

**EVENTS**

**SUBSEQUENT**

**TO THE**

**RETURN OF**

**CHRIST**

*“The more we understand of what we profess to believe the stronger is our faith therein; and the nearer we approach its development, the more necessary it is, that a lively interest be kindled in us, that our lamps be well trimmed and our lights be found brightly burning (Matt. 25:4,7,10). ”*

*John Thomas 1866*

## **FOREWORD**

This volume of notes arose out of a Bible study class conducted by the Wilston Ecclesia (Queensland, Australia) during 1979 and 1980. Notes were produced and distributed at each fortnightly class. Subsequently the notes have been reprinted several times and are now available electronically.

The work of Christ between his return to raise the responsible dead and the beginning of his universal rule over all the earth is a vast scriptural subject upon which many volumes could and have been written. The purpose of these notes is to bring this subject within the reach of all, including young people who may be considering this wonderful subject for the first time.

In compiling these notes constant recourse has been made to the writings of our pioneers whose expositions of the prophetic scriptures have for a long time enabled Christadelphians to form a vivid mental picture of the world-shattering events that are now on the horizon. The writings of Brother H.P. Mansfield have also been invaluable in treating of these matters and we acknowledge our indebtedness to his articles in the Logos Prophetic Supplement of 1970-71.

It remains the hope of the author that these notes may contribute something towards strengthening the vision of all who 'love Christ's appearing', that we may be found ready to share with him in the glories of the future age and the events ushering it in.

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Electronic version revised and reissued October 2003

# CONTENTS

<b>Page</b>	
1	INTRODUCTION – EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE RETURN OF CHRIST <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The need for a clear vision of the future</li><li>The need for watchfulness</li><li>The vision of Abraham an example</li><li>The aim of a clear vision – faith and hope</li><li>We should love Christ’s appearing</li><li>Triumph through tribulation</li><li>The discipline of the Truth – Numbering our days</li><li>Constant readiness – A key to acceptance</li></ul>
4	THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES
5	THE JUBILEE PERIOD <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Jubilee periods in the history of modern Israel</li><li>40 years of war to subdue the nations</li></ul>
7	THE RETURN OF CHRIST <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The order of events</li><li>How will we know Christ has returned to judge the Household?</li><li>The method of transportation to judgement</li></ul>
11	RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE JUDGEMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Responsibility question</li><li>Saints and Sinners</li><li>Responsible or accountable?</li></ul>
13	THE RESURRECTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A definition</li><li>Paul’s discourse on Resurrection – 1 Cor. 15:35-54</li><li>‘Sown’ and ‘Raised’ as used in 1 Cor. 15:36-52</li><li>The condition or nature of the Resurrected Body</li><li>The three stages of resurrection illustrated in Daniel’s typical death and resurrection – Dan. 10</li></ul>
20	THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The locality of the Judgement Seat</li><li>Yahweh comes in from Sinai – Deut. 33:2-3</li><li>From Sinai into the Holy Place – Ps. 68</li><li>Eloah shall come from the south – Hab. 3:3-4</li><li>Sinai – The mountain of judgement</li><li>The Judgement Seat – A literal reality</li><li>The basis of judgement – The Word</li><li>A verbal account – Rom. 14:10-12</li><li>The place of the Angels at the judgement</li><li>The Angels as ministers to the saints</li><li>The books of judgement</li><li>A book of the life</li><li>The Book of Life</li><li>Reaping what we sow</li><li>Children at the Judgement Seat</li><li>The responsibility of parents and children</li><li>Why the period of judgement will be short</li><li>The fate of the rejected</li><li>The condition of the world at this time</li></ul>
34	THE GLORIFIED BEING <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Instantaneous transformation – 1 Cor. 15:51-54</li><li>The immortal constitution</li><li>Retention of identity</li><li>Male or female?</li></ul>
36	THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Joyous activity at Sinai</li><li>His wife hath made herself ready</li><li>Preparations for war</li></ul>
37	THE MARCH OF THE RAINBOWED ANGEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The conquests of the Rainbowed Angel – Rev. 10</li><li>Synchronisation of events occurring at this time</li></ul>
41	THE GOGIAN INVASION

- 44 THE WORK OF ELIJAH  
The scope of Elijah's work  
'Israel' and 'Judah' in the prophetic Word  
The timing of Elijah's mission  
Elijah's associates – Matt. 24:30-31
- 46 THE SECOND EXODUS OF ISRAEL  
Elijah's message to scattered Israel  
Returning Israel – Yahweh's weapons of war  
The route of the Second Exodus
- 50 CHRIST'S MILITARY STRATEGY  
Synchronisation of events  
The deployment of the Saints  
The Arabs subdued and disciplined  
The purpose of this strategy  
The conversion of the Arabs  
The fate of Edom  
The smiting and healing of Egypt
- 58 CHRIST AT JERUSALEM  
The sacrifice in Bozrah – Isaiah 34  
Edom and Bozrah typical names  
Treading the winepress at Bozrah – Isa. 63:1-6
- 60 ARMAGEDDON AND ITS AFTERMATH  
The great earthquake - Dramatic changes in the Land of Israel
- 64 THE REFINING OF JUDAH
- 64 THE LAND OF ISRAEL CLEANSED  
The Tribal Cantons
- 65 THE SUBJUGATION OF THE NATIONS  
Proclamation to the nations  
The mid-heaven prophecy – Rev. 14:6-7  
The response of the nations  
The submission of Britain
- 66 THE LULL BEFORE THE FINAL STORM
- 67 RIVERS IN THE DESERT
- 68 THE TIME OF TROUBLE SUCH AS NEVER WAS  
The destruction of Rome
- 68 A FINAL PLEA TO THE NATIONS
- 68 YAHWEH'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE NATIONS
- 69 THE DURATION OF NATIONAL JUDGEMENT  
Random or selective judgement of individuals?
- 69 ISRAEL ESTABLISHED IN THE BONDS OF THE COVENANT  
The return of scattered Israel  
Israel enters the Land  
Israel's deliverance complete
- 70 CHRIST'S REIGN ON EARTH  
All nations subject to Zion's King  
The Saints as king-priests  
Tribute to David's son  
Satan bound
- 71 A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS  
When and how the Temple will be built  
The site of the Temple  
The Holy Oblation  
The Temple structure  
Ground plan of the Temple  
The entrance gates  
The circular inner Temple  
The Altar
- 77 THE FINAL CONSOLATION

# EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE RETURN OF CHRIST

## INTRODUCTION

### THE NEED FOR A CLEAR VISION OF THE FUTURE

A clear and vivid mental vision based upon an accurate understanding of the prophetic Scriptures is absolutely essential if saints are to maintain integrity in their walk towards God's Kingdom in the 'midst of a crooked and perverse' generation.

After the example of Christ 'who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross' (Heb. 12:2), we need to understand and to fix our attention upon the events that will occur upon the earth after the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our privilege now to 'speak of the glory of God's Kingdom', for surely 'Yahweh will do nothing, but he revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets' (Amos 3:7). We have this assurance that if we make the things of the Kingdom 'all our salvation, and all our desire' (2 Sam. 23:5) then Yahweh 'will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him' (Ps. 145:19).

The inevitable result of a poor or cloudy vision of the future is *spiritual nakedness* – i.e. the loss of our covering for sin and a return to our former unredeemed state.

#### Proverbs 29:18

"Where there is no vision" – *chazown* – mental sight, from a root *chazah* – to gaze at; mentally, to perceive, contemplate (with pleasure); specially to have a vision of.

"the people perish" – *para* – to loosen; to expose, dismiss. Note the margin of the A.V.: "naked". The word is translated 3 times as "naked" (note in particular Ex. 32:25). Roth. – "a people is let loose". Youngs Lit. – "Without a vision is a people made naked".

### THE NEED FOR WATCHFULNESS

In his final message the Lord Jesus Christ warned his disciples that a failure to watch the signs that indicated his coming was near would result in ill-preparedness likened to nakedness.

#### Revelation 16:15

"Behold, I come as a thief" – The Lord bases his words upon the familiar practices associated with the Temple guard. Every night 240 Levites and 30 priests were stationed in the precincts of the Temple to watch and guard the 24 gates of the Temple and its courts. Their duty was to remain awake and alert to prevent the entry of the unclean or forbidden. When these Levites and priests came on duty at sunset they put on a distinguishing garment of white linen. They had to stand watch until dawn without relief.

At any time during the night the chief of the Temple guards known as 'the temple captain' (Acts 4:1) could make his rounds of the Temple. On his approach the guards had to arise and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep while on duty was arraigned before his fellow guards at dawn and publicly stripped of his garment which was burnt while he was summarily dismissed from his temple service. He departed naked and shamed before his brethren.

It is not difficult to see the parallels with our position. We are all 'temple watchers' being charged with the responsibility of watching the doors of God's spiritual house to prevent the entrance of anything unclean (2 Cor. 6:16-18). We have a 'linen garment' (Rev. 19:8) which we must keep 'unspotted from the world' (Jude 23, James 1:27). We watch in the night 'until the day dawn, and the day star arise' to dispel all darkness (2 Pet. 1:19; 2 Thess. 5:2-7). Our head may come during any watch of the night (Matt. 24:42-44) and will reject us if we are found asleep or unprepared (Matt.

24:48-51). Our punishment and our shame will be known to all our brethren (1 Cor. 4:5; Luke 12:2-3; 1 Tim. 5:24-25).

“Blessed is he that watcheth” – *gregoreo* – to keep awake, to watch. Used Matt. 24:43, 1 Thess. 5:6, 10. In this context refers to spiritual alertness.

“keepeth” – *tereo* – to watch over, take care of, keep an eye upon, observe attentively.

“garments” – Note use of garments as a symbol of a covering of imputed righteousness – Job 29:14; Rev. 19:8.

“lest he walk naked and they see his shame” – This is a return to the condition of Adam and Eve before Yahweh Elohim provided a skin of a lamb for a covering to hide their nakedness. By hiding their external shame a covering was also provided for their evil conscience and they could once more walk in the fellowship of the Deity. This status we enjoy in Christ but it can be lost by a failure to realise that “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4).

A lively faith in the things “which God hath prepared for them that love Him” is the key to our victory over the world and its carnal lusts. Failure to cultivate a clear vision of the future will soon lead to a state of spiritual slumber and then to spiritual nakedness and ultimately to a condition of entanglement with the pollutions of the world – then “the latter end is worse....than the beginning” (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

## **THE VISION OF ABRAHAM AN EXAMPLE**

The mental vision of Abraham and his response to it when he saw Christ’s day is an example of the kind of vision and response which we must cultivate if we desire to be ‘Abraham’s children’.

### **John 8:56**

“rejoiced” – *agalliao* – to jump for joy, to dance. Abraham’s vision of Christ’s day was so vivid and his faith in it so strong that he was emotionally and physically moved in expression of his joy and expectation (Heb. 11:13).

