to seek the Lord, we recognized certain things and conditions of heart as sinful and requiring the Divine forgiveness, and necessary to be put away to the extent of our ability; Josiah destroyed the idols: but it was only after we had been considerably exercised in the matter of reform in our own lives, and in connection with the Temple, the Lord's Church, that the Lord supplied that clearer knowledge of His own perfection and the righteousness of His law, which enabled us to see that with all the reforms and cleansings accomplished we still came far short of the grand standard set forth in the Divine law--Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy being, and thy neighbor as thyself.

And as the king rent his garment, and manifested greater contrition of heart after years of zealous service, so it is usually with the Christian who has passed through several stages of reform, and whose mind at last discerns the true meaning of the great law of Love. Then it is that he feels more than at first his shortcomings. While the world may be considering him as a great reformer, a great saint, he himself has gotten to a place where he sees the majesty of the Divine law as with a telescope, and his own imperfections as with a microscope. Then it is that he also seeks the Word of the Lord for guidance, instruction, help.

The Lord's reply through the prophetess was most direct--confirmatory of all that had been declared by the mouth of Jeremiah and Zephaniah, but adding words of comfort and consolation for the king himself--"Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place . . . and hast rent thy clothing and wept before Me, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord." It was too late for any national reformation: the nation had been tried for several centuries, and it had been found wanting, and according to the Divine Plan, the time was near at hand when the typical kingdom should be entirely overthrown-overturned until He should come, Messiah, whose right the antitypical Kingdom is, and to whom it will be given. There was no reason, from the Divine standpoint, why this course should be altered, and the repentance of the king could therefore only be treated

as an individual matter, and dealt with accordingly, for God has an individual providence over all those who are consecrated to Him, as well as a general supervision of the affairs of the nations.

PARALLEL CONDITIONS TODAY

Much in this narrative reminds us of the somewhat parallel condition and circumstances of the present time, Looking back through the vista of "the dark ages, we see the parallel to Israel's and Judah's tendency towards idolatry, superstition, etc. We see false religions, doctrines and dogmas set up and worshipped in Christendom. We see here, as we saw in Judah's history, not only the worship of false gods, but also false worship of the true God--worship contrary to the commandments of His law. We see in the Reformation Movement of the sixteenth century something corresponding in many respects to Josiah's reformation. It has led to a considerable smashing of false doctrines, errors and false gods and of misrepresentations of the character and teachings of the true God. The present reformation movement also has had much to do with the cleansing and repairing of the Temple--the true Church, the saints--and in the establishment of a true worship, based upon truth more clearly discerned, and better sacrifices. And finally we have found the book of God's Law--we found the Bible. It was rescued from seclusion by the Reformers, and through the printed page has been laid before all Christendom. Not only so, but to us also it is being "*read*"--explained, made clear, under Divine providence. We are seeing its heights and depths, its lengths and its breadths, as never before.

In this Book also, "we read the righteous sentence of the crumbling thrones of earth." We read of the "Day of Vengeance" that is coming upon the antitypical Israel, and as we inquire of the Lord respecting it, and whether or not it may be averted, we hear His decision in the Scriptures, as Josiah received it concerning his kingdom. The Word of the Lord informs us that so far as Christendom is concerned there is no balm in Gilead that will help and recover her. Her case has gone too far to be rectified, and to have the old garment patched. The Lord's decision is that the present social structure shall pass away in a great time of trouble, and that on its ruins He will establish through the glorified Church, the Kingdom which He has so long promised, and for which we are to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

Nevertheless, the Lord's promise is comforting to all those who mourn in Zion, to all those who are out of sympathy with evil and unrighteousness, to all those who love the law of the Lord their God, and who are seeking to serve Him with all their mind, soul and strength, and to exercise His law of Love toward their neighbor also. To this class, fully consecrated to the Lord, comes the assurance, "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

JEREMIAH SPEAKS BOLDLY FOR GOD

--MAY 28--JER. 26--

Golden Text.--"Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah."--Jer. 26:13.

JEREMIAH prophesied in the days of Josiah and of his four successors, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. He was of about the same age as Josiah, and seems not to have been seriously ill-treated by that reformer, although, as noted in our last lesson, he was passed by when the king sought heavenly counsel respecting the Book of the Law and the turning away of the penalties for sin therein recorded.

Jeremiah's position was a peculiarly trying one, for although his prophesying evidently had a marked effect and greatly influenced the king and the princes and the people in cleansing the land of its idolatry and in re-establishing the worship of Jehovah, yet he was not permitted to compliment the people on these measurable reforms, and to promise them a return of Divine favor, as did the false prophets of that time, and was considered unpatriotic. On the contrary, under the Lord's inspiration he kept pointing out to Israel the flagrant sins of the past, and their natural tendency to leave the Lord and to follow other gods in idolatry. Under various pictures he represents Israel as wholly indifferent to the Lord's goodness of the past, wholly negligent of the covenant relationship entered into with Him as a nation, except when they got into adversity, when their repentance would be but for a short time, and only from the selfish motive or desire to escape the troubles which their own course had brought upon them.

The Lord's messages, at the mouth of Jeremiah, practically held out no hope for a permanent return of Divine favor in the near future; but on the contrary predicted that Judah would be carried away captive as

Israel (the ten tribes), her sister, had been. And as though emphasizing this thought, the Lord declared to Jeremiah, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind could not be [changed] toward this people: cast them out of My sight."--Jer. 15:1-7.

Thus Jeremiah was what would be esteemed a prophet of evil--a pessimist. It is not surprising, therefore, that in his obedience to the Lord, in his faithfulness in speaking forth the word of the Lord, he became greatly disesteemed of his fellow-countrymen, who doubtless would have honored him highly, had he prophesied unto them smooth things, promises of coming blessings and greatness as a nation. Thus we see that Jeremiah had not only the opposition of the idolatrously disposed people of the kingdom, but the disfavor also of the reformers of his day, who thought indeed that they were doing a grand work, and should be complimented thereon, and should have messages of Divine favor.

OPPOSING PRESENT FANCIFUL DREAMS

We cannot avoid noting the remarkable similarity of Jeremiah's position to that of the Lord's people today, who are enlightened with the Present Truth, and who, as the messengers of God, declare this Truth. Similarly these note with pleasure the fact that there are many great reforms in progress at the present time, in Christendom. Nevertheless, they are obliged to speak from the Divine standpoint, "He that hath My word let him speak My word." (Jer. 23:28.) And in thus speaking the word of the Lord, they oppose and contradict the many fanciful dreams of present day reformers who are vainly hoping that as a result of civilization and through human efforts, and especially those of their party, all the promised blessings are about to flow to the world of mankind, and thus by human efforts establish righteousness in the earth, and bless all the heathen.

The Lord's faithful mouthpieces of today, Jeremiah-like, are obliged to contradict these fanciful dreams, and to point out that they are unreasonable as well as unscriptural--that much of the present-day progress, civilization, benevolence and loving-kindness of Christendom is only an outward veneer, a drawing near to the Lord with the lips, and in some of the outward forms of conduct, while the hearts of Christendom are far from Him, and far from the law of the New Covenant--perfect love toward God and toward the neighbor.

The Jeremiah class of today is obliged to point out that all the various efforts being put forth for the conversion of the world will never bring the desired result, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," but that on the contrary the increase of the earth's population is far more than keeping pace with the increase of even nominal Christian Church membership, so that, as someone has reckoned recently (basing the calculation upon the various censuses from 1833 to the present time), at the present rate of increase of the non-Christian world over the professedly Christian world, Christianity would entirely disappear from the earth within seven hundred years. The estimate shows a loss of about one per cent every ten years.

And as Jeremiah was, in faithfulness to the Lord, bound to proclaim the coming overthrow of the kingdom, so the Lord's people of the present time who have His word of Present Truth, cannot disguise or withhold the fact that a great time of trouble is approaching--is nigh, even at the door--and that it will mean the complete obliteration of the present order of things in anarchy. On this account we are esteemed by many to be pessimists, and prophesiers of evil things only; our opponents, in their bitterness, entirely overlooking and ignoring the fact that we present at the same time and from the same Word of the Lord the most glorious optimism conceivable, and show most clearly that the approaching time is merely the precursor of the great blessing which God has promised shall come to all the families of the earth, not through the imperfect powers of fallen men, but through the perfect powers of our glorious Lord and His glorified Church, His Bride, who will then be with Him, His joint-heir in the Kingdom.

SPAKE AS MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

The method by which the Lord communicated His message to and through Jeremiah and the other Old Testament Prophets is not distinctly set forth in the Scriptures; except that the Apostle Peter declares that they "spake and wrote as they were *moved by the Holy Spirit*." Many Bible students overlook this fact, and hence attempt to explain the peculiar predictions, etc., of the Prophets, as though they were their own thoughts, the results of their own reasoning, expressions of their own views or opinions. Quite to the contrary, they were God's views, God's expressions, and God's illustrations; and the Prophets merely did, spake and wrote what the Lord directed. The only willfulness of the Prophets, as we may understand it, was that they *willingly* gave themselves up to the Lord, thus to be His

mouthpieces; the Lord would not take as His mouthpiece and prophet an unwilling, inharmonious person.

To our understanding, the Lord spoke to these Prophets of olden time much after the manner in which the evil spirits now speak to spiritualist mediums--"clairaudiently." In other words, we believe that the fallen angels, personating the dead, make use of certain channels of human nature, which in time past God made use of in communicating the truth to His Prophets. As a guard upon this point, however, let us remember that God no longer speaks to His people in this way, but has closed the canon of His revelation by speaking "unto us through His Son" and His specially commissioned and empowered Apostles.--Heb. 1:1, 2.

Our present lesson is located in the days of King Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah. In fact, some of the most pointed and forceful of Jeremiah's prophecies center around and commence their fulfillment in connection with the reign of King Jehoiakim. The reason for this is also evident: The typical kingdom of God, under Israel, was drawing near to its end. Israel was to go into servitude to the kingdom of Babylon seventy years (Jer. 25:8-11), first by becoming a vassal kingdom for a few years, and then to experience complete overthrow and be carried away as captives of Babylon. As has been previously pointed out, this seventy years of captivity commenced in the third year of Jehoiakim. This is significant, for Jehoiakim's third year was contemporaneous with Nebuchadnezzar's first year, and in harmony with the Divine program, Nebuchadnezzar was given to understand that in the beginning of his reign he was constituted a universal monarch, and all nations were to serve him. (Dan. 2:37, 38.) In fulfillment of this Divine decree, he proceeded to exercise this authority by subjugating the nations, Israel included. God's special providence concerned Israel, and this going into captivity and bondage to Babylon was a punishment for their many sins--their repeated violation of Jehovah's Word.

No wonder, therefore, that so much of Jeremiah's prophecy centers around these last kings of Israel, particularly Jehoiakim, in the third year of whose reign the prophetic seventy years of servitude and captivity began to count. The several chapters of Jeremiah following our lesson go considerably into detail as to the fall of Israel's kingdom and the events and developments that related not only to their downfall, but concerned their final deliverance and restoration.

JEREMIAH BECOMES UNPOPULAR

Reaching the 36th chapter of the prophecy, we have a general review or summing up of the entire situation by Jeremiah. He had been restrained of the liberty which he possessed during the lifetime of King Josiah, the reformer, and although not imprisoned was apparently forbidden to address the people in public. He therefore adopted (doubtless at the Divine instance) the method of having a scribe take down his prophecy in writing, and Baruch was the one found worthy of this service, although he well knew that it meant the loss of the king's favor and the putting of himself on the unpopular side of an unpopular matter. After Baruch had written the prophecy respecting Jerusalem, declaring its utter overthrow at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, etc., he (as the representative of Jeremiah, who was not permitted to teach) entered into the court of the Temple and read the prophecy in the hearing of all the people, who came there to worship. Some heard with interest and astonishment, and as a result, the prophecy was brought to the attention of the king, peradventure he, as the representative of the people, might take some steps toward repentance, which might save the people "from some of the disaster, even though as a whole it might not be prevented. When the king heard respecting the matter he was curious to hear it also, but he became so incensed and indignant at what he considered the extreme improbability of the prophecy that, taking the scribe's knife, he cut the manuscript into small pieces' and burned it in the fire before him.

Jeremiah's God-directed course may, serve as a lesson to God's people of today who have the Truth to present. Their message is to be delivered, and if they are hindered or restrained or forbidden to speak it in the temple (in the nominal churches), they should adopt some other method of presenting their message to the attention of those who are seeking to worship the Lord. They may do this either by the written or the printed message. As a result, the right ones will hear, and yet when the knowledge of the present condition is brought to the attention of those in power, they will be similarly disrespectful to the message, and skeptical respecting its Divine authority. They may even attempt to destroy the printed page, or hinder its circulation, but the attempt will be futile, as it was in the case under consideration.

Amongst those who were present at the destruction of the Lord's message by the king, three only offered any protest, and they manifested no indignation, no sorrow, but merely advised in a worldly-wise way that the king be not too rash. So there are today those who have some interest in Present Truth, some knowledge

respecting it, and who, nevertheless, for fear of their influence in worldly-church and political circles would do no more than *advise* a more liberal course. Meantime, realizing the king's attitude of heart and opposition to the message. Jeremiah and Baruch fled and hid themselves, or, as expressed in the lesson, "The Lord hid them"--prevented their royal enemy from finding them.

The king may have thought that he had utterly wiped out the Lord's message and annulled it when he burned the roll, but the result was quite to the contrary. At the Lord's instance Jeremiah prepared another manuscript containing the same prophecy, and with additional matter, and the king brought upon himself additional trouble, as a punishment for his contumacy.

DESTROYING GOD'S WORD TODAY

It is still possible to endeavor to destroy God's Word, though all such efforts will fail: the Word of God will eventually triumph. It may be attempted variously:

(1) By rejecting the Word of God, the Bible--perverting its statements and ridiculing them.

(2) By speaking of its truths irreverently and connecting them with funny stories, and thus vitiating its influence upon speaker and bearers.

(3) By neglecting it, leaving it unread, unstudied.

(4) By forbidding people to read the Bible, or even by limiting or hindering Scriptural investigation.

(5) By persecuting those who preach and teach it conscientiously because their interpretations are contrary.

(6) By in is representing the Word of God, substituting for its teachings the traditions of men--hymn book and creed theology, misrepresenting it to be Bible theology--and thus misrepresenting

God's character and Plan, while professedly serving Him, honoring His Word.

(7) By skipping over and ignoring certain teachings of the Scriptures because they do not harmonize with preconceived opinions and preferences.

All of these are modern methods of fighting against God sure to bring punishments--darkness, Divine disfavor.

THE MEMORIAL CELEBRATION

Reports thus far received are that the observance of the Lord's Supper has been general, and all things considered, the numbers of those who participated are encouraging. Additionally, the expressions from the friends in connection with their reports indicate a deepening of the work of grace and of the spirit, leading the brethren to appreciate more and more the privilege of serving the Lord in whatever way He may indicate. Let us all continue to do with our might what our hands find to do, and thus show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Let us resolve to keep our hearts with increasing diligence, recognizing that out of them are the issues of life.

The brethren of the Brooklyn Ecclesia met on Tuesday evening, April 11th, in observance of the sacred occasion. The service was a solemn and impressive one. It was shown that the eating of the bread pictured the appropriation of our Lord's humanity, by which we were justified, and by which our justification or righteousness in God's sight is maintained notwithstanding the imperfections which are ours through heredity. It was also shown that the blood represented primarily our Lord's earthly life-rights appropriated to us, in justifying us to life.

Then the second larger view of the matter was shown, in the light of the Apostle's words that all the faithful, all the Royal Priesthood, all the members of the One Body of Christ, join with their Lord in becoming the One Loaf, and join with Him also in the breaking of that Loaf. It was also shown in the light of the Apostle's words, that in becoming members of the Body of Christ, we become sharers with our Lord in His cup of suffering--in His sacrifice of earthly life.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [fellowship-sharing] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion [in His sufferings] of the Body of Christ? For we, being many, are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all partakers [sharers] of that one Bread."

As a fresh glimpse was thus taken at the significance of the deep things of God, the hearts of the friends were stirred, How wonderful it seems that we should be called to such an intimate association with our Lord and Redeemer, both in the sufferings of this present time, and in the glories that shall follow, called to be "dead with Him, that we might also live with Him."

The service was concluded with a hymn, after which all went out quietly, without the usual greetings, striving to carry as far as possible the precious thoughts of the occasion.

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. V MAY 15, 1922 No. 10

OUTLOOK FROM THE WALLS OF ZION

IN the light of events transpiring since the world war, it seems more and more apparent that the great Federation of Christendom may be upon a much larger scale and much wider in extent than has been heretofore supposed. Events transpiring in every quarter of Christendom indicate that the Eastern or Greek Catholic Church that developed after the separation from Rome, in the eleventh century, is seeking to enter into the Divinely predicted alliance. Not only so, but it is encouraged to look in that direction. It was the Imperial power located at Constantinople when Justinian was emperor, that issued the decree constituting the Bishop of Rome the head over all the churches of Christendom. This decree was issued in 533 A.D., and is doubtless foretold in the symbolic vision of Revelation 13, in the words, "and the dragon [Imperial Rome] gave him [Beast, under Papacy] his power, and his seat, and great authority." (V. 2.) For about five centuries, until near 1050 A.D., the Eastern Church continued to recognize the Roman

bishop as the head of the Church, with greater or less fervor. At this latter time, however, a separation from Papacy and the Western Church occurred, since which time (until quite recently) no efforts worthy of note have been made looking toward a reunion of the Eastern Church with the Western, either with Roman Catholicism or Protestantism. The Eastern Church itself did not hold together after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, but became divided into different factions. The Pope who preceded the present one made some efforts toward bringing the Eastern Church back into the fold. His efforts, however, were not effective, and did not attract much attention, though they served to awaken an interest in the matter of reunion. *The Literary Digest* of April 1st thus refers to this matter, under the heading:

"THE PAPACY'S PROGRAM"

"Peace with Italy, reunion of the Roman Catholic Church with the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches and a return of the Anglican Church to Rome are among the possibilities envisioned by some observers in the new accession to the Papacy. Whatever the general view may be, at least one Anglican paper thinks that the road to Rome may be opened under Pope Pius XI, and at least one Russian Patriarch is said to be sympathetic toward a similar step to be taken by the Russian Orthodox Church. The new Pope stands for the liberal school, though conciliatingly he has assumed the name of the Pian, writes a correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette* (London), and the Pope's own view of the Papacy, says this writer, 'has been expressed in the words, "not national, not international, but supernatural."' Furthermore, 'it is known that Benedict's last thoughts were for that reconciliation which time has shown is more important to Italy than to the Church . . . Under the new Pope the feud, though complicated by the popular or Catholic party, promises to work itself out.'

"Speaking of the possibility of reunion with Rome, *The Church Times* (London), an Anglican Church organ, admits that there is a serious division between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, but believes the gulf is neither so serious nor so deep as some on both sides would make out. Suggesting that conferences looking to reunion be held, the Anglican journal asks:

"Is it allowable to hope anything from the election of Cardinal Ratti to the see of Peter? We cannot but think it is, though it may be that the wish is father to the thought. But we are told that he chose the name

Pius because "Pius is a name which is an omen of peace," and that he declared the blessing given outside St. Peter's, immediately after his election, was intended to extend not only to those actually present, or to those in Rome alone or in Italy, but to all nations and all races as "a pledge and a message of that universal pacification which we all so ardently desire." There is more, however, than this to make us hope. Pius XI belongs to the freemasonry of scholars, and that is always a bond of union. It is rare that religious animosities are so fierce among them as among others. Mabillon, the great French Benedictine scholar of the seventeenth century--a time of bitter religious hatred between Catholic and Protestant--always spoke of Protestants as "our separated brethren." And there are many friendships among separated brethren in the world of learning today. We must not, of course, expect too much or form hopes that are certain to be disappointed, but to assume, as some do, that reunion with Rome is out of the question, is to go far to make it so.'

"Maurice Francis Eagan in the *American Review of Reviews*, thinks that

"Another great question which will probably occupy Pius XI is the understanding as to a reunion with the Greek Orthodox Church. Russia has hitherto been the implacable enemy of Rome; the Russian Church was essentially a state church; but now that state and Church have separated, there is a party in Russia, including one of the most important of the Patriarchs, anxious to join the Roman Catholic Church, as the most stable organization eccles-iastically in the world. The question of the celibacy of the clergy would not be an invincible barrier. It did not prove to be so in the case of the Lithuanians and other schismatics; and the monastic orders, in the Russian Church, are solemnly vowed to celibacy."

The Anglican Church of England is also making efforts, not only to bring other Protestant bodies into union with itself, but to unite the Eastern Church with it. The following from the *Boston Transcript* of March 4th, a paper that gives much attention to what is going on in the religious world, thus calls the attention of its readers to these efforts on the part of both Papacy and the Church of England to gather in the Eastern Churches:

"CHURCH POLITICS IN THE NEAR EAST"

"As leaders in world Christianity, the people of the United States have a vital concern in a race for supremacy that just now is getting started. The prize is union with the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church, and the seekers for it are the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. The first-named has the advantage of the personal preferences of the new Patriarch of Constantinople and the backing of the Episcopal Church in this country, and the last-named those gained by work done by the late Pope and the internal divisions with the Eastern Orthodox Church at the moment. In the high councils of the religious field plans are making night and day. On the surface, everybody is seeking Christian unity. Beneath, there is the attempt to capture, each for itself, the alliance of the great Eastern Communions.

"Reduced to figures, as given in the tables, there are 575,000,000 Christians in the world. Of the number, according to the same tables, Roman Catholics are 288,000,000, Protestants are 167,000,000, and Eastern Catholics 121,000,000. But the figures require explanation. These two Catholic bodies enumerate population. Protestants count actual number of adult persons. If all statistics were put on the same basis of counting, the number of Christians in the world would be 825,000,000, and the number of Protestants 416,000,000.