“see.....saw” – *eidon* - to see; implying not the mere act of seeing, but the actual perception of the object; refers to the mind and the thought of him who sees. Note the use of different word in verse 57 - *horao* – to perceive with the eyes, see something; used of bodily sight. *Eidon* speaks of mental sight or visualisation while *horao* refers to actual sight. However, Abraham’s vision of Messiah’s day was as vivid as the real thing, so complete was his faith.

Note - *eidon* is translated 'seen' in Heb. 11:13.

## **THE AIM OF A CLEAR VISION - FAITH AND HOPE**

The aim of establishing a clear vision of the future is to develop an Abrahamic faith and hope.

### **Hebrews 11:1**

“substance” – *hupostasis* - a setting under, support, foundation, confidence. Bro. Thomas translates - "Faith is the confident anticipation of things hoped for, a full persuasion of things not seen". R.V. - "giving of substance to things hoped for".

“evidence” – *elegchos* - logical proof, evidence, demonstration, convincing argument.

### **Romans 8:18-25**

V.19 - “earnest expectation” – *apokaradokia* - a looking away towards anything with the head bent forward. Roth. - "eager outlook".

"creature" – *ktizo* - creation. The R.S.V. translates as "creation" in every place where the A.V. has "creature".

V.24 - "for we are saved by hope" – Diag. - "for we are saved by the hope". The hope referred to is 'the Hope of Israel' (Acts 28:20). "Hope" is the Greek word *elpis* - to expect, to hope for.

## **WE SHOULD LOVE CHRIST'S APPEARING**

The exhortation for saints of all ages is to set their minds on things which are above and to love the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **2 Timothy 4:8**

In this verse Paul reveals his confidence in the "hope of the glory of God" and his part in it - this is an example of faith and hope for us to emulate.

"love his appearing" – "love" is *agapao* - a selfless and sacrificial love. Those who love Christ's appearing are those who for his sake have 'lost' their lives in this world - Matt.10:39; John 12:26. Unlike Demas who "loved" (*agape*) this present age, they have not forsaken their Lord but have dedicated their lives to his service (2 Tim.4:10).

## **TRIUMPH THROUGH TRIBULATION**

The inevitable result of a way of life centred upon the return of Christ as its ultimate objective is suffering (2 Tim. 2:12), persecution (2 Tim. 3:12), and tribulation (Acts 14:22). However, a lively faith and a clear vision balance out the suffering and make it "a light affliction" (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

### **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

V.16 - "faint" – *ekkakeo* - to turn out a coward, i.e. to lose one's courage.

"our outward man" – i.e. the physical man, the body.

"the inward man" – i.e. the spiritual man, the mind and character. We are apt to confuse these descriptions, but Paul's meaning is clear – compare chap. 5:1-10.

"renewed day by day" – *anakainoo* - to renew, to daily acquire new strength which previously it had not. Spiritual growth should be a daily process by regular approach to the scriptures; anything less will inhibit the development of the inner man and stunt spiritual stature.

V.17 - "a far more exceeding" – Gr. lit. - "according to a surpassing unto a surpassing". Diag.- "an excessively exceeding". Roth.- "yet more and more excelling".

V.18 - "while we look not" – *skopeo* - to look, inspect, reconnoitre, behold, regard. It is physically impossible to look at things which are 'not seen' because they lie in the future, but that is the point Paul is making. Faith gives reality to things which are yet to come to pass.

## **THE DISCIPLINE OF THE TRUTH - NUMBERING OUR DAYS**

Saints who possess such a vision will be able to bring to bear upon their lives a discipline which will exclude fleshly lusts, earthly vanities and time wasting pursuits. The Psalmist put it succinctly in Ps. 90:12 - "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom". Those so motivated will be found "redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16).

## **CONSTANT READINESS - A KEY TO ACCEPTANCE**

Servants of God cultivating such a discipline are unlikely to be caught unawares by the stealthy, thief-like and sudden return of the Lord Jesus Christ but will be ready to open the door when he

knocks with lamps trimmed and burning brightly, and a good supply of the oil of the Word in hand (Matt. 24:42-44).

**Matthew 24:44**

"Therefore be ye also ready" – Roth. - "Wherefore ye also be getting ready". This is an exhortation to constant preparedness.

"ye think not" – Roth. - "ye are not thinking". Like the sleeping man whose thoughts are somewhere else there is the very real danger that we might be found by our Lord in a state of unpreparedness, having lost our conception of the realities of the Kingdom and our vision of the glories which lie beyond.

**THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES**

**THE AGES FRAMED BY THE DIVINE WILL - Hebrews 11:3**

"the worlds" – *aionos* - ages. Diag. - "ages".

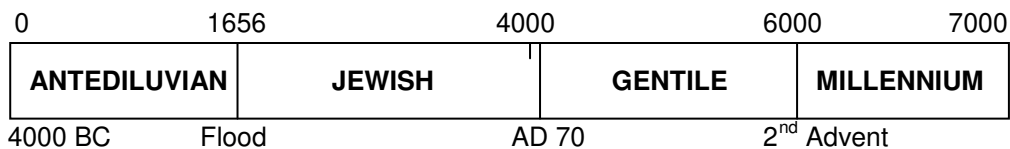
"were framed by the word of God" – *katertishai* - to arrange, to adjust. Diag. - "so thoroughly adjusted by God's command". The ages of human history have not fallen out by chance but have unfolded according to God's predetermined plan. His providence has "thoroughly adjusted" the course of history.

"that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" – Diag. - "that not from things then manifest the things now seen have come to pass". We must never judge by the appearance of things. Present appearances, however unfavourable to the outworking of God's purpose can never frustrate that purpose.

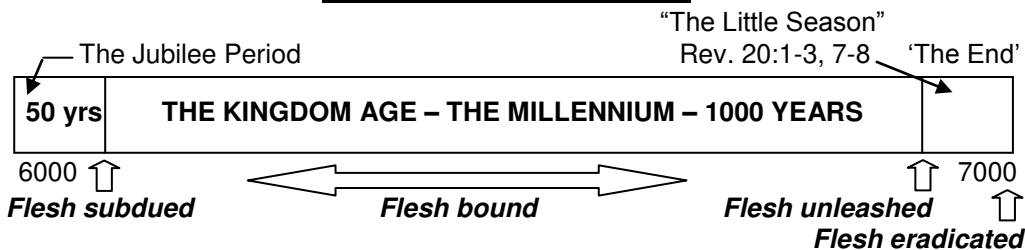
**Hebrews 1:2**

"by whom also he made the worlds" – Diag. - "on account of whom also He constituted the ages". The word "made" can mean "to constitute". The word "world" is *aionos* - ages. From the beginning God purposed to send forth His son and consequently the ages have revolved around His purpose in Jesus Christ.

**THE AGES OF HUMAN HISTORY**



**THE AGE OF THE AGES**





## THE JUBILEE PERIOD

Although there is no place in the scriptures which clearly states that there will be a fifty year Jubilee period between the return of Christ and the inauguration of the Millennium, there is ample evidence by inference that the resurrection and judgement, and subsequent events up to the completion of the Temple and the return of scattered Israel under Elijah, will cover a period of fifty years.

The clearest indication is to be found in the prophecy of Ezekiel. Ezekiel was a man of sign to the house of Israel - Ezek. 12:6; 24:24. However, because the greater proportion of his prophecy has relationship to the development of Yahweh's glory in the household of Christ, spiritual Israel, the prophecy and its setting from the very beginning has relevance to things yet future in the purpose of Deity.

Time periods play an important part in Ezekiel's prophetic work as a man of sign - Ezek. 4:3-8. It might be expected therefore that in relation to future events a pattern will be discernable in Ezekiel's prophecy concerning time periods surrounding those events.

The last nine chapters of Ezekiel are devoted entirely to a detailed description of the House of Prayer for all nations to be constructed by Christ as a habitation for His Father's glory and to the services pertaining to that Temple along with details concerning the division of the Land.

It is noteworthy that at the commencement of this section of his prophecy and immediately following the section dealing with the destruction of Gog and the cleansing of the Land Ezekiel provides a precise date upon which he saw the vision of the Temple - Ezek. 40:1.

### Ezekiel 40:1

The prophecy of Ezekiel flows smoothly in chronological order from the end of chapter 36 which summarises the prophecies of the re-establishment of Israel in the Land (Ezek. 36-39).

- Ezekiel 37 – The vision of the valley of dry bones – Israel is to be restored to the land of their fathers.
- Ezekiel 38&39 – The advance of the Gogian host – Russia's destruction at Armageddon — The land of Israel cleansed.
- Ezekiel 40-48 – The Temple built – A House of Prayer for all nations – The Land divided and inhabited.

It is vital to note that the things Ezekiel saw in chaps. 40 to 48 are represented as being actually existent at the time the vision was given – note the offerings in position as though the Temple was in operation (Ezek. 40:43).

### VERSE 1

"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity" – i.e. the 25th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (Ezek. 1:2). This year was the 14th after the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in the 11th year of Zedekiah the successor of Jehoiachin upon the throne of Judah.

The significance of the 25th year of Jehoiachin's captivity is that it was apparently a Jubilee year. Ezekiel commenced his prophecy by dating it from the 18th year of Josiah's reign (Ezek. 1:1). This was the year of Josiah's great passover and according to tradition was a Jubilee year. This would account in part for Josiah's zeal towards the Temple and people despite the absence of a copy of the Law, during this year of his reign.

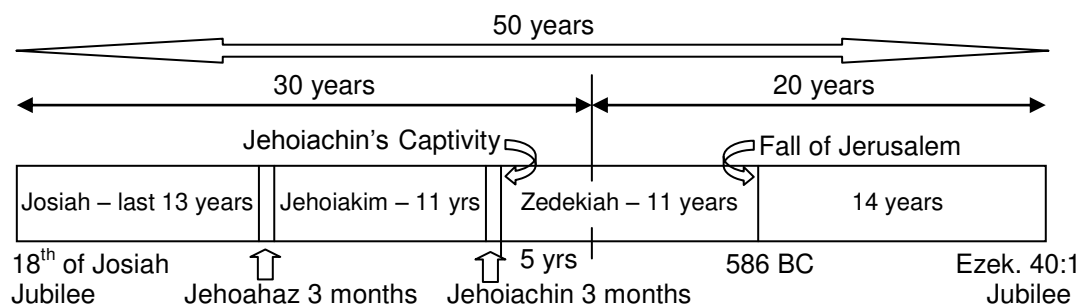
The 25th year of Jehoiachin's captivity was exactly 50 years after the 18th year of Josiah and therefore a Jubilee year. In this year Ezekiel saw the Temple completed and in use. There must be a

reason for this arrangement. It is evident that we are intended to see a pattern to be unfolded in the divine purpose foreshadowed in Ezekiel's experiences.

The Temple will be opened for use by all nations and the Millennial reign of Christ will begin in the fiftieth year after his stealthy and thief-like return to resurrect and judge the household. This Jubilee period will be filled with numerous dramatic and world-shaking events which will completely change the world and its civilisation in preparation for a Millennium of righteousness and peace (2 Pet. 3:13).