"The new elements in the case for Christian unity, or absorption, according as one looks at it, are the Eastern Orthodox Catholic, in Russia and in the Balkan nations, the new Patriarch Melitios, elected recently and now enthroned at Constantinople, and the separation of Church and State in Russia, with the new doctrinal views entertained by the Russians toward the Anglicans and the rest of the world."

An interesting item from the same paper, in reference to the attitude of the present Pope toward the efforts of Protestants to unite, reads:

"Keen interest now centers in the course of Pope Pius XI. His predecessor told five American Episcopal leaders who called on him in the Vatican, that the Roman Catholic Church is not ready to cooperate in their unity program, *but he assured them that he would pray personally for the success they wished.*"

Bible students, who understand that one of the visions of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, as also one or more of the Old Testament prophecies, describe a general union or federation of Christendom to take place just before its fall, and in close proximity to the

establishment of Christ's Kingdom, are deeply interested in these events now transpiring in the religious world. These events, together with many others, enable the Lord's followers to, "lift up their heads, knowing that their deliverance draweth near." Furthermore, much clearer views are given on some of the closing visions of the Revelation which refer to these things that are yet to transpire before the full establishment of the Kingdom.

There seems to be good and sufficient reasons for making a more distinct, definite application of this "dragon" symbol of Rev. 13:2, since the downfall of the *Western* Roman Imperial power in A.D. 476, than has been done in the past. After the fall of the *Western* Roman Empire, with its capital city Rome, and the distribution of its power amongst the ten kingdoms of Western Europe, this divided Western power under the Papal head is evidently symbolized by the "Beast" with the ten horns, which latter for a time were controlled by Papacy. It would therefore hardly be proper to apply the "Dragon" symbol to the civil powers of the "Beast's horns" (the kingdoms which occupy the Western territory.) It would seem rather, to represent the civil powers of the Eastern Roman territory. It should be borne in mind that the Imperial power or "Dragon," after the fall of Western Rome (476 A.D.), continued on at Constantinople, although gradually waning in its influence and dominion until its fall in 1453 A.D., since which time it has, like the Western, been broken up into parts. As these divided powers are all (with the exception of Russia, since the war) allied with the Eastern apostate Church and act in cooperation with that body, we would suppose that the "Dragon" symbol is continued in these Eastern, apostate Christian governments.

In Rev. 12:15, 16, we read: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." To our understanding this vision seems to describe the absorption of the false doctrines, etc., introduced into Eastern Christendom by the people of the Eastern Empire. From the time when the "Dragon" gave power to the "Beast" (Rev. 13:2), we have no further mention of the "Dragon" symbol until its mention under the sixth Vial (Rev. 16:13), a vision that is generally understood as meeting its fulfillment at the present time. We there read of the "Dragon's" alliance with the "Beast," and the "False Prophet, the latter otherwise called in Rev. 13, "the Image of the Beast," referring, as we understand, to united Protestantism.

If we are correct in this application, the "triple alliance" of the "Dragon," the "Beast," and the "False Prophet," we should look for the fulfillment in the union, of the two divisions of the Western Church, Protestant and Roman Catholic, with the combined civil and religious powers of Eastern Christendom. All the events cited in the quotations above as now in evidence in the whole religious world, seem to be rapidly working towards the formation of this great Triple Alliance of the "Dragon," the "Beast," and the "False Prophet."

"NEXT CONFERENCE IN 1925"

"Announcement was made today that the next world conference on Faith and Order, comprising seventy-seven national churches of the world in the movement toward church unity, will be held in Washington, D. C., in May, 1925. Group conferences of the many communions represented in the world conference will be held for preparation and study in the intervening period, according to Robert H. Gardiner, secretary of the world conference, 174 Water Street, Gardiner. The work in anticipation of the world gathering will extend both to the clergy and lay men and women, even including thousands of individual congregations."--*Scranton Times*, March 22nd.

"EUROPE SEETHING LAVA, LLOYD GEORGE DECLARES"

"Genoa, April 26.--Premier Lloyd George drew an alarmist picture of Europe tonight in addressing the British and American press representatives.

"He compared Europe to seething racial lava, which, like the earth's crust, was seeking a proper level. This adjustment was full of peril.

" 'The world must recognize the fact,' he said, 'that Russia and Germany combined contain over two-thirds of the people of Europe. Their voice will be heard, and the Russo-German treaty is the first warning of it.'

" 'I wish America were here,' he exclaimed. 'Some people think we want the United States for some selfish purpose. This is not true; we want America because she exercises a peculiar authority.

" 'America could exercise an influence no other country could command. With the prestige which comes from her independent position, she would come with the voice of peace.

"But America is not here, so Europe must do her best to solve the problems in her own way!

"Mr. Lloyd George gave it as his opinion that the disorganization of Europe would affect the entire world, including the United States. He was amazed at people who ignored the portentous fact facing Europe today.

"Unless Europe reorganizes--in other words, unless the Genoa conference succeeded in arranging a pact of peace--he was confident that in his own life, certainly in the life of younger men present, Europe would again welter in blood.

"We must realize that Europe is not on good terms and that storms are arising which we must deal with."--*New York American*, April 27, 1922.

YOUR PRECIOUS FAITH

[Reprint from Pastor Russell]

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."--1 Pet. 1:7.

FAITH has in it the two elements of intellectual assurance and heart reliance. The former is faith in the abstract sense; the latter is its concrete form. It is in this latter, fullest sense we read that, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. 10:10.) Both the head and the heart--the intellect and the affections--are necessary to that faith without which it is "impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6); though many fancy they have faith when they have only one of its essential elements. With some it is all emotion; with others it is all intellectuality; but neither of these can stand the tests of fiery ordeal;

they must abide together if they are to endure to the end and be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

An intellectual grasp of the fundamental principles of Divine Truth--viz., of the existence of a personal, intelligent God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and of His purpose and plan of redemption through His only begotten and well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ--constitutes the *foundation* of faith; while trust and reliance to the extent of His promises, upon the personal God who is the author of our being and who, as a Father, invites the implicit confidence and love of His children, make up the *superstructure* of our faith.

The trial of our faith to which the Lord and the Apostles refer is therefore a trial, not only of our intellectual recognition of Divine Truth, but also of our heart reliance upon God. In both respects every true child of God will find his faith severely tried, and, as a soldier of Christ, let him not fail to be armed for the conflict. If an attack is made upon the intellectual foundation of our faith we should see to it that we have a "Thus saith the Lord" for every item of our belief. Let the Word of God settle every question, and let no human philosophies, however ingenious, lead us into the labyrinths of error; for if the foundations of faith become unsettled, the superstructure cannot stand when the winds and the floods of adversity and temptation beat against it. Doubt and fear will cause it to tremble, and when it is thus weakened the vigilant Adversary will surely send a blast of temptation against it, and great will be the soul's peril.

Let us, therefore, look well to the foundations of our faith--study the doctrine and get a clear intellectual conception of every element of Divine Truth which the inspired Word presents to the people of God; let us become rooted, grounded, settled, established in the faith, the doctrines of God, and hold them fast; they are the Divine credentials; and let us give earnest heed to them, lest at any time we should let them slip.--Heb. 2:1.

But having the doctrines clearly comprehended as Foundations of faith, we need also to look well to the superstructure of heart reliance, which is really in greater danger from storms and floods than are the foundations, being more constantly exposed. The Apostle Peter tells us that a tried, proved faith, a faith that has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and come off victorious, is very precious in the sight of God. That is, that every time we pass through a conflict and still retain, not only the Truth, but also, our confidence in God and reliance upon His promises

in the dark as well as in the light, our integrity of heart and of purpose, and our zeal for Truth and righteousness, our characters have grown stronger, more symmetrical and more Christlike, and hence more pleasing to God, who is thus subjecting us to discipline for this very thing.

Therefore, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12, 13.) It is worthy of notice here that special reference is made, not to the tests of intellectual belief brought about by the presentation of false doctrine, but to reproaches and persecution for Christ's sake, either for adherence to His doctrines, or conformity to His righteousness; for, the Apostle adds, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." He warns us to take heed only that we suffer not as evil-doers, "Yet," he says, "if any man suffer as a Christian [that is, either for Christian principles or Christian doctrine], let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf."

The Prophet Daniel also says that particularly in this time of the end, "many shall be purified and made white and *tried*;" and Malachi (3:2, 3) compares the trials of this time to the "refiner's fire" and to "fuller's soap," which are designed to refine and purify the Lord's people. The Apostle Paul urges that we fight the good fight of faith, and patiently endure afflictions to the end. (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3.) And many are the words of consolation and blessed comfort offered by the Psalmist, and others to the tempest-tossed and suffering people of God.--See Psa. 77:1-14; 116:1-14; 34:19; 31:24; 2 Thes. 3:3.

Are you then, dear brother or sister, hard pressed, on every side with temptations to doubt that God's protection, love and care are *yours*, that His precious promises belong to you? Have you grown discouraged and disheartened? Do the foes seem too many and too strong for you? Do the reproaches come with crushing weight, and do the clouds hang heavy over your seemingly defenseless head? Ah, it is just here that faith must claim her victory! Is it not promised, "This is the victory that overcometh, . . . even your faith"? It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the Truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved: summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance;

hold fast to your hope; call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and "cast not away our confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength"; "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," and faith has gained her victory. Then in due time the Lord's hand will be recognized in making all things work together for good to you according to His promise. This proof of your faith, says, Peter, is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire.

THE LONG PROMISED REGATHERING OF ISRAEL - PART 1

A SIGN OF THE END OF GENTILE DOMINION

"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. . . 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."--Jer. 31:7-10.

PART I

JEREMIAH was called as a prophet when but a youth, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, which was about 627 B.C. His mission as a prophet continued for about forty years, until the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and its Temple, about 587 B.C. While the book of Jeremiah contains exhortations and warnings to the kings and people of Judah, it is made up largely of prophecies concerning God's judgments upon the kingdom of Judah, as also upon the nations that oppressed both Israel and Judah. It also deals considerably with the return from the captivity in Babylon; the coming of the Messiah; and of a second return to their land in the (from the time the prophecies were uttered) far distant future--in the latter days. This return is to be that of a gathering from among all the nations in which they have been scattered since 70 A.D. The exhortations and prophecies were uttered at different periods in the life of Jeremiah, and are not arranged in chronological order. They were probably collated before his death, and re-arranged according to their subjects. Chapters 30 and 31 are understood by scholars to have formed a distinct prophecy, the subject matter of which relates to our own days. An understanding of this prophecy is of much importance in enabling us

to discern the signs of the times, and to realize our close proximity to the establishment of the Kingdom of Messiah. The prophecy has reference not only to Judah, but to Israel as well. The words were dictated by Jehovah Himself: "Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." "These are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah."--Jer. 30:1, 4.

The prophecy opens with a prediction concerning their final trouble, and while of brief duration, it will be more dreadful than any they have ever yet experienced. It is called the "time of Jacob's trouble." The prophecy goes on to say that they "shall be saved out of it;" and that it is still in the future is seen from the words: "For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."--Jer. 30:8, 9.