The following summary of the dates referred to above reveals that from the 18th of Josiah to the 25th of Jehoiachin's captivity was a period of 50 years.

Josiah reigned	31 years	
Josiah kept a Jubilee Passover in his 18th year	<u>18 years</u>	
Josiah reigned after the Jubilee	13 years	
Jehoahaz reigned		3 months
Jehoiakim reigned	11 years	
Jehoiachin reigned		3 months
Zedekiah reigned (to the smiting of the city)	11 years	
Ezekiel received the vision 14 years later	14 years	
Total period since last Jubilee	49 years	6 months
Intervals		6 months
	<hr/>	
	50 years	
	<hr/>	



"in the beginning of the year" – i.e. in the first month, Abib.

"the tenth day of the month" – The 10th of Abib; the day the Passover lamb was selected. Ezekiel's vision occurs 50 years to the day after Josiah's Jubilee Passover.

"in the fourteenth year after the city was smitten" – i.e. the 25th year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

"in the selfsame day" - Often where these words occur in the scriptures, stress is being laid upon the importance of a time period – cp. Gen. 7:13; Ex. 12:41. It was exactly 50 years to the day since Josiah's Passover.

## JUBILEE PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN ISRAEL

1847 to 1897 – In 1847 Bro. Thomas wrote "A confession and Abjuration" which became the basis of "Elpis Israel" written in 1848. The key to this final step in the rediscovery of the Truth was Rom. 8:24 "we are saved by the hope" (i.e. the Hope of Israel - Acts 28:20). Fifty years later the Zionist

Congress was convened in Basle, Switzerland to formulate a plan to establish a Jewish State — a homeland for the Jews.

1897 to 1947 – The first Zionist Congress which embarked upon a programme to establish a homeland for the Jews culminated in the United Nations voting to partition the land of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state on November 29th 1947 almost exactly 50 years later.

1917 to 1967 – In 1917 the British Government issued the Balfour Declaration supporting the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. In the same year the occupying forces of Turkey were driven out of Palestine by the British army. Exactly 50 years later on the 8th June 1967 Jerusalem was freed from the hands of the Gentiles and Luke 21:24 received its incipient fulfilment.

## **40 YEARS OF WAR TO SUBDUED THE NATIONS**

Speaking of the little open scroll in the hand of the 'Rainbowed Angel' of Rev. 10 Bro. Thomas writes, "A little scroll is a short time in which things written therein are to be accomplished - a period, say of forty years, according to the testimony of Mic.7:14-17." The little scroll contained the seven thunder judgements of Deity against the nations and refers to the war of Armageddon and its aftermath (see Eureka Vol. 2 pgs.542-544).

### **Micah 7:15**

Rotherham translates — "As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt, will I shew him wonders". R.S.V. - "As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them marvellous things".

While this is clearly a reference to the miracles performed by Yahweh in the wilderness on Israel's behalf and an assurance that similar miracles will be seen again during the Second Exodus of Israel, the inference is that these "marvellous things" will span a similar period of 40 years. As the context deals with Israel being used as Yahweh's weapon of war against the nations it is reasonable to postulate that these wars will also span a period of approximately 40 years.

In Eureka Vol. 1 page 133 in the section dealing with the "Aion of the Aions" Bro. Thomas refers to "The Hour of Judgement" of Rev. 14:7 and suggests that it is a period of 40 years. He writes, "It is the antitype to the 40 years in the wilderness, and the Aion of the sickles (Rev. 14:14-20)." See also Eureka Vol. 5 pgs. 38-39, 74-75, 163-165 (Logos Edition).

The Second Exodus of Israel to be considered later in these notes will almost certainly be over a period of 40 years - Ezek. 20:34-38.

## **THE RETURN OF CHRIST**

### **THE ORDER OF EVENTS**

The first work of Christ will be to resurrect the responsible dead – the resurrection will precede the gathering of the responsible living - 1 Thess. 4:14-17.

#### **1 Thess. 4:14-17**

V.15 - "shall not prevent them which are asleep" - "prevent" is the Greek word *phthano* - to come or do before, get first in doing or being anything, be before with. Hence the Diaglott translates "will by no means precede those who fell asleep". Paul comforts the Thessalonians with the knowledge that those believers who had died would be the first to know that the Lord was in the earth, through their resurrection to life.

V.16 - "with a shout" – *keleusma* - (from *keleuo* - to put in motion by word or command), a call, summons, a shout or command which assembles, any signal shout that summons and assembles all at once. (In Greek literature it is used of the shout to co-ordinate the timing of rowers on a galley.) Used in Lxx. Prov.30:27 - "The locusts .....at the word of command march in rank".

The shout is not necessarily audible to all but only to those for whom it is intended; in this case the responsible dead. So John 5:28-29 will come to pass and they "that are in the graves shall hear his voice".

Bro. Thomas writes in Eureka; "An angel's whisper can wake the dead, when breathed by the command of Him, who is the Resurrection and the Life. This would be a 'great sound' though inaudible to the ears of flesh".

"with the voice of the Archangel" – The only Archangel mentioned in scripture is Michael (Jude 9). The name means "Who like unto El". Michael appears to be the angel charged with guiding the destiny of the nation of Israel. This is the inference gained from verses such as Jude 9, Dan. 10:21; 12:1. It is highly probable that Michael was the angel of Yahweh's presence (Isa. 63:9), the name bearing angel of Ex. 23:20-21 who accompanied Israel through the wilderness and encountered Joshua outside the walls of Jericho describing himself as "the prince of the host of Yahweh", Josh. 5:14.

Christ is Yahweh's name-bearer (John 17:6, 26) and is called "Michael" in Dan. 12:1. Unto him is now given all power and authority in heaven and earth including the power of life and death; the authority to forgive and punish sins once exercised by Michael - Ex. 23:21. Thus he comes with the voice of the Archangel.

"with the trump of God" – The definite article is lacking in the text. Literally it should read "a trump of God". Gr. *salpinx* is used by Lxx. for two Hebrew words - see 1 Sam. 13:3; 2 Kings 12:13. This is possibly an indication that the trumpet is connected with those used in the Temple service.

The trumpet referred to is the silver trumpet used to assemble Israel before Yahweh's presence - Num. 10:2-10. On the first day of Tishri (7th month) Israel were to keep "a memorial of blowing of trumpets" - Lev. 23:24. This heralded the approach of the day of Atonement or coverings on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Tishri which in a Jubilee year was signalled by blowing of trumpets throughout the land - Lev. 25:8-10. This is significant as it is evident that the resurrection (a day of coverings for the redeemed) will occur exactly 50 years before the Jubilee inaugural ceremonies associated with the opening of the Millennium at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (15<sup>th</sup> day of Tishri) - Zech. 14:16. (See notes on the 'Jubilee Period').

Like the "shout", the sound of the trumpet will not be audible to all, any more than the Apocalyptic trumpets which for centuries have been sounding in the earth – Rev.8:2. The resurrectional trumpet is associated with the period of the seventh trumpet – Rev. 11:15-19.

"and the dead in Christ shall rise first" – Notice the sequence of events provided by the Apostle to this point :-

1. The living saints will not precede the dead.
2. Christ will return with a "shout" or command that will awaken the dead.
3. He will come with the authority of the Archangel to forgive or condemn, to invite in participation or banish.
4. The dead raised, he will gather the living with them into a place of judgement.

The absence of any specific reference to the judgement is quite deliberate in this context. The Apostle's theme is one of comfort to some who mourned their dead brethren (v.13) and he sets out to

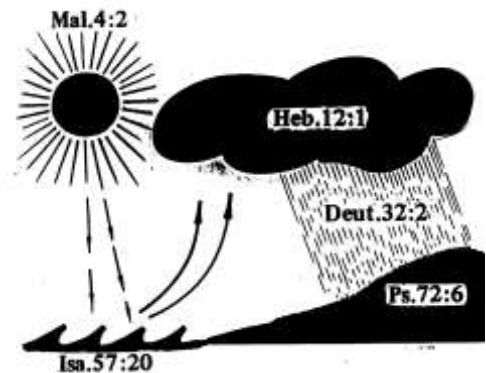
portray the glories and happiness for both dead and living at the return of Christ as a source of comfort and consolation — verse 18.

V.17 - "we which are alive and remain" – 'remain' is the Greek *perileipo* - to leave over (middle voice); to be left remaining, to survive. This is a reference to the relative few who will be living at Christ's return in comparison to the many responsible "who sleep in the dust of the earth".

"shall be caught up together" – The Greek word *harpazo* signifies to snatch, to seize, to take hold of forcibly as a wild beast does its prey. There is no hint of direction in the word — it implies neither going up or down. The word is used of Philip's removal to Azotus (or Ashdod) a distance of some 32 kms (20 miles) by miraculous means. It is translated "catcheth" (John 10:28), "pull" (Jude 23), "pulled" (Acts 23:10, and "take" (Matt. 11:12).

The responsible are to be "caught away" to the judgement by an irresistible divine force in a similar manner perhaps to Philip's experience.

"in the clouds" - The definite article is lacking, hence the Diaglott translates "be caught away in clouds". These clouds are symbolic of a multitude called out of, and raised above the sea of nations (Isa. 57:20) by the influence of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2) and reserved for the purpose of raining Yahweh's doctrine (Deut. 32:2) upon a humbled humanity (Ps. 72:6). Thus the Apostle speaks of the faithful saints as a great "cloud of witnesses". A more sinister multitude is referred to as a "cloud" in Ezek. 38:9, 16.



The saints will be gathered in companies to Mt. Sinai and stand in a vast multitude before the Judge who will separate "the sheep from the goats", so that he might form the "cloud of witnesses" in its glorified state (Rev. 10:1) and march forth 'clothed' with it to meet the Gogian "cloud" upon the mountains of Israel.

"to meet the Lord" – *apantesis* - with a view to a meeting. Moulton in his Greek Testament Grammar writes, "It seems that the special idea of the word was the official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary". In the Papyri it is used of a newly arrived magistrate. The word occurs in Matt. 25:6 in relation to the 'wise virgins' who rose up to go out and meet the Bridegroom, and again in Acts 28:15 of the brethren who went out to meet Paul as he approached Rome. Evidently it was the practice of leading citizens of a city to go forth and escort a dignitary on the last stages of his journey as a mark of respect and in an effort to gain his approval.

The purpose of gathering into the Lord's presence will be therefore to pay respect to the Judge of the whole earth and to obtain his approval.

"in the air" – Again the definite article is lacking: 'air' is figurative of the political 'atmosphere'; it is the aerial or governing region and refers to the government of Christ and his saints in the age to come. This government will be formed at Sinai, from which it will proceed to take dominion over the whole world.

That 'air' is symbolic of a ruling power is clear from such references as Eph. 2:2 and Rev. 9:2. In the parable of the mustard tree (Matt. 13:32) the Lord foretold the obeisance of earthly rulers ('the birds of the air') as the kingdom of heaven envelopes the earth. Daniel speaks of the glorified saints as being stars of the firmament (or atmosphere) – Dan. 12:3.

The hope of the saints is to be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in his kingdom not only as joint-heirs but as "kings and priests", ruling the earth in righteousness - Rev. 5:10; 3:21; 20:6.

"so shall we ever be with the Lord" - This is a glorious prospect in which all true saints exult. It will be a time of unspeakable blessedness and a state of unmixed joy and happiness which will last forever. Should we not "comfort one another with these words"?

### **HOW WILL WE KNOW CHRIST HAS RETURNED TO JUDGE THE HOUSEHOLD?**

As the gathering of the responsible living is to follow the resurrection, the question arises as to what manner of indication will be given to them that the Lord is in the earth. An appearance to them of an acquaintance or relative who had fallen asleep in Christ would be a certain way of revealing Christ's return and this method is not without scriptural precedent (Matt. 27:52-53) at a time of great significance in the divine plan, but a more probable way will be to confront each responsible individual with the angel who has been appointed to overshadow his affairs. (See notes on the Judgement Seat).

### **THE METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION TO JUDGEMENT**

It is evident from many places in scripture that divine power enables those endowed with it (e.g. the angels; the Lord himself) to traverse immense distances in a very short span of time.

A number of mortals have experienced the effects of this power and have been physically transported by it, namely:

Enoch – Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5

Elijah – 2 Kings 2:11

The 12 disciples – John 6:15-21

Philip – Acts 8:39-40

In the case of the disciples in the boat on Galilee, divine power was used to perform a miracle. They were immediately and instantly transported to the shore of the lake some distance away. Similarly, with Philip it is inferred that he was instantly 'caught away' some 32 kms (20 miles) to Azotus.

Perhaps the responsible will be transported in a similar manner to the precincts of Christ's judgement seat.

### **BE YE ALSO READY**

Do we believe the Lord's coming is near?  
How will we meet him, with joy or with fear?  
Will he be likely to then recognise  
In us the foolish or the virgins wise?

We make the answer as daily we live;  
In what we are thinking, in what we give,  
In what we may say, in acts we perform,  
The pattern of life to which we conform.

Two ways are open, the narrow and broad;  
Two masters to serve, the flesh or the Lord;  
The world and its joys can claim our real love,  
Or affections be set on what is above.

The time is now short, the Lord is at hand:  
And when he appears, just where shall we stand?  
Some on the left will depart into night,  
Who can imagine their terror and plight!

But O for the joys of those on the right,  
Exulting in praises, in glory and might!  
Then let us be ready, able to pray,  
With trembling, yet gladly, "Come, Lord, today".

# **RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE JUDGEMENT**

## **THE RESPONSIBILITY QUESTION**

Speaking to the Romans the Apostle wrote, "we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ" (Rom.14:10). Likewise to the Corinthians he said, "For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ" (2 Cor.5:10).

In a more general statement in 2 Tim. 4:1 he said that Christ would judge "the quick and the dead at his appearing", but not all the living and dead: only those who like the Roman and Corinthian brethren had become responsible to judgement by their knowledge of the truth.

Knowledge is the ground of responsibility – John 12:46-48; 15:22; 9:41; Rom. 2:12-16. Those who have come to a knowledge of the Truth sufficient to bring them to a realisation of what God requires of them will be held accountable to judgement regardless of their response to that knowledge. This is evident from many scriptural passages - Luke 13:24-28; Matt. 8:10-12; Luke 10:9-16; etc. Mankind is divided into two major divisions by knowledge—the enlightened and the unenlightened. The enlightened group may be further divided into three according to the definitions provided by Peter - 1 Pet. 4:17-18.

### **1 Peter 4:17-18**

There are three distinct groups among those enlightened by the Truth. They are, according to the Apostle Peter:

1. Righteous or godly saints
2. Ungodly saints
3. Enlightened sinners

The use of the terms 'saints' and 'sinners' distinguishes those who are responsible to divine judgement from those who are accountable to divine judgement, in this case. In fact mankind is basically divided into two classes, saints and sinners and each of these classes is again divided into two groups, namely, godly and ungodly saints and enlightened and unenlightened sinners.

## **SAINTS AND SINNERS**

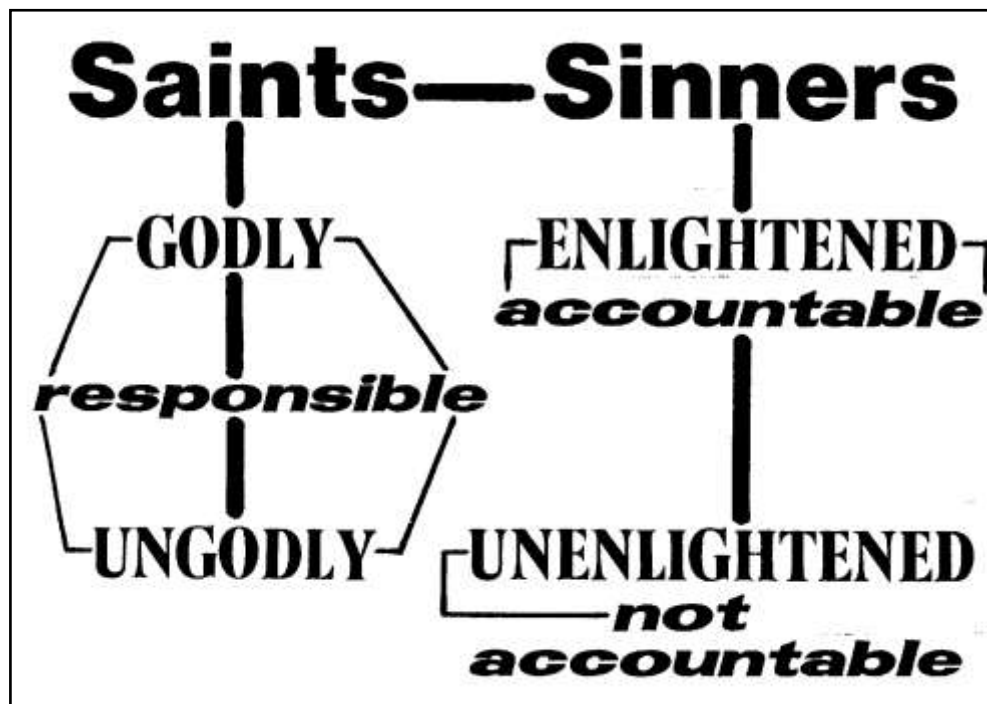
All men are born under the constitution of sin being endowed with a nature that leads to sin (in all but one) – see Rom. 5:19 and Elpis Israel pages 129-131. When one obeys the call of the gospel and enters into covenant relationship with God, he is called a "saint" or sanctified one – Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2.

## **RESPONSIBLE OR ACCOUNTABLE?**

Responsibility is the state of being answerable for something entrusted to one's care. This is the position of those who enjoy covenant status, or "saints". They must answer for the way they deal with the charge delivered to them and for the way they discharge the responsibilities which covenant status confers upon them.

Accountability is liability to give an account. Those "sinners" who have been enlightened by the Truth but have refused to accept its responsibilities will nevertheless have to give an account of why they so refused. They will be held accountable to, but not responsible for the Truth they have ignored.

Hence the two classes and four groups may be seen as standing in relationship to divine judgement in the following way:



"Sinners" are justified by faith by responding to the teaching that is delivered to them, thus those who rejected it must give account as to why they rejected the Word - John 12:46-48.

"Saints" are justified by works by living the Word, hence they will be held responsible for the sacred deposit of the Truth delivered to them and must answer for the way they have used it. Thus it will be that they will either be godly or ungodly according to their actions.

### UNIVERSAL RESURRECTION UNSCRIPTURAL

Only those responsible to judgement will be raised from the dead. The notion of a universal resurrection advanced by some religious sects is entirely unscriptural as evinced by the following passages: —

Dan. 12:2 - "Many (but not all) of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

Isa.26:14 - "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed and made all their memory to perish."

Isa.43:17 - "Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as tow."

Ps.49:19-20 - "He (mgn. the soul) shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."



# THE RESURRECTION

## A DEFINITION

The Greek word *anastasis* meaning a rising up, a standing up (from the root *anistemi*, to stand up, to cause to rise) is used 42 times in the New Testament and is translated 39 times 'resurrection', once 'rising again', once 'raised to life again', and once 'that should rise'.

Resurrection is therefore the standing up of dead ones. The resurrection will be a virtual re-creation of former beings into exactly the same mental, moral, and physical state that they possessed prior to their death.

The apostle Paul deals at length with the subject of resurrection in 1 Cor. 15 and this discourse along with the symbolic enactment of Daniel's resurrection recorded in Dan. 10 will form the basis of the following notes.

## PAUL'S DISCOURSE ON RESURRECTION - 1 Cor. 15:35-54

The apostle sets out to answer some in the Corinthian ecclesia who denied the doctrine of resurrection altogether. He refutes their arguments in this section and in the process demonstrates the whole process of resurrection up to its final objective — the incorruptible, glorified being. He reveals that this final state is one of 'difference with identity', i.e. the glorified individual with an immortal body will retain his basic physical form, individual identity, character and moral attributes.

V.35 - "How are the dead raised up" – Bro. Thomas translates, "How are the dead ones rebuilt". The word 'raised up' being *egeiro* signifies to awaken, wake up, arouse, cause to rise up and in the passive voice, to rebuild, rear up, to cause to exist.

"and with what body do they come" – Bro. Thomas translates, "and for what body do they come forth". The word 'with' should be translated "to" or "for". Paul anticipates the question of his detractors. The question is – for what purpose are they raised? Will they remain as they are after the resurrection? What body will they assume when 'rebuilding' is completed?

V.36 - "Thou fool" — An exclamation as translated by Rotherham, "simple one", and the Diaglott, "O senseless man". The word 'fool' is *aphron* - without mind, senseless, destitute of any sound principle. Paul is moved to thus rebuke his detractors because even nature itself taught them the principles of resurrection.

"that which thou sowest" - *speiro* (active voice) to scatter seed, to sow seed. It is important to note that while the apostle likens the sown seed to the dead body being laid in the ground, his emphasis is not upon the dead body or its dissolution but upon the new body which springs forth at the resurrection. This is in keeping with the anticipated question he has asked in verse 35 - "to or for what body do they come forth?" The apostle's mind is riveted firmly on the issue which confronted him in Corinth – is bodily resurrection fact or fable? Some in Corinth thought it to be fable because their Hellenised minds could not understand how it was possible for a man to be raised after centuries of dissolution into a being identical with his former self, mentally, morally, and physically, but the philosophers of Corinth had not even considered the natural phenomena of sowing grain which clearly illustrated the principles involved and testified to its possibility in the human sphere.

"is not quickened except it die" - The word 'quickened' is *zoopoieo* - to make alive, to give life. This is a direct reference to the words of Christ in John 12:23-26. The principle of nature is that new life is preceded by death of the original seed body - so it is also in the human sphere, both in a physical and spiritual sense.