That this great trouble occurs after they have returned to their land, and have become prosperous as a nation, and is caused by an invasion of their country by allied hordes, who are seeking spoil and plunder, is seen by a reference to Ezek. 38 and 39. That it refers to the time when the present order will be overthrown and when Messiah's Kingdom shall be in process of establishment, is seen in the words which follow: "Therefore fear thou not, O My servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. 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 I will not leave thee altogether unpunished."--Jer. 30:10, 11.

THE JEWISH RACE DISTINCT FROM ALL OTHER PEOPLES

For over twenty-five centuries now, the Jewish race have been subject to one or another of the nations of the world. For over eighteen hundred years, they have been scattered over the face of the whole earth, oppressed, persecuted, despised and unmercifully treated; and yet they still exist, as "distinct in manners, feelings and hopes, as when Moses was their leader, and Aaron was their priest. Since God shook them out of their ancient dwelling places, nations, thrones, and kingdoms have risen, flourished, fallen, and lost their proud subjects in

the ever-varying stream of human affairs; but Israel still stands apart, unshaken by earth's mutations, with the accents of David and Isaiah still on the people's lips, and still looking for the promised Shiloh, to take them back in triumph to their fatherland. The Christian Church herself, glorious as she is in her list of martyrs and attainments of grace and truth, has, since then, been depressed, diminished, enfeebled, by violence and defections which she has found it hard to survive; but the house of Judah, with all their wrongs and spoilations, have only strengthened with their trials, whilst all the bitterness of their great cup of sorrow has never made them forget that they were, Hebrews, or lessened the tenacity with which they cling to God's peculiar covenant with them. . . . Popes, councils, bishops, monks, kings and peoples seemed equally enraged against them, and equally determined on their extermination. To effect this, every expedient has been tried, but all have failed." Their enemies are represented as saying: "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." (Psa. 83:4.) Like their experiences in Egypt in their early history, the more they have been afflicted, the more they have multiplied and grown.

The prophecy we are considering, however, informs us that their troubles would end; that "it shall come to pass, that like as I [Jehovah] 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": and these words are followed by a statement of the institution of a new covenant with them--"with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake; . . . but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, 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."--Jer. 31:28-34.

"GOD HATH NOT CAST AWAY HIS PEOPLE"

Next in the order of the prophecy follows a most remarkable utterance by Jehovah--an utterance that has comforted and encouraged the true and loyal Israelite for over twenty-five hundred years of their sad and

checkered history--words which it would be well for the Church of God, as well as the nations, to make note of carefully, lest they be, as the inspired Apostle Paul has said, "wise in their own conceits," and become blind concerning coming events. The utterance we quote entire: "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: 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. 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. 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. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goeth. 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."--Jer. 31:35-40.

LITERAL FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISES

David Barron, a noted convert to Christianity, in a reply to some expositors who vainly attempt what is called a spiritualizing of these prophecies concerning Israel, making Israel and Zion to mean the Church, and the land to signify heaven, has said: "I confess this system of interpretation has no consistency about it, and makes the Word of God the most meaningless and unintelligible book in the world. For instance, it says here, 'I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, . . . and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers.' If Israel be the Church, who is Judah? If Judah be the Church, who is Israel? and which the captivity the Church has endured? and where is the land from which the Church has been driven out, and to which it will return?"

This intelligent Jewish Christian next proceeds to quote the Scripture we have above cited, and adds: "And what will our allegorical interpretations make of the hill Gareb, and Goath, and the brook Kidron? Now all these are known to me in the environs of the literal Jerusalem in Canaan; but I confess some difficulty in locating them in heavenly places. If Israel does not mean Israel, and 'the land God gave their fathers,' does not mean Palestine, then I do not know what it

means. The announcement is, 'He who scattered Israel, to the Jews, 'scattered and felled,' but when, in the same sentence, a gathering of the same people is mentioned--Oh, no, this is the gathering of spiritual Israel. What consistency or honesty, I pray, is there in such interpretations?"

Another has said: "To what may we attribute the loose system of interpreting the language of the Psalms and Prophets, and the extravagant expectations of universal conversion of the world by the preaching of the Gospel, which may be observed in many Christian writers? To nothing so much, I believe, as to the habit of inaccurately interpreting the word Israel, and the consequent application of promises to the Gentile churches with which they have nothing to do. The least errors in theology always bear their fruit. Never does man take up incorrect principle of interpreting Scripture, without that principle entailing awkward consequences, and coloring the whole tone of his religion.

"I do not deny that Israel was a peculiar typical people, and that God's relations to Israel were meant to be a type of relations to His believing people all over the world. I do not forget that it is written, 'As face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man' (Prov. 27:19), and that whatever spiritual truths are taught in prophecy concerning Israelitish hearts, are applicable to the hearts of Gentiles. I would have it most distinctly understood that God's dealings with individual Jews and Gentiles are precisely one and the same. Without repentance, faith in Christ, and holiness of heart, no individual Jew or Gentile shall ever be saved. What I protest against is, the habit of allegorizing plain sayings of the Word of God concerning the future history of the *nation* Israel, and explaining away the fullness of their contents in order to accommodate them to the Gentile Church. I believe the habit to be unwarranted by anything in Scripture, and to draw after it a long train of evil consequences."-*Scattered and Gathered*--BISHOP RYLE.

"YOU ONLY HAVE I KNOWN"

Referring especially to our text, we note that the words are not so much addressed to Israel as to the Gentile nations: "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye, *nations*. . . . He that scattered Israel will gather him." (V. 10.) While it is said that the Lord was the One who scattered Israel and Judah, it should be kept in mind that it was accomplished in His overruling providence. It was on account of their disobedience and apostasy from His covenant that they were punished. He simply

withdrew, as He said He would, His protecting care and favor from them thus *permitting* the great nations of the earth to be His instruments in executing His chastening judgments. They were, in the very beginning of their history, given promises of His protecting care over them. In their early history they experienced His wonderful power, in their deliverance from Egypt's bondage. Many times during the first ten centuries of their history, up to the end of the period of their kings, did they experience wonderful deliverances; notwithstanding all this, they departed more and more from His ordinances and precepts, relapsing into the grossest idolatry, until at last the judgments could no longer be stayed, and they began to experience disaster after disaster, and defeat after defeat, at the hand of their foes. After Solomon's death, because of oppressive taxation, the nation was divided, ten of the tribes choosing Jeroboam as their king and occupying the northern part of the land, and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin continuing under Rehoboam, Solomon's son, and dwelling in the southern part. About 745 B.C., the judgments began to fall on the Northern Kingdom, and in a little more than half a century, the people of this part of the kingdom were all carried away into captivity, and the land was for a time laid desolate, until finally, strangers, foreigners, were settled in it. For about one hundred and sixty years after the captivity of Israel, the Southern Kingdom of Judah continued, and then, after the death of the good king Josiah, the predicted judgments began to fall upon Judah.

Jehoahaz, the youngest son of Josiah, was placed upon the throne by the people. This was about 609 B.C. Jehoahaz occupied the throne but three months, when the king of Egypt came against Jerusalem and took Jehoahaz a prisoner to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, the oldest son of Josiah, was next placed upon the throne by the king of Egypt as his tributary and his name was changed to Jehoiakim. In his (Jehoiakim's) third year, Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem, captured the city, and made Jehoiakim his vassal. At this time the Temple was partially despoiled, and some of the most intelligent of the nobles and princes, among whom was Daniel, were carried away captive to Babylon. After three years Jehoiakim rebelled against Jehovah's decree that he should serve Nebuchadnezzar, and in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year, he came again against the city. At this time Jehoiakim suffered an ignominious death, and Jehoiachin, his son, was placed upon the throne. The narrative of the events seems to imply that after a brief period of three months, Nebuchadnezzar, not willing to trust Jehoiachin's faithfulness to serve him, came again to Jerusalem, and Jehoiachin and his mother voluntarily gave themselves up and were carried away to Babylon and placed in prison, where he remained for thirty-seven years. This is called the great captivity. It occurred about 598 B.C. Of it we read, that Nebuchadnezzar "carried out thence all

the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he I carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land: those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand; all that were strong and apt for war, even them, the king of Babylon brought captives to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah."--2 Kings 24:11-17.

From the words of Jeremiah 27:12-15, we learn that had Zedekiah and the people obeyed the words of Jehovah and continued to serve the king of Babylon for the remaining period of the seventy years (about fifty-one all told), they would have been permitted to remain in their land; but we are informed that Zedekiah refused to obey the Lord's word, and rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar, he again came up against the city, captured it, destroyed both it and the Temple, and carried Zedekiah and the remainder of the people captives to Babylon. This was about the year 587 B.C. This completed God's judgments for the time, and since that event, with the exception of one brief period, in the days of the Maccabees, they have been subject to the nations.

In 536 B. C. about 43,600 returned to their land, and after a delay of about sixteen years, because of a wrong condition of heart before the Lord, they built their Temple and city, and continued to dwell there until the year 70 A.D., when, because of their rejection of their Messiah, their city was taken by the Romans, their beautiful Temple again destroyed, and soon after they were dispersed and scattered among the nations of the earth. Their city and land continued in possession of the Romans, except for one brief period when the Persians captured it, until 637 A.D., at which time the city was taken possession of by the Mohammedan power and the celebrated Mosque of Omar was erected on the very site of Solomon's Temple, where it remains to this day.

All these events, with very many detailed particulars, were foretold by Moses and other of the Prophets, including Jeremiah. The early Church was made up of a few, comparatively, Jewish converts, who were enabled to see in Jesus of Nazareth, their long promised Messiah.

Since that time, only a few of the nation have been able to see that the crucified One was the Messiah, the Savior of the world. In the language of one of their own countrymen, the Apostle Paul, only a remnant of them were saved, and came out from under their covenant of bondage into the liberty of the sons of God, to be joint-heirs with the Redeemer in His heavenly Kingdom, soon now, we believe, to be established over the world.

"HE THAT SCATTERETH ISRAEL WILL GATHER HIM"

While it is generally admitted by students of the prophetic Scriptures that all these predictions concerning the scattering of this people among the nations of the earth were the subject of much of Old Testament prophecy, yet it is not so generally admitted that they shall again be gathered and restored as a nation to their land, and possess it forever. Such need to read more carefully Jehovah's message to the nations: "Hear the word of the Lord, *O ye nations*, and declare it in the isles afar off, He that scattered Israel will gather him." (Jer. 31:10.) The same God who pronounced these manifold judgments upon them and permitted the nations to be the unconscious executors of His wrath--the rod of chastening for them--not only predicted and promised their gathering again, but also pronounced judgment upon the nations who have so mercilessly and cruelly mistreated them. Concerning the first of these nations, He said: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, . . . for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.--Jer. 25:12-13. See also Jer. 50 and 51.

A prophecy that applies to all the nations that have despoiled Jerusalem and made desolate the land of Palestine, is recorded in Jer. 25:15-33. A portion of this prophecy reads: "For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by My name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; 'for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations; He will, plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the

other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." (Vs. 29-33.) There can hardly be any doubt that the world war of 1914-1918, the most colossal tragedy the world has ever witnessed, came the nearest to fulfilling this solemn prediction; yet even this dreadful trouble comes considerably short of meeting all the requirements.