## THE TERMS 'SOWN' AND 'RAISED' AS USED IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15:36-52

There are a number of views current on the meaning of the phrase "It is sown" used by the apostle in 1 Cor. 15:42-44. The principal suggestions are: -

1. That we are 'sown' when we are born into a state and an environment related to corruption, dishonour, weak-ness, and to things natural. This 'sowing' is said to cease at death and is followed by a resurrection and a 'raising' process which ultimately leads to immortality and incorruptibility. Paul's words are compared with the parable of the Sower and the Lord's reference to "a corn of wheat" in John 12:24-26 in order to show that 'sowing' in the life of a believer is actually a 'dying' process - "I die daily" (1 Cor. 15:31).
2. That we are 'sown' when our dead body is placed in the ground after the pattern of sowing grain in the cultivated earth.
3. That we are 'sown' when we are called forth from the grave at the resurrection of the dead.

### A critical examination of the three views

View 1 – While this interpretation of the phrase "it is sown" answers some apparent difficulties in 1 Cor. 15 and clearly sets forth the scriptural teaching in respect to sowing and reaping in the Truth it nevertheless fits very uncomfortably into the context of Paul's discourse on resurrection. How are we to reconcile this view that 'sowing' relates to life and probation with the introductory sentence of 1 Cor. 15:42 - "So also is the resurrection (*anastasis* standing up) of the dead"? This sentence forms the bridge between v.38 and v.42 which are divided by a parenthetic expansion of the phrase "and to every seed his own body" (v.38). Paul's subject is quite clearly resurrection of a dead body not the life and probation of a living being. He is expounding the question "How are the dead raised up? And 'to' or 'for' what body do they come forth?" (v.35). Any interpretation of the

phrase "it is sown" must therefore be consistent with that theme and this interpretation simply cannot be made to fit the context.

View 2 – The objection advanced against this view is that Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:44, "It is sown a natural body" and uses the words *psuchikon soma* meaning a living body. This automatically rules out the possibility of reference to the burying of a dead carcass. This is correct in respect to the context of Vv.42-44 but it is not valid in respect to v.36. The reason for this lies in the different voice of the word 'sown' used by the apostle. In verses 36 and 37 the word *speireis* is used and is in the active voice meaning the act of scattering and sowing seed. However, in verses 42-44 the word *speiretai* is used and is in the passive voice. Depending on the context this word relates not so much to the act of sowing but the results of sowing, hence Bro. Thomas translates it, "it springs forth" in reference to the sprout body of a planted seed. (See under the word *speiro* in the Greek-English Lexicon by Liddell and Scott). The context requires us to accept this meaning. Bearing in mind that verses 39-41 are virtually a parenthetic statement, verse 42 can be read immediately following verse 38 where the context clearly refers to the sprout body – the first visible sign of sowing; the emergence from the ground of a new plant. Therefore, the apostle likens the sowing of seed to the burying of the dead body in verses 36 and 37 and goes on to employ the simile of its sprouting forth from the ground in the context of the resurrection of the body. Having developed his theme to this point the apostle then says, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It springs forth in corruption..." The 'sowing' of v.42 therefore relates to the newly resurrected body as it comes forth in a state of corruption, dishonour, weakness, and natural life.

View 3 – This is the view advanced by Bro. Thomas in his work "Anastasis" (1866) and is based upon the meaning of the word 'sown' in verses 42-44 explained above in View 2. The only objection raised against this view has

been that at resurrection believers are 'reaped' not 'sown'. That is true, but such an argument fails to take into account either the variation in meaning of the word *speiretai* used in the passive voice or the demands of the context. If the meaning of the word provided by Bro. Thomas is accepted, and some notable Lexicographers do support his interpretation, then the weakness and invalidity of this objection immediately appears. Paul is speaking about the 'springing forth' of the resurrected body and such terminology undeniably relates to the resurrection.

### **'RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE' - 1 Cor.15:52**

Two very diverse interpretations have been placed upon this phrase. They are:-

- a. That the dead are resurrected with incorruptible bodies, i.e. they come forth from the grave immortal. This doctrine is commonly known as 'immortal emergence'.
- b. That the dead are 'raised', 'reared up', 'rebuilt', and 'caused to exist' by a process in stages to ultimate incorruptibility.

### **An examination of the two interpretations**

Interpretation 1 – This doctrine does away with the judgement of the "just and unjust"

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V.37 - "thou sowest not that body that shall be" – Roth. - "not the body that shall come into existence dost thou sow". The sprout body differs from the original seed body as does the fully grown plant.

"but bare grain" – Roth. - "but a naked kernel". An apt description of the lifeless corpse laid like a seed in the ground.

"it may chance of wheat" – Roth. - "if it so happen of wheat".

V.38 - "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him" — The word "pleased" is *thelo* meaning to will, to wish, to desire. It is an inflexible divine principle that all things produce "after their kind" (Gen.1:11,12,21,24,25). There is no confusion in nature and the same principle will apply to the resurrected body. A body placed in the grave after an existence in a state of corruption, dishonour, and weakness will not be raised in a state of perfection, incorruption, honour and power. The human cannot become the angelic nor the terrestrial ascend to the celestial without a complete change effected by the intervention of the divine will.

before the tribunal of Christ; leaves responsible but unworthy saints and accountable sinners in the grave, and does similar violence to many other doctrines of the "one faith". The apostle does not say, "The dead are resurrected incorruptible", but "the dead are raised incorruptible". Everything hinges on the word 'raised' and investigation shows that it must not be confused with *anastasis* or "standing up" of dead ones.

Interpretation 2 - The Greek word translated 'raised' is *egeiro* meaning to awaken, wake up, arouse, cause to rise up, etc. In 1 Cor. 15:52 it is in the passive voice. The word has wide usage in the N.T. and relates to rising from sickness, sitting or lying; to appearing or raising up so as to occupy a place in the midst of people; to the raising of buildings; to rising up against, as well as to the rising of the dead. For the phrase "shall be raised" which in the Greek is the word *egerthesontai* Bro. Thomas gives the meaning "to raise up, or again, to rebuild, to cause to exist" and adds that "it includes the whole process of rebuilding from the awakening to the quickening" into immortality. The apostle is therefore teaching that the dead "spring forth" in a state of corruption, dishonour, and weakness, but when adjudged worthy of eternal life are "caused to exist" by a process of "rebuilding" into a state of incorruptibility, honour, and power.

V.39-41 – These verses form a parenthetical statement by the apostle on the variety and quality of flesh in creation and the variation of glory between bodies terrestrial and celestial. As this is not directly relevant to the present study these notes will pass on to verse 42.

V.42 - "So also is the resurrection of the dead" - The word *anastasis* meaning "a standing up" occurs here. Bro. Thomas translates "So also is the standing up of the dead ones". This sentence binds the subject of verses 37, 38 and 42 together as pointed out in the previous remarks on "sown" and "raised". The apostle has spoken of the seed being planted, dying, and sprouting forth in new life after its kind. This he likens to the resurrection or standing up of dead ones from the dust of the ground.

"It is sown in corruption" - The word 'sown' in this and the following verses is *speiretai* and is in the passive voice. The Greek-English Lexicon by Liddell and Scott under the word *speiro* says "passive, spring or be born". This conforms with Bro. Thomas who gives the meaning as "to spring or be born". The context however, must finally determine the meaning of the word used by the apostle. It is easy to wrest a scriptural passage such as this by the strict application of one shade of meaning of a Greek word which completely contradicts the thrust of the argument.

There is no fear of this mistake being made in this verse. The context most clearly concerns the springing forth of the newly germinated plant from the ground, and this is likened to the standing up of dead ones. Hence, Bro. Thomas correctly translates the phrase, "It is sprouted".

The resurrected body "is sprouted" in a state of corruption which was the condition of its nature before death. It is in exactly the same condition of nature as its previous existence and remains in that condition until 'raised' or allowed to perish once more into the dust.

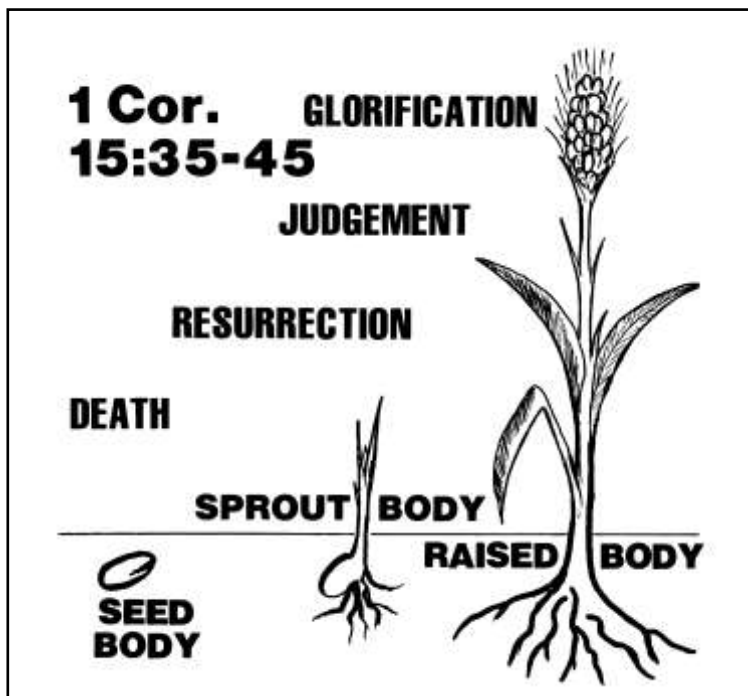
"it is raised in incorruption" - The word 'raised' is *egerthesontai* and signifies to raise up, or again, to rebuild, to cause to exist. (See notes on this word in previous section). Bro. Thomas says that the word "includes the whole process of rebuilding from the awakening to the quickening". The individual having been awakened from sleep in the dust of the earth assumes his former identity, mentally, morally, and physically and stands before the judgement seat of Christ in a state of

'corruption', 'weakness', 'dishonour', the possessor of a natural, living body. If accepted by Christ as worthy, saints will undergo a change "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" into a state of incorruptibility or immortality. He is then said to be "raised in incorruption". This is the third and final stage of the process after the pattern of raising grain.

The three stages are:—

1. The seed body — Burial of the dead body
2. The sprout body — Anastasis (standing up or resurrection)
3. The raised body — Rebuilding or immortalisation

These stages are illustrated in the diagram at left.



In verses 42 to 44 the apostle presents the contrasts between the resurrected body and the glorified body.

Note the pattern of these contrasts: -

<b>"Sown"</b>	<b>"Raised"</b>
<b>IN</b>	<b>IN</b>
Corruption	Incorruption
Dishonour	Glory
Weakness	Power
A natural body	A spiritual body

V.43 - "dishonour" – *atimia* - denotes dishonour, ignominy, disgrace.

"glory" – *doxa* - denotes renown, splendour, brilliance, glory.

"weakness" – *astheneia* - denotes want of strength, infirmity, weakness, feebleness.

"power" – *dunamis* - signifies natural capability, inherent power, capability of anything.