As we have noted, the judgments on the nation of Israel began to come on the ten-tribe kingdom first, and they next fell upon Judah. The judgments upon the four great empires that scattered Israel, Judah and Jerusalem, began with Babylon, and one by one the three great empires that succeeded Babylon and oppressed to a greater or less extent the nation of Israel, fell under the providential overruling judgments of the God of Israel.

THE FOUR "UNTILS"

A noted writer on prophecy has most eloquently expatiated on the remarkable preservation of the Jewish race, and also their future restoration and conversion to Christ: "Persecution which would have blotted out any other nation seems in their case to have been so blended and tempered with Divine preservatives, that, like the symbol of their Jehovah, the burning bush, they present the astonishing spectacle of a nation always girdled about with the fires of judgment, but never consumed. Scattered like dust to the four winds, they have yet preserved their national unity as firm and compact as a rock; driven out of their land, and kept from it by an inexorable decree, they have beheld their supplanters guarding with scrupulous care their most sacred shrines, as though unconsciously waiting to surrender them back to them on the expiration of their lease; so utterly homeless that they have had no city or foot of land for centuries which they could call their own, they have nevertheless been the bankers of the world, as though destined always to have on deposit the wealth needful for restoring the desolations of Zion, if the hour for such restoration should come.

"This mingling of mercy and misfortune in their career has constituted the Jewish race the paradox and miracle of modern, history. It has awakened a constant curiosity and speculation in the minds of the thoughtful of their future. Incomparably dark as has been their history for eighteen hundred years, men have been constrained to see in that darkness, the shadow of Jehovah's hand turned over them for their protection and preservation! And in the very sharpness of the

judgments that have overtaken them, not a few have discerned the presage of a future glory far surpassing anything in the past.

"Have we thought what an undertone of hope there is even in the Divine condemnations of the Jews? The single word '*until*' constitutes a kind of epitomized prophecy of Israel's restoration. The picture which our Lord gives in the Gospels of the destruction of the Holy City and the dispersion of the Jews is one of the darkest in all the Scriptures. What a massing of the shadows of doom; what a crowding together of successive chapters of woe! And yet, as we reach the middle of that sentence which summarizes whole centuries of Divine retribution, 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, we are conscious of a certain powerful relief from the strain that has been put upon us. '*Until*'-- amid the dense surrounding darkness, this one word fairly gleams with the promise of a better future for the suffering race. It is only a hint, an intimation, that is given us; but it is so pregnant with the hidden light of hope, that it impels us instinctively to fix an end to the desolations of Zion. So in our Lord's pathetic farewell to the Temple, after His rejection, there is the same refrain, 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate'; and 'Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not, see Me, *until* the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' *Until* the time come--here certainly is a flash of light upon the dark prediction of Israel's desertion. It is but a word again; but it is heavy with the burden of prophetic expectation. Next to the silence which says nothing contrary to our hope, the hint which barely breaks the silence in its favor is the most significant. And this is all we have here; but how much is in it!

"In St. Paul's discourse upon the hardening and healing of his people, like phraseology occurs, 'Blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until* the fullness of the Gentiles come in.' Thus again and again, this word *until*' is heard, like a cadence in the solemn strain of the Divine threatening in which Jehovah's voice seems to drop, for a moment from the stern tones: of anger and imprecation', to those of His 'old love,' and tenderness.

"O then that I
Might live, and see the olive bear
Her proper branches, which now lie
Scattered each where,
And without root and sap decay,

Cast by the husbandman away,
And sure it is not far!

"For surely He
Who loved the world so as to give
His only Son to make us free,
Whose Spirit too, doth mourn and grieve
To see man lost, will, for old love,
From your hearts this veil remove.'

--Henry Vaughan, 1654.

"THEY SHALL LOOK UPON HIM WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED"

"But let it not be supposed that we have in the New Testament only inspired hints and implications concerning Israel's restoration. The eleventh chapter of Romans is a compact and well-reasoned argument upon this theme, conducting us step by step from sorrowful promise to triumphant conclusion. '*Hath God cast away His people?*' is the question considered. '*God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew,*' is the conclusion reached. And this upon two grounds present fact and future fulfillment. Though the *nation* has been cut off, there is '*a remnant, according to the election of grace,*' who have believed on Christ to their salvation, and therefore have been preserved in the favor and fellowship of God; while on the other hand, those remaining outside this remnant have been hardened; '*the rest were blinded.*' But concerning this rejected majority, there is hope, because of the sure covenant of God. And though like the branches of an olive tree, they have been broken off, we are told first, that, '*God is able to graft them in again*'; and a little later after, '*How much more shall these which be natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?*' Not only possibility, but certainty, of Israel's restoration is thus predicated. And the argument culminates in the grand conclusion, '*And so all Israel shall be saved*'--an elect and individual redemption, at last succeeded by a national and complete redemption. And this full recovery, it will be observed, is in connection with the second coming of Christ in, glory. As it is written: '*There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer.*' and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.' . . .

"Behold, He cometh with clouds,' and every eye shall see Him, *and they also that pierced Him*, and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him.' (Rev 1:7, R.V.) If, with most expositors, we must understand, '*the tribes*' in this instance to mean the kindreds and peoples of the world, we cannot so interpret the Old Testament prophecy of which this is a quotation. In the profound mourning, so graphically pictured by Zechariah, in which 'every family apart,' is seen sobbing out uncontrollable grief, the scent is by general consent, in the Holy Land, and the subjects the house of Israel. And what has come to pass? The bounds of another prophetic '*until*' have been attained for Jerusalem. 'Upon the land of my people' God threatened thorns and briers, forsaken palaces and deserted towers, '*until the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high.*' (Isa. 32:15.) That time has now been reached, and the word which God spoke by the mouth of Zechariah is fulfilled: 'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplications; *and they shall look upon Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him*, as one mourneth for his own son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one in bitterness for his first-born.' The point of departure at last becomes the point of return. The wounds of Jesus were the death sentence upon national Israel; and now they become the source of life to that long-rejected people. For immediately upon the prediction of their mourning for Him whom they pierced, it is added: 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness.'

"Nationally or individually, there is but one way of salvation for Israel--the way of the Cross; the one way of repentance--a total reversal of attitude towards the Nazarene."--A. J. GORDAN.

(To be continued)

JEHOIAKIM TRIES TO DESTROY GOD'S WORD

--JUNE 4--JEREMIAH 36--

Golden Text.--"The word of our God shall stand forever."--Isa. 40:8.

OUR lesson has to do with the time when Jeremiah was one of the principal prophets in the land, who had been hindered for some time

from prophesying publicly, but, as was noted in a previous lesson, under the Lord's guidance he wrote out his prophecy respecting the coming judgments and chastisements upon the people of Judea, his scribe being Baruch. When it was finished it was read before certain prominent people of Jerusalem and so deeply impressed them that they desired that the matter should be brought to the king's attention. Apparently they were friendly to the Prophet and the scribe, and suggested the necessity for their concealment, lest the king should be angry with the prophecy and should seek to do them injury. King Jehoiakim, not satisfied with the general report given him respecting Jeremiah's prophecy, demanded to see the document itself, and had his own scribe read it before him. The king was unmoved by the message, and after hearing the contents of three of the columns of the manuscript he took his scribe's penknife and cut them off and cast them into the fire before him, and so he continued to do with the remainder until the entire manuscript was read and destroyed. Thus he emphasized his determination to take no counsel from the Lord, or we might say that he evidenced his lack of faith in the Lord and his disregard for His Word.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

The king ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and his scribe, but, in harmony with the Lord's providences, they had already secreted themselves and were not found. In their seclusion they learned of the destruction of the manuscript, and prepared another statement of the prophecy, which we are informed had certain further additions, and this constitutes the book of Jeremiah as found in our Bibles. This gives us a little view of the manner in which the Bible came into existence piece by piece under the Lord's supervision. Doubtless the first manuscript delivered to the king was more particularly in respect to his own time and affairs. This served its purpose, and then the larger and fuller book of Jeremiah's prophecy, as we now have it, was prepared--not especially for the people of that time, but, as the Apostle Peter points out, it was designed for the instruction and edification of the Gospel Church. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Pet. 1:12.) Even those things which were applicable in some measure to Jeremiah's day and to Jehoiakim and to the king of Babylon were, as we have seen, of twofold significance--applying not only to the literal Babylon of that time but also to the mystic Babylon of this Gospel Age.

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

As Jehoiakim found it in the end vain to fight against God, and that burning the words of Jeremiah did not destroy nor render null and void his prophecy, so others are finding the matter to this day. Roman Catholics have apparently long been opponents of the Word of God, the Bible, and under their direction considerable Bible burning has been done. History tells us that the first edition of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament was bought up in the book stores of London, etc., and burned. Indeed, in very recent years we have heard of similar proceedings in other countries. The Bible may be set down as the strongest foe of ignorance, superstition and every wrong doing: it is no wonder, therefore, that many hate the book.

It would not do for Roman Catholics to ignore the Bible altogether, since in considerable measure their religious system is based upon its teachings; hence they have from time to time issued various editions of the Bible, various translations, though none of these were ever issued by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church as a whole, but merely by local Bishops. It would not be claimed by any that there is a wide discrepancy between the teachings of the popular Douay edition of the Bible used by Roman Catholics and the common English version of the same books. The Catholic version is supplied with elaborate notes on the Scriptures, supposed to safeguard the latter from heresies, while the Protestant version is usually published without note or comment except the marginal readings respecting the translation.

In our day a peculiar anomaly is presented: the Roman Catholic Church, which through her popes has denounced Bible Societies as being of the devil, has within the last few years through its councils, and also through the pope's encyclical letters to the bishops of America, advocated the reading of the Scriptures by its people, and urged that the priesthood shall encourage this, reading. Probably this is merely for effect, merely to counteract the past tendencies of the Church, and to seem to imply that Papacy is loyal to the Scriptures. As a matter of fact, Roman Catholics tell us that the priests do not urge the reading of the Scriptures, but when inquired of on the subject treat the matter lightly and rather discourage it. Of course only a Douay version is permitted at all, and it only to the educated, whom it would be unwise to refuse. Furthermore, the price of the Catholic edition is rather prohibitive so far as the poor are concerned.

THE BIBLE-BURNING SPIRIT

Those whose eyes of understanding are open have doubtless noticed a peculiar change of sentiment amongst Protestants respecting the Bible. Some are known as higher critics, who consider their own judgments respecting all Biblical matters to be far superior to the opinions and testimonies of the Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. Egotistical and self-confident, they assume to be much wiser than is written, yet hold that it is not well to break entirely with the Bible because it still, has a considerable hold upon many good people, and by rejecting it in toto they would not only lose the respect of these good people, but also lose their support., Others still hold to the Bible as a fetich, a charm, a book of good luck, which they like to have upon their parlor tables and without which in the house they would not feel entirely safe; they regard it as the Word of God, but do not understand it themselves nor do they believe that others understand it. They have a special interest in and regard for Churchianity, especially for the branch of it to which they have given adherence, and they somehow realize that an investigation of the Bible might undermine the influence of Churchianity and make its students independent of those systems of man which have grown so grandly influential in social and financial circles. These would not burn the Bible itself, but would be in full sympathy with the burning of expositions which would remove the dust and smoke of superstition from the Word of God and let its true light and beauty shine forth.