V.44 - "a natural body" – *psuchikon soma* - a living body. This then is contrasted with a spiritual body or a body empowered by Spirit.

V.45 - In this verse the apostle demonstrates the difference between natural life and spiritual life in the resurrected state by contrasting the first Adam with the last Adam.

"The first man Adam" – Adam was the only man (excepting Eve) not to have come into existence by the process of conception in the womb and birth. He was formed into a mature being by the Elohim out of the dust of the ground after their own image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). His experience conforms exactly to that of the resurrected being who likewise will be formed out of the dust into the same image and likeness as his former self.

"was made a living soul" – Roth. and Diag. - "became a living soul". The quality of his nature was natural, earthy, capable of corruption. This is a direct quotation from Gen.2:7.

"the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" – Diag. - "the last Adam a life-giving spirit". Christ 'became' a quickening spirit by a process of 'raising' as will his brethren (see Rom.14:9).

The word 'quickening' *zoopoieo* occurred in verse 36 and signifies to make alive, give life. Christ has been raised incorruptible' and exalted by the Father to become Judge and bestower of eternal life upon all who are worthy - John 5:21-29.

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## THE CONDITION OR NATURE OF THE RESURRECTED BODY

In "Anastasis" Bro. Thomas states on a number of occasions that the resurrected body will be in condition and nature like the body of Adam before he transgressed and was made subject to death. The following quotations will suffice to reveal the Doctor's mind on this point in 1866 (refer also Eureka vol. 1, pg. 63).

"This is our present life, intermitted at death, and restored when we awake from our sleep in the dust of sheol. We are then as Adam was when he came from the Creator's hand. The life is organic and terminable; and liable to disturbance from any cause operating judicially."

".....so that far as body is concerned in the matter, the one character on record in the Lamb's Book of Life, when glorified, will have been related to three bodies, more or less intimately connected - the first, the body of sin; the second, a body like Adam's before he sinned: the third....."

"The crowd before him in this stage of resurrection, which is simply ANASTASIS, or standing up, are in corruption, dishonour, weakness, and naturalty; for those physical qualities are constituents of all bodies begotten or conceived in dust - "Dust of the earth, earthy"; yet 'very good' bodies, in the sense that the first Adam's was 'very good' before he sinned."

It would appear that Bro. Thomas adopted this view on the basis of the context of Paul's quotation of Gen.2:7 in 1 Cor.15:45 but as pointed out in previous notes, it seems obvious that the apostle is simply contrasting the natural with the spiritual, the earthy with the heavenly and the terrestrial with the celestial. It is evidently not his intention that we should assume that the resurrected body will be in the 'very good' state but rather in a natural and earthy condition in contrast to the belief of some that the body would emerge immortal and incorruptible.

### **In relation to destiny**

It has been suggested that Bro. Thomas's view is correct if seen from the point of view of Adam's relation to destiny. Adam, before he sinned, was not subject to death and his destiny depended upon the intervention of the divine edict or sentence acting upon him judicially to grant him immortality or consign him into mortality or subjection to death. This is said to be the state in which the dead having been raised will stand before Christ. They will be raised in a 'very good' state having paid their debt to the Law of sin and death and experienced the consequences of mortality.

There seems to be little evidence for this view however. Of the many cases of resurrection in the scriptures there are some where dissolution of the body had occurred (e.g. Matt. 27:52-53) and some where corruption had set in (e.g.

John 11:39). In all the cases of resurrection it is evident that every one, except the Lord himself, died again in due time and experienced corruption. It is clear therefore that the resurrected body remains subject to death. This conforms to the pattern observed in the typical resurrection of Daniel and of the Lord himself who had to receive "a change of raiment" before exaltation to his Father's side (Zech. 3:1-5).

### **Bro. Thomas in Eureka Volume Three**

As time went on, subsequent to the publication of Anastasis it appears that Bro. Thomas modified his understanding on the subject of the condition of the resurrected body. A few quotations from Eureka volume three adequately demonstrate this point.

"This would not have been affirmed of him (Christ) while dead. But the dead body was made to live again. It was thus restored to its former life; brought back to what it was before; .....the risen Jesus waited to be changed, or transformed, into what he was not on emerging from the tomb. The true believers who hope not to die, knowing that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, are also waiting to be changed or transformed into what they are not. The position of Jesus and this remnant is identical" (page 383).

"This coming forth of the future constituents of the perfect man from the graves, restores them to an equality with the few among the living, who may attain perfection with them. In this co-equality they are intellectually, morally, and materially alike" (page 586).

"But, passing through the grave cleanses no one. They who emerge thence, 'Come forth' with the same nature they carried into it; and therefore their coming forth is resurrection. If the same kind of body did not come forth that was buried, it would not be resurrection, but only surrection, as in the case of the first man.....He (Jesus) rose again the same Jesus that was buried, only that instead of being dead, he was alive again. He was buried under the curse of the Law, which 'made him a curse for' our benefit (Gal.3:13): He came forth while that same Law was in force and

operation, his coming forth upon the arena of his execution did not relieve him from the curse of that Law, which sentenced him to continuous and everlasting death; so that, if they could have recaptured him, the Mosaic authorities would doubtless have returned him into death" (page 587).

"I have been rather particular in the exposition of the things connected with the body of Jesus, which being made subjectively to know, 'the way of lives' became the 'way' (John 14:6), illustrative of the manner in which all his brethren will experimentally pass from the humiliation of death to the exaltation of eternal life and glory. They, as he, come forth from

the unclean house of death earthy, and, therefore unclean bodies" (page 589).

"All that comes out of the ground is cursed, and unclean; so that even the body of Jesus, and the bodies of the approved saints in resurrection, require to be justified, rectified, purged or perfected, by all-absorbing spirit: which makes every atom of their substance instinct with incorruption, and life; in other words, transforms it into spirit" (page 705).

If the context from which these quotations have been made is examined, it will be seen that Bro. Thomas is emphasising that in nature and condition the resurrected body will be identical to those who are 'alive and remain' unto the return of Christ.

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## **THE THREE STAGES OF RESURRECTION ILLUSTRATED IN DANIEL'S TYPICAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION - DANIEL 10**

In the third year of Cyrus, the year of Daniel's death, a vision was given to the prophet of 'a Certain Man' or 'Man of the One' who represented the Multitudinous Christ, the perfected and glorified ecclesia of which Daniel himself was to be a member. Having beheld the vision Daniel describes the experience which then overtook him - a typical enactment of his own death, resurrection, judgement and glorification as an example of the process he and others would have to pass through to become part of the 'Man of the One'.

### **Daniel's Typical Death — Daniel 10:8-9**

V.8 - "There remained no strength in me, for my vigour turned in me into corruption and I retained no strength" – The loss of strength and bodily vigour is tantamount to the passing of life from the body.

V.9 - "then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground" – Daniel was prostrate upon the ground in a deep sleep. This is a graphic enactment of death.

### **The First Stage of Daniel's Resurrection — Daniel 10:10**

V.10 - "And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands" — The application of power brought about a renewal of existence but its effect was partial, not complete. He had life but was not vigorous. This is typical of the reformation of the dead and their emergence from the grave.

### **The Second Stage of Daniel's Resurrection — Daniel 10:11-17**

V.11 - "and stand upright" – He was now the subject of *anastasis*, the standing up of dead ones.

"I stood trembling" – Though standing Daniel remained extremely feeble and evidently in a state of fear.

V.15 - "I set my face toward the ground and I became dumb" – Daniel's weakness is revealed here. He was conscious that his nature was still earth-tending and he was speechless, rendering him incapable of giving an account to his judge.

V.16 - "one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake" – This enabled Daniel to give an account of himself at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

### **The Third Stage of Daniel's Resurrection - Daniel 10:18-19**

V.18 - "there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me" – This signified Daniel's approval and bestowed his reward for faithfulness. It is equivalent to being changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye' into a state of incorruptibility.

V.19 - "peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong" – Typically Daniel now stood forth immortal in the tranquillity of unfading strength.

## **THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**

### **THE LOCALITY OF THE JUDGEMENT SEAT**

All references to the judgement seat of Christ imply a specific locality. For example:

"We shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ" - Rom. 14:10

"We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ" - 2 Cor. 5:10

"We beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him" 2 Thess. 2:1

"Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" Psalm 50:5-6

It being established that the judgement seat will be set up in a specific locality there remains the task of seeking within scripture as to where that locality might be. The inferential evidence is strong indeed. Three contexts will now be considered that shed considerable light on this subject. They are Deut. 33, Ps. 68, and Habakkuk 3.

### **YAHWEH COMES IN FROM SINAI – Deut. 33:2-3**

V.2 - "Yahweh came from Sinai" – Though much of this chapter is couched in the past tense it is nevertheless evident that Moses is speaking prophetically not historically. Note the unfulfilled prophecy concerning Israel's future security and glory – Vv.26-29.

Yahweh (He who shall become) the prophetic name of Deity which encapsulates His purpose of being glorified in a multitude made like unto Himself, significantly occurs here. It speaks of the multitudinous Christ (Yahweh and all His saints, Zech. 14:5) arising from Sinai to proceed forth on their mission of conquest.

Bro. Thomas translates the phrase, "Yahweh came in from Sinai". The prophecy is couched in the past tense because its fulfilment is guaranteed on the principle of Rom. 4:17. Moses saw the multitudinous Christ go forth from the region of Sinai and march by stages to the Land of Promise. Their point of departure being Sinai, it is reasonable to assume that it was the place of judgement and the scene of the glorification of the worthy and faithful saints.

"and rose up from Seir unto them" – The word 'rose up' is *zarach* in the Hebrew signifying to irradiate (or shoot forth beams) i.e. to rise (as the sun). The analogy is that of the sun rising at the



dawn of a new day, and travelling over the expanse of heaven. The picture is of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2), together with his saints (Matt.13:43) rising upon the political 'earth' and going forth to dispel its darkness — 2 Thess. 2:8; 1:7-10.

As Christ's entry into the land will be from the east the analogy of the rising sun is very appropriate.

"he shined forth from Mt. Paran" — Again the analogy is that of the sun, now risen high in the sky. The exact location of Mt. Paran is difficult to determine but it was somewhere in the region of Kadesh-Barnea. Christ and his saints are seen moving rapidly across the region of the Sinai Peninsular, northwards, then eastwards and then north again to enter the land from the east.

"and he came with ten thousands of saints" – The word 'came' is *athah* signifying to arrive, to appear speedily, suddenly, and unexpectedly. This is true of the rising sun. The saints are likened to the rays of the sun shining forth and dispelling the darkness of the political earth. Ten thousand is a symbolic number in scripture representing an innumerable multitude - see 1 Cor. 4:15; 14:19; Ps. 3:6, Song of Sol. 5:10; 1 Sam. 29:5; Jude 14.

Rotherham translates, "Yea he came out of holy myriads". The word 'thousands' is *rebabah* - abundance, i.e. a myriad. Moses is speaking not of Israel in the wilderness but of the innumerable company of the redeemed (Rev. 7:9) who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth".