Let us, dear friends, realize more and more that we cannot turn aside the Divine Plan by our puny oppositions if we were so disposed, and let us get into such heart harmony with the Lord, let us exercise such faith toward Him, that nothing will be farther from our thoughts than to substitute a plan of our own for His, or in any wise to alter, change, or amend the gracious Plan, which, rightly seen, includes all the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love and wisdom Divine. Let us not fight against God, and be overwhelmed and suffer loss of position if not loss of life eternal. Let us on the contrary receive the great blessing which comes to all those who are children of the light, who receive it into good and honest hearts, and who rejoice in it.

THE GREATEST OF BOOKS

Many of the world's best and noblest characters have acknowledged the grandeur of God's Book, even those who, like Presidents Lincoln and Grant, were not themselves professedly consecrated Christians. We are all familiar with General Grant's declaration that he esteemed the Bible to be the cornerstone of the liberties enjoyed in the United

States. President Lincoln said, "Take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a better man." Coleridge said, "The words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being than all other books put together." John Ruskin said, "Whatever I have done in my life has simply been due to the fact that when I was a child my mother daily read with me a part of the Bible, and daily made me learn a part of it by heart." Huxley, the agnostic scientist, declared, "The Bible has been the Magna Charta of the poor and the distressed." Gladstone declared, "What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply?" Theodore Roosevelt said, "If we read the Bible right, we read a book which teaches us to try to make things better in this world."

These testimonies come to us from the outside rather than from the inside--mainly from those who understood very little of the true Divine Plan of the Ages. How much deeper and more meaningful is the testimony of our hearts to the value of this book as we come, step by step, to a proper appreciation of the glorious and wonderful words of life which it contains and the true meaning of its exceeding great and precious promises, by which in the Lord's Plan it is designed that a little flock may become partakers of the Divine nature and be prepared to be the Lord's instruments for the blessing eventually of all the families of the earth.

THE BIBLE INDESTRUCTIBLE

In an early edition of Wycliffe's Bible there was a frontispiece representing a fire of true Christianity against which its enemies, Satan, the pope, and infidelity, were blowing with all their might, trying to put it out; but the more they put themselves out of breath, the more brightly did the fire burn. This is still true. The enemies of the Lord's Word, whether great or small, those who do their utmost against the spread of the Truth and to oppose the Helps for Bible Study which the Lord sends forth from time to time, are really in some respects at least spreading the flame of the Truth. We may be sure that eventually the object, the purpose, of the Divine Word will be accomplished--the elect Church will be called, schooled, prepared for the Kingdom and gathered into it to do the work promised, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

As illustrating that the Bible has stood the test of time where other books have failed, we note the fact that while other books have no

particular opposition, no attempts having been made to destroy them, nevertheless they sink out of sight--while the Bible, with all the opposition which has been brought against it for centuries, is more widely circulated today than ever. It is estimated that "there are more than a million volumes in the imperial library at Paris gathered in since the fourteenth century; yet of this immense catalogue, 700,000 are out of print. . . . Mere fragments of all the literary wealth of Greece and Rome have made their way down the centuries, while the riches of Solomon and David, Moses, prophets, scribes, have held their steady place." "Not a manuscript of the classics is a thousand years old, but at least fifty manuscripts of the Greek New Testament are more than one thousand years old."

Our experience in the study of the Word in these days, the new beauties and rich depths of the Divine wisdom, love and power which our wondering hearts behold, are illustrated well by the experiences of the French electrician, Ampere. He was shortsighted without being aware of it. When he became conscious of his defect of vision, through the casual use of a friend's eye-glasses, he burst into tears as he realized how much he had missed throughout his life of the wonderful beauty of the world around him.

JEREMIAH CAST INTO PRISON

--JUNE 11--JER. 37:1--38:13--

Golden Text.--"Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah."--Jer. 1:8.

INCIDENTS of our last lesson--the writing of his prophecy, etc.--brought the Prophet Jeremiah into special prominence. Our present lesson finds him in the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of the house of David to sit upon the throne; the one of whom it is written, "O thou profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose time is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown. . . . I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."--Ezek. 21:25-27.

How accurately this prophecy has been fulfilled! With the captivity of Zedekiah the kingdom of David was overturned but not destroyed. To all human appearances it has been destroyed, for no heir of his has occupied the throne of Israel from Zedekiah's day to the present time--

-over twenty-five hundred years. If Israel were today exalted to place and power in the world, and desired to re-establish the kingdom of David, no Jew could prove his title to the throne as being of the lineage of David. All such records have long been lost. There is just one who could claim title to that throne, namely, He who was the man Christ Jesus. Born of Mary, He was of the seed of David, and adopted by Joseph, who was of the same stock. Although He surrendered His life as a ransom for sinners, He was and still is heir of all the promises made to Abraham and to David, and soon, according to the Scriptures, will take to Himself His power and great glory and reign as the antitypical David upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord, to bless Israel and every nation, people and tongue.

The long interregnum of 2520 years, the "seven times" of Israel's disfavor and of Gentile rule, will soon have run their course and usher in the glories of the Kingdom of God. The overturning of the diadem was not to be perpetual, but "until He come whose right it is." This was not completely fulfilled in our Lord Jesus at His First Advent. True, He came to be a King, but the great Prophet, Priest and King of the Divine Plan was not the man Christ Jesus, but the glorified Christ Jesus the Head, and the Church, the members of His Body. He whose right it is by Divine sanction is selecting from amongst His brethren a little flock to be His associates, and this Gospel Age is the period of their testing and development.

THE REMOVAL OF THE DIADEM

The captivity of the Jews was in three sections: the first included Daniel and others with the king, Jehoiakim. The latter was left in charge over the Jews as a vassal king for about eight years. Following his ignominious death, his son, Jehoiachin, was placed on the throne, on the same footing as his father--i.e., to be subservient to the king of Babylon. He reigned for only three months, when, because of his rebellion against the king of Babylon, the second captivity took place, and he was carried away. In fact, this was by far the largest of the captivities. The king of Babylon then placed Zedekiah in control as his vassal under tribute, but on account of the latter's treachery and league with Egypt, nine years later, the Babylonian army came again against Jerusalem and besieged it. Thus the third and final captivity, famine and pestilence, resulted, and about two years later, the city of Jerusalem was captured and utterly destroyed, and King Zedekiah, with his eyes put out, was taken a prisoner to Babylon, with all the people except a few of the very poorest and least competent. Jeremiah,

given his liberty, chose to remain with the poor of the land who subsequently went down into Egypt, so that Jerusalem and the country round about lay desolate, much of the time without inhabitants, for seventy years.

OBEYING GOD, OPPOSED BY MAN

Our lesson particularly relates to the period at the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar's army. Jeremiah had prophesied the success of the enemy and recommended the Israelites to surrender speedily and save themselves from the great trouble, famine, etc., which otherwise would surely come upon them. He pointed out that their troubles were the result of disobedience to God, and that the proper course now was to repent and accept the situation and learn the lesson and profit thereby.

Certain princes of the kingdom soon learned of the prophesying and appealed to the king that it must be stopped, as it had a demoralizing effect upon the defenders in proportion as the prophecy was believed they requested the death of Jeremiah and the king responded that the matter should be in their hands. But perhaps fearful of the consequences of the act, or perhaps deterred by the Lord's providence, instead of putting Jeremiah to death, they put him into a dungeon, which was probably a water cistern. Its bottom was foul with accumulated mud, and the Prophet sank into this and would soon have perished of hunger had it not been for the interposition of a colored man, an Ethiopian eunuch, one of the king's servants, who appealed to the king against the injustice and was commissioned to take Jeremiah out from the dungeon or cistern by means of cords, his tender heartedness and care for the Prophet being indicated also by his supplying cast-off rags to keep the ropes from cutting the Prophet's body.

Surely we may conclude that this Ethiopian of kindly heart was used of the Lord in this emergency; that whilst the Lord could have delivered His prophet with equal facility in some other manner, He was pleased to use a person of kindly heart who was at hand. And yet we have people of sufficient intelligence to write books who claim that the "Negro is a Beast," and that he is everywhere condemned in the Scriptures. This Ethiopian evidently had a cleaner heart than the majority of the chief men in Israel--a heart much nearer to the Divine likeness than theirs. Similarly, an Ethiopian eunuch, a Jewish proselyte, was amongst the first to be established and blessed with the

Gospel, under the special providence of God, through the ministries of Philip.--Acts 8:27- 38.

Jeremiah's experiences illustrated a general principle, namely, that where the will of God and the plans of man conflict, those who are faithful to God are likely to be in the minority and to be considered public enemies, because out of accord with those who are out of harmony with the Lord and His Plan. It was this that brought upon Jeremiah his imprisonment, as it has brought upon the Lord's people of every age the frowns and opposition and persecution of those who are not the Lord's faithful people, of those who are not guided by the Divine counsel, but are walking in their own ways under the leadership of the prince of this world.

"IN IGNORANCE YE DID IT"

Since Satan is still the prince of this world, it is reasonable to suppose that those who are in accord with him today will be found similarly opposed to God, opposed to all who are loyal to the teachings of His Word. It is for this reason that the Scriptures assure us that we must expect to suffer now, to be misunderstood, misrepresented--"Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world."

Looking back all through the Gospel Age, from the days of Jesus until now, we find that those who have been loyal and faithful to Him in every time have been called upon to prove, to witness, to testify to their faithfulness to the Lord by the trials and difficulties which they would endure for His sake. And this expression, "for His sake," means much the same today as it did in the day of Jeremiah, namely, for the sake of the Word of the Lord. It was because Jeremiah was faithful to the Lord's message and the others unfaithful to it that they persecuted him. And this is still the case: the Word of the Lord is His representative in the world still. Our Lord placed Himself and His Word side by side when He said, "He who is ashamed of Me and My Word, of him will I also be ashamed."

The test is upon us today as it has been upon the Lord's people in the past. Are we ashamed of Him, of His message? All who are of the overcoming class, all who will constitute the "very elect," the "Kings and Priests unto God," all who will be associated with Jesus as

overcomers of the world and His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, will have these characteristics. They will be loyal to the message, not ashamed of it. The words of the Apostle will voice their sentiments, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Not being ashamed of the Lord and His message implies that they will be faithful in the presentation of the same when convenient to themselves or when inconvenient. To the best of their knowledge and ability they will speak forth the words of Truth and soberness--as wisely as possible, as inoffensively as possible, but they must speak. As the Apostle said, when forbidden to declare the Good Tidings, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20.) But it is only those who have heard something and seen something who have any testimony to give; those who know nothing may as well keep quiet. Until by the Lord's grace the eyes of our understanding are opened, until we shall have seen something of His grace exhibited in His Divine Plan, we are not prepared, not qualified to tell others. We must first receive the living Bread before we can dispense it; we must first know the Truth and be set free by it before we can become its bond servants, before it could be true of us as it was of the Apostle--"Woe is me if I preach not, the Gospel of Christ." That is to say, he would be unhappy if not permitted to tell the glorious message of God's redeeming love and mercy exhibited in His Divine Plan.