"from his right hand" – The symbol of power and authority exercised by the Lord Jesus Christ and his saints - Ps. 44:3; 45:4, 9.

"a fiery law for them" – Bro. Thomas translates, "a fiery mandate". Roth. - "fire to guide them". The word *eshdath* in the Hebrew means a fire-law. The symbol of fire is frequently used in the context of judgement and it is evident that the law which emanates from Christ's hand has to do with the judgement of the nations

## **FROM SINAI INTO THE HOLY PLACE – Psalm 68**

V.1 - "Let God arise" — This verse is a direct quotation from Num. 10:35 except that David makes one important change to Moses' words. Each day the movement of the Ark was heralded by the words "Rise up, Yahweh, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before". Similarly when the Ark rested Moses said, "Return, O Yahweh, unto the many thousands of Israel" (Num.10:33-36).

It is significant that these words are quoted in a Psalm which deals with the bringing up of the Ark to Jerusalem. Both the progress of the Ark from Sinai to Canaan and its installation by David in Jerusalem were highly typical events. The Ark of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ and its cherubim, the glorified saints will again move from Sinai into Jerusalem.

Hence David substitutes 'Elohim' for 'Yahweh', for then 'he who will become' will be manifested in a multitude of 'mighty ones'. No longer will Yahweh go before the nation and return to it as in the days of Moses but He will be manifested in a host who will bear His name.

V.4 - "extol Him that rideth upon the heavens by his name Yah" – Roth. - "that rideth through the waste plains". The word 'heavens' is *arabah* and should read Lit. "through the deserts". This compares beautifully with Deut. 33:2 as the Arabah is the arid region south of the Dead Sea, to the east of Paran and in the proximity of Seir.

V.17 - "The chariots of God are twenty thousand" – Roth. - "The chariots of God are two myriads, thousands repeated". As stated in the notes on Deut. 33:2 this is a symbolic number representing an innumerable multitude - the multitudinous Christ. Chariots are vehicles of warfare (Ps.20:7; Ex. 14:7). These being the 'chariots of Elohim' are symbolic of Christ and the saints in

warlike manifestation as the vehicle of Yahweh in His controversy against the nations. It is upon these chariots that He rides through the Arabah (v.4).

"even thousands of angels" – The word 'angels' is *shinan* signifying to change, to reiterate, a repeating. Hence, Roth. - "thousands repeated". Other translations provide the alternative, "the changed ones".

"the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place" – Bro. Thomas translates, "The Lord among them, Sinai in the holy". While this is literally correct there are other translations which appear to throw light on David's meaning. In his margin Rotherham quotes Ginsburg who translates, "the Lord hath come from Sinai into the sanctuary". The Companion Bible has, "Yahweh among them (the chariots and the angels) hath come from Sinai into his sanctuary". The Jerusalem Bible has, "the Lord has left Sinai for his sanctuary". The word *adonai* should be Yahweh, being one of the changes made by the Sopherim. This beautifully harmonises this verse with verse 4.

The saints are pictured as the cherubic-chariots of Deity amongst whom is found Yahweh (Christ - the Father's name-bearer) riding from the precincts of Sinai through the Arabah and into his sanctuary - Jerusalem.

Once again the point of departure for Christ and his saints is Sinai, proving almost conclusively that it is the place of judgement.

V.18 - "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive" – Paul quotes these words in Eph. 4:8 and applies them to the resurrection and glory of Christ, as the guarantee of the resurrection and glorification of his faithful brethren. This confirms the fact that the Psalm deals with things that were beyond the days of David.

### **ELOAH SHALL COME FROM THE SOUTH – Hab. 3:3-4**

V.3 - "God came from Teman" – The title of Deity used is Eloah signifying 'the mighty one' and is clearly a reference to Christ. See use of the word in Dan. 2:44. Of this mighty one it is said in Hab. 3:13, "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed". The anointed of this verse are the glorified, thus fully anointed saints, (2 Cor. 1:21).

Teman simply means the south, i.e. south of Israel or the region of Sinai.

It is important to note that though this verse is in the past tense it should be translated in the future tense, hence Bro. Thomas translates, "Eloah shall come in from the south". The word *yahvo* occurs in the text and should read 'shall come in', being in the future tense. That Habakkuk speaks of future events is obvious from the latter half of the verse.

Once again the starting point of Messiah's advance into the land is from the region of Sinai, the place of judgement.

"and the holy one from mount Paran" – Compare these words with Deut. 33:2. The march of Christ and his saints takes them through the region of Paran just south of Kadesh-Barnea.

"His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise" – Habakkuk proceeds to the ultimate purpose of the work commenced in Sinai - to fill the earth with Yahweh's glory manifested in Christ and the saints.

V.4 - "And his brightness was as the light" – Roth. - "And a brightness as light appeareth". This parallels with the analogy of the sun found in Deut. 33. Christ and the saints "the kings of the sun's rising" (Rev. 16:12) will dawn upon a darkened world like the rays of the sun rising over the horizon at the dawn of a new day.

"he had horns coming out of his hand" – The word 'horns' is *qeren* - a horn (as projecting); the word can mean a ray of light. Hence Rotherham translates, "rays out of his hand hath he". The Jerusalem Bible translates, "rays flash from his hands". Again the figure used is that of the sun. The rays or 'horns' which emanate from the hand of the mighty one are symbolic of the saints in glory. Both the horn and the hand are symbols of power, hence

"there was the hiding of his power" – The word 'hiding' is *chebyown* signifying a concealment. Thus, the Jerusalem Bible translates, "that is where his power lies hidden". There is another remarkable correlation of ideas here with Deut. 33:2 - "From his right hand went a fiery law for them". The saints will be the ministers of judgement to the nations - Ps. 149; Jude 14.

The evidence of these three passages of scripture seems quite conclusive. Sinai is the place of judgement, made so by divine decree, historical associations and admirable suitability for the purpose.

## **SINAI - THE MOUNTAIN OF JUDGEMENT**

The suitability of Sinai as the place of judgement is well described by Bro. H.P. Mansfield in this extract from the Logos Prophetic Supplement (Vol. 36 No. 8).

A place that is isolated, and likely to remain so, is required to permit the secret and uninterrupted communion of Christ with his brethren, following the Judgment (see Isa. 26:20-21).

Sinai is adequately situated for the purpose. It is also rich in historical background so as to provide the solemn significance for such an occasion. It was at Sinai that Moses received his call, and witnessed the miracle of the burning bush. There, also, Yahweh announced His name which is expressive of His covenant with Abraham. At the Mount, Israel was given the law and was constituted the Kingdom of God. To it, Elijah fled from the fury of Jezebel after his dramatic destruction of the priests of Baal and in the storm of hurricane and earthquake, and then in the "still, small voice," he was provided with an outstanding apocalypse of divine power and wisdom. At Sinai, most likely, Paul received the revelations that were so awe-inspiring and wonderful, that he was not then permitted to reveal them unto others.

The Sinaitic Peninsula is in the form of a triangle bordered on the one side by the Red Sea, and on the other by the Gulf of Akaba. It is recognised as one of the most mountainous regions of the earth's surface.

Towering, rugged mountains of red granite are intersected by narrow valleys and desolate plains. Before Horeb is a vast plain at the head of valleys that lead to it, and in which the Israelites camped when they were led there by Moses.

Moses describes the area as "a great and terrible wilderness of fiery serpents, scorpions and

drought" (Deut. 8:15). Jeremiah declares that it is "a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passeth through, and where no man dwelleth" (Jer. 2:6).

The Mount itself is approached through a valley some 200 feet wide, with huge masses of perpendicular granite rocks on either side. which appear as though shattered and split by earthquake. The valley has a gentle, but constant, ascent; the scenery is stern as is appropriate to the use of the site. It proclaims the land of miracles, and its awful 'isolation and split, eroded rocks seem to suggest the terrors of Yahweh. The scenes are suited to the sounds of the fearful trumpet that was once heard there, and the equally anxious feelings that will be induced by the setting up there of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

### **A Description of Sinai**

The giving of the Law is associated with two peaks: Horeb and Sinai. They form two eminences on the extremes of a plateau some three miles long. It was before Horeb that the people gathered and heard the voice of Yahweh: it was to Sinai that Moses ascended when he "spake face to face" with the angel name-bearer. Horeb is some 6,500 feet above sea level (Sinai about 7,500 feet), and about 1,000 feet above the plain. It has a cliff-like appearance, rising precipitously, like a huge altar set in a sanctuary, and is faced by a large plain capable of containing an immense concourse of people. In *Sinai and Palestine*, Dr. Stanley comments:

"That such a plain should exist at all in front of such a cliff is so remarkable a coincidence with the sacred narrative as to furnish a strong internal argument, not merely of its identity with the scene, but of the scene itself having been described by an eye-witness. The awful and lengthened approach, as to some natural sanctuary, would have been the fittest preparation for the coming scene. The low line of alluvial mounds at the foot of the cliff exactly answers to the 'bounds' which were to keep the people off from 'touching the Mount.' The Plain itself is not broken and uneven and narrowly shut in like almost all others in the range, but presents a long retiring sweep, against which the people could 'remove and stand afar off.' The cliff rising like a huge altar in front of the whole congregation, and visible against the sky in lonely splendour from end to end of the whole plain is the very image of the 'mount that might be touched,' and from which the 'voice' of God might be heard far and wide over the stillness of (he plain below, widened at

**that point to its utmost extent by the confluence of all the continuous valleys."**

The experience had a profound effect upon the people of Israel when they gathered there under Moses, so that they entreated with him to intercede for them whilst they retired afar off. How much more awe-inspiring will be our visit to that Mount. Already the power of Yahweh will be visibly manifested in that the majority of the innumerable host then assembled will have been raised from the dead. We will be re-united with loved ones who have died but then will live again. Each one there assembled will doubtless be impressed by his or her unworthiness for eternal life, and yet buoyed up in the confidence that God is love, and that He has provided an Advocate who knows and understands our feelings, and whose sympathetic consideration will extend the mercy of forgiveness wherever possible consistent with the justness and righteousness of his Father. Thus the principles of holiness and reverence to the Name of Yahweh will be elevated by all to the glory of the One who proclaimed it.

## **THE JUDGEMENT SEAT A LITERAL REALITY**

Perhaps the most graphic picture of the judgement seat is given by the Judge himself in his parable of the Sheep and the Goats - Matt. 25:31-46.

### **Matthew 25:31-46**

V.31 - "When the son of man" – Significantly the Lord uses the title 'son of man'. This is the title of Christ which emphasises his delegated authority from his Father. It was precisely because of his being son of Adam as well as son of God that he is qualified to judge all men - John 5:21-22, 27.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Who better to exercise divine judgement?

"and all the holy angels with him" – That the angels will play an important part in our judgement is beyond doubt; therefore, a special section will be devoted to this subject later in these notes.