"GOD KINDLY VEILS OUR EYES"

As the poet has declared, "We know not what awaits us." That is, we know not with distinctness what to expect. In a general way we are informed by the Lord's Word that a great time of trouble is impending. It is not our duty to make this our central theme: rather the Good Tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, secured through the precious blood of Christ, is our central theme; and in connection with this is the proclamation of the terms and conditions upon which we hope to be accepted of the Father as joint-heirs with Christ-members of His Body. Occasionally, and only occasionally, need we enter upon the role of Jeremiah to be announcers of the evil conditions coming upon the world.

Our Golden Text is especially appropriate and should always be remembered, not only in severe persecutions but also in the lesser ones, when our names are cast out as evil, "when men shall separate you from their company," when they make all kinds of misrepresentations against you falsely because of your faithfulness to

the Lord and to His Word and to the principles of righteousness. Then remember this Golden Text, and assure your heart in harmony with it and with other statements of the Lord's Word, that all these experiences of opposition the Lord is willing to overrule for your highest welfare, causing them to work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. All who will be of the Kingdom of Heaven class must pass through some such experiences for the development and testing of their characters.

THE DOWNFALL OF JUDAH

-JUNE 18-2 KINGS 25:1-21--

Golden Text.--"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."--Gal. 6:7.

ZEDEKIAH, the last king on the throne of David, was exalted to his position by Nebuchadnezzar and reigned eleven years, until the complete overthrow of the dynasty. He was given the throne upon his taking a solemn oath of faithfulness as a vassal to the king of Babylon. The taking of that oath was the immediate cause of his down-fall. The matter is so stated in Ezekiel's prophecy.--Ezek. 17-:11-21.

The folly of the king's course in this matter is but an illustration of the general folly of all who reject the Lord as their counselor. In previous lessons we have seen how the Lord through Jeremiah His prophet had warned the king respecting reformation and the keeping of his oath and the certainty that the king of Babylon would vanquish him. Self-willed and unbelieving and careless of his oath, the king, abetted by the princes and his counselors, took the course which proved to be the way of folly and which led to the utter overthrow of the nation.

This reminds us of the words of the Apostle, "The wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits." It was, of course, not the privilege of Zedekiah or others living at that time to have the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the sense that spiritual Israel may enjoy it now. Nevertheless they had what to them was a very fair substitute, all things considered, namely, God's direct revelations through His prophets. But now as then an evil heart of unbelief is inclined to lean to its own understanding, its own wisdom--earthly wisdom, which often, as the Apostle declares, is sensual and devilish. This is the meaning of much of the war and commotion which we see about us in the world, especially amongst

so-called "Christian nations." Nor should we too severely censure, the world for not acting along the lines of faith and trust in the Lord when we remember that they know Him not and see Him not as do His spirit-begotten children--"Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." For those who do see and do hear and do know the Master's will to proceed along worldly lines would certainly be much more reprehensible than for the natural man to take the same course. The Lord looketh upon the heart, and where the privileges are small the requirements will be correspondingly lenient; where the privileges are great, as with us, we can only reasonably expect stricter requirements at the Lord's hands.

"THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE"

In Zedekiah's case the Lord allowed the natural consequences of his wrong course to follow, and they were severe indeed. His sons were slain before his eyes, then he was blinded and carried to Babylon, where he was a prisoner until his death. We infer from this that he never came to a properly repentant attitude of heart before the Lord. On the contrary, his nephew, the previous king, Jehoiachin, who was taken a prisoner to Babylon eleven years before, was subsequently released from prison and granted many favors at the hands of the king of Babylon.

These high ones in nominal Israel may properly enough represent the more highly favored ones of the Lord's people in spiritual Israel, and we may draw the lesson that the unfaithful, like Jehoiachin, might be chastened and afterwards treated with leniency; but that those who violate the oath of their covenant, their vow to the Lord, breaking that vow, will suffer loss in every sense of the word--they shall thenceforth be blinded by the Adversary to the blessings they had once enjoyed and they will subsequently die the Second Death. Everywhere the Scriptures uphold the thought that a vow, a solemn compact with the Lord, is a most binding obligation. It is under such an obligation that all the members of the New Creation have been granted the first fruits of the spirit. Disloyalty or renouncement of this vow to us could therefore mean nothing short of the Second Death.

CALAMITY AND RUIN

The calamity and ruin which came upon Jerusalem and Judea, at the time described in our lesson, doubtless seemed to many to indicate God's lack of power, His lack of ability to protect the nation which He had specially planted. Not so. The Scriptures assure us that God foresaw the calamities which then came upon His chosen people; He foretold them through the Prophet and He permitted them to come upon the nation. The lessons He had sent them in the nature of milder chastisements had availed little. The example He had shown of scattering the ten tribes on account of their idolatry had not properly been taken to heart by the two tribes with whom His favor still remained. Now He would scatter them all, and they would continue in servitude to the kingdom of Babylon fifty-one years longer, having been in captivity already nineteen years. Additionally He would leave their land in a desolate, non-productive condition for seventy years also, beginning with this final siege against Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Dating this seventy years of desolation from that point, at about 590 B. C., it would run out about 520 B. C. True to the prediction, it was about that date that the desolating condition ended.--Zech. 1:7, 12, 16; Hag. I and 2.*

The period of servitude was sufficiently long to allow nearly all of them to die in exile, a period in which those who loved idolatry might go their way, as it is written, "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." It was a period, too, in which those who still revered the Lord--as for instance Daniel, and others mentioned--would

*For a fuller exposition of this subject of the servitude and desolation, see H '21, pp. 119-123.

in a foreign land look back longingly to the land of promise, read more attentively than ever the records of the Lord's dealings with their nation, and see how He had predicted this very trouble which they now were experiencing, and lead them thereby to a better condition of heart and to the instruction of their children in the right ways of the Lord.

As a matter of fact this was the result. At the close of the seventy years' servitude, the Lord raised up Cyrus, the king of Media and Persia, who, having conquered the Babylonians, offered liberty to all of the Jews who desired to return to their own land. That proclamation would have little influence upon the vast majority of the Israelites who had gone into captivity. Those idolatrously inclined had undoubtedly forgotten all about Jehovah and the covenant made with their fathers, and were fully amalgamated with the heathen by intermarriage, etc.

The indifferent Israelites settled in the foreign land realized that it would be to their disadvantage in temporal matters to leave their Babylonian homes to go back to Palestine, there to begin life afresh and to battle with the inconveniences, the wilderness condition, of their once fertile land. Consequently of all the hosts of the twelve tribes that went down to Babylon in various captivities only about 50,000 accepted the offer of Cyrus to return. Only a very few of these had ever seen Palestine; they had merely heard of it through their parents and the few aged ones of their number. These, however, had learned well the lesson which their fathers refused to learn. From the day of the return from the Babylonian captivity, we have not a record of further idolatry in Jerusalem and Judea.

THE GRAND JUBILEE AT HAND

The Lord had appointed a Jubilee arrangement by which every seventh year would be a Sabbath year of rest to the soil, and every fiftieth year a Jubilee of restitution for all the people, to all the inhabitants throughout Israel. It would appear that this Divine arrangement fell into neglect or was only partially observed for a time. Doubtless the princes and nobles and wealthy thought they saw an error in the Divine program and that they could improve upon God's arrangement. At all events there is no record of the keeping of the Jubilees, and the Lord here declares that they were neglected--either they were not kept at all or they were observed in so perfunctory a manner as to constitute neglect from the Divine standpoint. Nevertheless we have no record of the Lord having chided the people on this score. A lesson for us would be that every feature of the Divine law is of importance, that every regulation should be observed, that there is a blessing in the arrangement whether it so appears to human judgment or not, and that the Lord will require an account from us eventually respecting our knowledge and obedience.

Turning to Leviticus 26:33-35, we find that the Lord through Moses had foretold this very failure to observe the year Sabbaths and Jubilees, and that it was on this account that the whole nation was cast out of the land of promise so that it received in the seventy years of its desolation the full number of Jubilee years--"For as long as it lay desolate it kept Sabbath to fulfill threescore and ten years."

This thought, that each of those years that the land was desolated represented a Jubilee year which had not been properly observed by Israel, furnishes one of the keys (See H '21, pp. 147-150, 185-187) by

which we may estimate the whole number of Jubilees from the entrance of the children of Israel into the land of Palestine down to the grand consummation when the Kingdom of Messiah will be established and the actual Jubilee, the antitypical Jubilee, will begin. These calculations carried out seem to show that we are already living in the grand antitypical Jubilee, which will last for a thousand years. As the priests were to blow the silver trumpets in the beginning of the typical Jubilee year announcing its beginning, so now all who, are of the Royal Priesthood are commissioned by the Lord to blow upon the silver trumpets of truth, and to make known to all who have a hearing ear in spiritual Israel our present times and seasons, and that the Great Jubilee, the times of restitution of all things, has begun. This implies that the great King is now taking unto Himself His great power, and that His reign over the nations will soon begin, precipitating the time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, the result of which will be the overthrow of all human institutions and the opening of the way to the establishment of the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," under whose ministrations all the families of the earth will be blessed, and every evil institution and thing suppressed, and every good and true matter brought forward to the light, established.

Thank God for the great blessing and privilege of living in our day under these favorable conditions. Let us be faithful to our vow and for the present be submissive to the powers that be, waiting for the Lord in His own time and way to establish His Kingdom and to fulfill all the gracious promises of His Word. Let us who realize that we are now in the antitypical Jubilee be faithful to the blowing on the trumpets.

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound;
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of Jubilee is come,
Returning ransomed sinners home."

REVIEW - JUDAH'S PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

--JUNE 25--

*Golden Text.--"Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah."--Psa.
33:12.*

TRULY the International Lessons of the quarter which close with this review have demonstrated the truthfulness of the Golden Text that has been chosen for this study; for even the chastisements and punishments for sin administered to the Israelites will ultimately prove a great blessing to them. With great patience and longsuffering the Lord had mercy upon the typical people, the house of servants, called to constitute and to make types illustrating His gracious purposes for the house of sons which would follow it, and, incidentally, to prepare the "Israelites without guile" for the spiritual blessings to result from their transfer to the "house of sons." And not only has He prepared this remnant, but He has also prepared all those who were faithful as members of the "house of servants," attesting their loyalty to the Lord, whose reward is to be the privilege of representing the heavenly Kingdom as its human agents on the earth. But while this is true, how much greater is God's mercy as seen and experienced by us who are of the house of sons, accepted in the Beloved One! How merciful is the Lord toward all those who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Captain of their salvation! How bountiful are the provisions made, not only for their ultimate reward, but also for their encouragement during the sojourn toward the heavenly city, with provision also for the passing over, the covering and the ultimate blotting out of their weaknesses by and through Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood.

One difficulty with us as Bible students has been that in the past we took too narrow a view of the Divine character and of the Bible. For more than twelve centuries the Bible was not studied. Instead, certain Bishops, thinking themselves to be Apostles of equal authority with The Twelve whom our Lord Jesus appointed (St. Paul taking the place of Judas), thought that they had full right, as Apostles, to make up a substitute for the Bible. These substitutes were styled creeds--Confessions of Faith. These were studied, and the Bible was neglected.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that God's people got far away from the true teaching of His Word. Even when the Bible began to come back to the people in Reformation times, their poor heads were so badly clogged and confused with the false doctrines of twelve centuries of human theorizing that they were not prepared to see the Bible in its own light, but rather in the light of these creeds. Besides, they had been long taught that to doubt the creeds would constitute

them heretics, and that the punishment for heresy is eternal torment--hence the endeavor to keep in line with the creeds in all subsequent Bible study.

Now Bible students see that this was all a mistake--that the Bible should have been studied in its own light. They see that the creeds are full of confusing errors, which really make the Word of God of none effect where they are recognized. Now our Bible studies are different, because of our clearer knowledge of these matters, as well as because we are living in the dawning of the New Age--at the time when God promised that His people should understand His Word--"The wise shall understand."--Dan. 12:10.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL PICTORIAL

God's wisdom and mercy were manifested toward the posterity of Abraham--Isaac, Jacob, and then all of Jacob's children. God made the twelve tribes into one nation, cementing them together by His promises to them in connection with the Law Covenant instituted by Moses at Mount Sinai. If they could keep God's Law, they would live forever--not die at all. Moreover, they were to be blessed in all of their affairs--their health, their flocks, their herds, their cattle. Everything would be blessed.

But they could not keep this Law Covenant, because of having been born in sin, like the remainder of the race. Nevertheless God purposed that through endeavoring to keep the Law that nation should be greatly blessed. And it was so. True, He chastened them for their wrong-doings and shortcomings, but always with loving interest and care, never wholly casting them off. Their national distresses and captivities were in the nature of chastisements, with a view to teaching them necessary lessons.

Thus God's favor continued with that one nation--and with no other nation--from the death of Jacob down to the death of Jesus, a period of 1826 years. Even then, in casting off the nation when they rejected Jesus and crucified Him, the Lord made provision for all of the Jews who were spiritually inclined, that they might not only be retained in His favor, but might come into still greater favor at Pentecost and onward, being there begotten of the Holy Spirit--no longer to be a house of servants under Moses, but the house of sons under Jesus. (Heb. 3:5, 6.) Even when rejecting the nation, God intimated clearly

that the time would come when His favor would return to them--after the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.--Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:13-17.

GOD'S NEW NATION

Meantime, the saintly Jews who were "Israelites indeed" became the nucleus, or start, of spiritual Israel. Of this spiritual Israel St. Peter says, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a peculiar purpose--that ye might show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

We see, then, that the Church is God's New Creation, the new nation with which He has been dealing exclusively during the Gospel Age. He is dealing with these with a view to their education and development, that they may be associated with our Lord Jesus in His great Millennial Kingdom. Then for a thousand years He and His saintly company, gathered from every nation under heaven, will bless natural Israel and all the nations of the world with light, with knowledge, with assistance and uplifting, for the purpose of delivering them from the bondage of sin and death, back to the likeness of God, lost by Adam and redeemed on Calvary.

It is because of this special work that God has for the Church that He has made her trials fiery ones, declaring, "Through much tribulation ye must enter into the Kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.) This class of fully consecrated ones, regardless of sectarian lines, have all been begotten of the Holy Spirit. None others are recognized of God. This Church have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life--in Heaven--and are in the present life demonstrating their faithfulness, their loyalty to God. When the foreordained number shall have taken the step and shall have demonstrated their loyalty even unto death, then this holy nation will be complete.

It is the spiritual seed of Abraham to whom belong the great promises of God. Of this class St. Paul says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29.) The promise was made to Abraham, and declares, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:18.) We have St. Paul's word for it that Christ and His Church are this spiritual seed, whose mission it will be, in God's due time, to bless all mankind--"all the families of the earth"--not only those who are alive and remaining

at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but all who have ever lived. God's mercy is especially toward this spiritual Israel--even more so than toward natural Israel.

THE BREADTH OF DIVINE MERCY

Now we come to the grand climax of God's mercy and grace. The Jewish nation was small. The Church, the spiritual Israel, is small. But God's grace and mercy are to extend to the whole world--every creature for whom Christ died. The time for dealing with the world and giving them their opportunity of sharing in God's grace and mercy has already been appointed by the Father. It will be during the Millennium--the thousand years of Christ's reign. He will be the great spiritual King of the earth; and His Church will be associated with Him as His joint-heirs and assistant rulers, teachers, healers, uplifters, rewarders and punishers of mankind during the Millennium. All this service of the world will be with a view to bestowing upon them, if they will, the grace of God, the mercy of God, which he purposed from the beginning, and which is to be brought to mankind through Messiah's Kingdom of Glory.

For a thousand years the rising Sun of Righteousness will bless the world, flooding the earth with the light of the knowledge of God. For the same thousand years Satan shall be bound, that he may deceive the people no more. For the same thousand years the work of blessing and restitution will progress--Times (or years) of Restitution, the entire Millennium will be. Every creature will have his eyes of understanding opened to see, to know and to understand the Love of God, His tender Mercy and His Wisdom, all centered in and manifested through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's Mercy will be exercised toward the world with a view to its release from the bondage of sin and death to the full liberty of the sons of God--the same that Adam enjoyed before he sinned.--Rom. 8:19-23.

Thus we see "a wideness in God's Mercy, like the wideness of the sea." Thus we see that His grace, while limited first to one earthly nation, then later to an elect company from all nations, is finally to be extended to every human being the world around, bringing all to the fullest privileges and opportunities of knowledge, love, obedience and blessing.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS -

HIS BODY BROKEN FOR US

Dear Brethren:

Owing to illness in the family we were unable to meet with the friends in P----- last evening, to observe the Memorial, but we observed it in our own home. There were just three of us, and in one respect, at least, it was more helpful than any previous similar gathering we have had the privilege of attending: the meaning of the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. 11:27 was made clearer than ever before, viz., as to what constitutes eating and drinking "unworthily." Past experience has shown us that many of the Father's children have been much distressed and discouraged, and in some instances prevented from partaking of the emblems because of a realization of their own *natural* proneness to sin, thinking that made them "unworthy." But when we get the Apostle's thought in the text cited above, then the more we realize our *natural* "unworthiness" the more help and comfort we receive from the observance of the Memorial. As we "discern" the Lord's body, especially as we realize that His own body of flesh was "broken for us;" that He died for our sins, "the Just for the unjust"; that He who knew no sin "was made sin for us"--as we understand this, we realize that the tendencies of our fallen human nature, which distress us so much, have been provided for in advance by the wisdom and foresight of our great and loving Father. So the thing which has caused some to feel discouraged because of their "unworthiness" is the very thing which drives us to the shed blood and *prevents* us from "eating and drinking unworthily." As we have said, this was made very plain to us last evening as we memorialized the shedding of that blood *for us*.

With the hope that you may be permitted to continue in the blessed work so faithfully carried on for the past four years,

I am,

Your brother in the strong bond of our Master's love for us,

C. D. J.--R. I.

ZEALOUS IN SERVING ONE ANOTHER

Dear Brethren:

I feel that I must tell you how much I appreciate the HERALD especially of late. I have enjoyed the Editorials very much, as well as the other articles, and I do so appreciate the loving spirit manifest throughout. While reading, I thought, here is Christian liberty; here is the spirit of Christ.

I am also pleased that we are to again have the First Volume of *Scripture Studies* in such form that we can feel free to give them out. I have had some opportunities of presenting the Truth to some who were looking for that which is more satisfying than what sectarianism could offer.

The Lord is surely blessing our little Class here. All the brethren are very zealous in serving one another, seeking to build one another up in the most holy faith, and in doing good unto all as they have opportunity. When we look around us and see so many of God's people who were once enlightened, being again deceived by Satan's old lie, "Ye shall not surely die," we realize how necessary it is to be on the alert and to keep ourselves in the love of God.

Praying the Lord's blessing upon your efforts to serve and please Him, I am,

Yours in His service,

M. L. V.--Calif.

THAT HE MAY ACCOMPLISH ALL HIS WILL.

Dear Brethren:

Can you please send me six copies of the March 15th HERALD? I think that the truths set forth in the article on Tolerance are not so well known to and appreciated by, Bible Students, as they might be. As there stated, the Truth is simply the means to an end--the development in us of a character-likeness to the Lord. He has given us the Truth in

order that we might know Him and our duty to Him, in the doing of which He gradually delivers us from self and bestows Himself upon us, go that we become truly one with Him. A week ago I read in a book, written by a saint of an older generation, that Christians are very prone to substitute His Truth for the Lord Himself, to rest upon it instead of allowing it to bring them home to, and keep them abiding in, Him, and thus they use it *as a means of getting rid of the Lord and their duty to Him*, just as the rulers of fleshly Israel did when He presented Himself to them.

A few weeks ago a brother asked me, "Has the Lord's message to the Laodicean Church ever been given?" and I could not say it had, for although the Pastor often delivered it by word and pen, he always, so far as I am aware, applied it solely to Churchianity, while I am persuaded it is even more true of ourselves and specially intended for us--Bible Students.

The Lord is speaking to our Father's children--not to tares and who but Bible Students have been blessed with such an abundance of riches in the knowledge of the truth which He has given us? And, if this knowledge is not being translated into character to correspond, if we are not being dead to self, refusing to allow self to have control of a single thought, and presenting our minds continually to the Beloved, thus proving our willingness to receive Him as our only Head, that He may accomplish all the will of the Father in us, surely we are more ungrateful, more dishonest, more blameworthy than any other.

For many years the Lord has blessed me in enabling me to take this message to myself, and I have been hoping that the Revelation articles in the HERALD would state the matter so plainly that Bible Students would be enabled to see their blindness and to give Him--their first Love--His rightful place in their lives.

In the condensed summary of the messages we can all see our duty--the will of the Father for us--and every one with a hearing ear is frequently exhorted to give close attention, so we are without excuse if we neglect our duty to our Lord and Head.

With our love, dear brethren,

Your brother in the Beloved.

W. M.--Scot.

ANXIOUS TO HEAR MORE

Gentlemen and Brothers:

Have just finished reading a copy of the "Inauguration of God's Kingdom" that I picked up somewhere--I don't know where--but it has so interested me that I am anxious to hear more about the present and coming events; and I am taking advantage of your kind offer to send more information respecting these things. Kindly enclose three extra copies of this pamphlet, as I have three sons that I would like to send one each.

I believe that it will interest them almost as much as it has me. Thanking you for your kindness in this matter, I am,

Yours truly,

A. N. L.--*Fla.*

Dear Friends:

Your leaflet entitled "Inauguration of God's Kingdom" has come into my hands, and I am much interested in its contents.

I am anxious to know the Truth, and God's Divine Law, which is the only way to salvation and eternal love. I would be glad to have some more information on the subject commonly known as the "Judgment Day," and "Our Lord's Return." Whatever literature on the subject may be sent to me I will as much as possible introduce to my friends.

The distance prevents me from attending your meetings or I would gladly do so.

Very sincerely yours,

H. J. F.--*N. Y.*