"then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" – This throne is clearly not the throne of David which will be the throne of Christ's glory during the Kingdom age but Christ's judgement throne at Sinai. Compare the language used in this verse with the Lord's description of the judgement in Luke 9:26. The Lord presents a vivid picture of a literal throne upon which he himself will sit arrayed in glory and surrounded by his angels who will assist him in the judgement process. It is purifying to mentally contemplate this scene as it will transpire on the plain beneath Mt. Sinai.

V.32 - "And before him shall be gathered all nations" – Some have thought this to be a reference to the judgement of the nations as it is described in Daniel 7. However, the context of Matt. 25 clearly has reference to individual responsibility and ultimate judgement. Note the parable of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents and also v.41 and v.46. The reward of the righteous in the case is 'life eternal'; this is certainly not affirmable of the nations who will be summoned before Christ's throne in Jerusalem following Armageddon.

'All nations' is scriptural phraseology for people of all nations. Note Joel 3:11-12; Zech. 14:2; the reference is to the armies of all nations, not every member of the nations. Similarly, at the judgement there will be present people out of all nations – Acts 15:14; 10:35; Rev. 5:9.

"and he shall separate them one from another" – A vivid picture of the Great Shepherd dividing his flock "discerning between the righteous and the wicked" (Mal. 3:18). An inescapable reality for all responsible men and women! We must all stand before Christ's judgement throne and behold his glory and having given an account of ourselves receive a direction from him - to the right or the left. This is the moment of truth for all. It is conjectural whether this separation will come early or later in the judgement process - what is certain is that the decision is irreversible and the moments spent before our Lord in this scene will be the climax of our entire existence.

"as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" – The very language suggests a preponderance of goats from amongst which the sheep are extracted, thus fulfilling the words, "Many are called but few are chosen". Sheep are chosen to represent faithful and worthy saints because of their characteristics and clearly it is character which Christ will judge – note Vv.34-35.

Sheep are dependent, submissive, willingly obedient and gregarious. All these characteristics will be found in the faithful - dependence upon the Good Shepherd, humble submission towards God, willing obedience to His will and recognition of their need of fellowship with their brethren.

Goats on the other hand are independent, solitary, disobedient, wilful and callously selfish. These characteristics, or any of them, will disqualify from entrance to the Kingdom. Those who are confident in their own strength, refuse to assist their needy brethren, disobey divine laws, manifest a wilful disposition and callously disregard the needs of others are unfit for a place in God's kingdom.

V.33 - "he shall set the sheep on his right hand" — The right hand, the symbol of power and divine authority is to be the side of reward while the left is reserved for the rejected. Those who pass to the right side will surely echo the words of the Messiah himself, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

Having made the division between sheep and goats the Judge then gives his approbation of the faithful and his condemnation of the unfaithful, Vv.34-46.

## **THE BASIS OF JUDGEMENT - THE WORD**

When the responsible stand before the judgement seat of Christ it is clear that the basis of their judgement will be the Word of God - John 12:47-49; Rom. 2:12. Christ will be seeking the "fruit of the Spirit", the evidence of a character fashioned by the power of the Word of God, for this alone will ensure acceptance at the judgement seat - note 2 Tim. 3:15 to 4:1.

The word of God is a living power and will endure forever, hence those who are manifestations of it and whose lives have been framed and guided by it will also endure forever - Yahweh will not deny His own word - 1 Pet. 1:22-25.

## **A VERBAL ACCOUNT - Romans 14:10-12**

V.10 - "we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ" – Should read "judgement seat of God (*theos*)" (R.S.V., Nestle; etc). It is Deity's judgement seat but he has committed all judgement into the hands of his son - John 5:22, 27.

V.11 - "For it is written" – This verse is a direct quotation from Isa. 45:23. The context of Isaiah speaks of a purified Israel and a humbled world following the judgements Christ is to pour out upon the nations at his return. This is evident also from the other occasion in which the apostle quotes the same words - Phil. 2:9-11. While in Philippians Paul applies the prophecy to the triumph of Messiah

and his acclamation by the nations, here he applies it to the events associated with the appearance of the responsible before the judgement seat.

"every knee shall bow to me" — This is inclusive of saints at the judgement as well as of all nations.

"and every tongue shall confess to God" – In the case of the peoples of the nations this will be a declaration of Yahweh's glory and supremacy and a vindication of the righteous. In the case of the saints it will be the same but on a personal level, during and subsequent to the process of judgement. The word 'confess' is *exomologeomai* signifying to speak out the same things, confess fully. An idea of its meaning is gained from its use in Matt. 3:6; Mark 1:5 (confessing); James 5:16; Rev. 3:5 (confess).

The use of the voice is clearly intended.

V.12 - "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" – The word 'account' is *logos* (the word spoken; an expression of the thoughts of the mind). In this context *logos* signifies the word as that which is spoken, an exposition or account which one gives. All who are responsible will give a verbal account before Deity which will expose their character and reveal their conduct during probation. It is possible that a full review of our lives will be made in the presence of the angels and that we will then appear before Christ for his final judgement which by then the discerning will have anticipated.

## **THE PLACE OF THE ANGELS AT THE JUDGEMENT**

The angels will play an active and important part in the judgement of the household and the development of Yahweh Tz'vaoth (He who shall become armies) or the Multitudinous Christ who will then relieve them from their duties for the duration of the Millennium — Heb. 2:5.

1. The angels will accompany Christ when he returns as Judge — Matt. 16:27; 25:31; Mark 8:38.
2. The results of the judgement will be declared in the presence of the angels - Luke 12:8-9; Rev. 3:5.
3. The angels will be involved in the removal and punishment of the unworthy - Matt. 13:49-50.

## **THE ANGELS AS MINISTERS TO THE SAINTS**

That the angels will be involved in the judgement of the saints is particularly appropriate in view of their close involvement with those saints during their probation. The scriptures teach that Yahweh appoints an angel to minister to and overshadow those who become heirs of salvation - Heb. 1:14; Ps. 34:7; 1 Tim. 5:21.

### **Hebrews 1:14**

"Are they not all ministering spirits" – The word 'ministering' is *litourgikos* signifying that which pertains to the public service, esp. of the Temple. This is a most appropriate word for the work of the angels, for they are indeed servants for the general good and well-being of 'a Temple' - the Temple of the living God composed of living stones; the Ecclesia.

They are 'spirits' or immortal messengers.

Roth. - "Are they not all spirits doing public service — for ministry sent forth for the sake of them who are about to inherit salvation".

"sent forth to minister" – The Greek for the words 'sent forth' is *apostello* - to send forth, equip and despatch upon a certain mission. That mission is to 'minister' - Greek *eis diakonia* - Lit. with a view to service. The task of the angels is to serve those who are the heirs of salvation. This is a remarkable

and sobering fact in itself and should provide a greater sensitivity to divine things, but there is the added fact that the position of the angels in relation to the saints admirably fits them for the work of judgement.

It also appears from a number of scriptural passages that each individual saint has one particular angel who is appointed to minister to him — Gen. 48:16; Matt. 18:10; Acts 12:15.

Sometimes the word 'angels' in Acts 12:15 is interpreted as simply meaning a messenger. This is one explanation which is satisfactory, but it does not ring as true as the alternative interpretation in view of the absolute incredulousness of the disciples in the house of John Mark. The damsel Rhoda insisted that it was Peter's voice that she heard at the door and that there was no mistake. In the face of this insistence only one thing seemed feasible - divine intervention - it must be Peter's angel! It is interesting to note that Peter's angel was instrumental in releasing him from prison - Acts 12:7-10.

## **THE BOOKS OF JUDGEMENT**

The scriptures speak of two books that will be involved in the destiny of every responsible person. They are:—

1. A book of the Life
2. The Book of Life

The latter is frequently referred to by that name while the former is alluded to in a number of passages which will be considered in these notes.

### **Are the Books literal or figurative?**

The question as to whether the books of judgement are literal or figurative is unlikely to be finally resolved until the day of judgement when the answer one way or the other will not be of great significance to those passing through the judgement process. It is now that we can gain value from making the effort to determine an answer from the evidence of scripture for ourselves, and being fully persuaded in our own mind, use that knowledge to stimulate and strengthen our faith so that what is recorded in those books will be a cause of joy for us in the day of account.

While it is manifestly obvious that Yahweh, whose knowledge and memory know no bounds, is not in need of a book to record the names of the saints or the events of their lives, a good deal of evidence seems to point to there being literal books for this purpose. Deity in His infinite wisdom does not require written records in order to remember, but finite and fickle man is not in that position. May it not be that God could adopt a method of recording the lives and names of His servants, which though unnecessary to Himself is to the advantage and consolation of His children. Certainly the expressions used in relation to the books of judgement imply the existence of literal books, whether they actually exist or not.

The conviction that there is a book in which our names have been written is a cause of great joy to faithful disciples of Christ (Luke 10:20), while the knowledge that all our ways and actions are recorded in another book is a compelling influence towards constancy and steadfastness in living the Truth in daily life.

### **Some evidence for literal books**

Firstly, it is interesting to note that the word for 'book' in Hebrew is *ciphrah* meaning a writing, by implication a book, while the word in the Greek is *biblos* signifying a written book, roll, or volume.

Moses evidently believed that there was a literal Book of Life. This is the clear implication from Ex. 32:32. The word 'written' is *kathab* and means to grave; to write. It is the same word as is used in

Dan. 12:1 which also implies the existence of an actual book. (Note the way *kathab* is used in Ex. 31:18; 32:15, and Dan. 9:13).

In the N.T. there is also evidence for a literal Book of Life. The Lord said to his disciples, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). The word 'written' in the Greek is said by the better texts to be *eggegraptai* signifying to inscribe or enrol. Hence Nestle - "have been enrolled".

## **A BOOK OF THE LIFE**

This is a kind of 'day book' in which the daily lives of the saints are recorded, event for event through the trials, tribulations, triumphs, failures, sins, and acts of righteousness that occur. By this means the growth and development of character is carefully traced throughout our probation. At either the death of the saint or at the return of Christ the account will be taken and the divine decision made as to whether or not the saint will have his name left inscribed in the Book of Life. Both books will appear at the judgement seat of Christ. The 'day book' to review the life and probation of each saint will most likely be used by the angel appointed to minister to him, while the Book of Life will be used by Christ to pass final judgement.

The following passages refer to a daily account or a book of the Life.

### **Psalm 56:8**

"Thou tellest my wanderings" – Roth. - "My wanderings hast thou recorded". The word 'tellest' is *caphar*; to score with a mark as a tally or record, i.e. to inscribe.

"are they not in thy book" – *ciphrah* from *caphar*, meaning a writing or record. As this is not the Book of Life in which are recorded names it must refer to another record — an individual account of the Psalmist's life.

Where sins recorded therein have subsequently been forgiven, they will be blotted out of the record entirely (Isa. 43:25).

### **Malachi 3:16**

"and a book of remembrance" – The Hebrew word for 'book' is again *ciphrah* - a writing or record. The word 'remembrance' is *zikrown* - a memento, from the root *zakar* - to mark; i.e. to remember. This could well be a reference to a daily record of remembrance as well as a record of identity.

"was written before him" – This language clearly implies that someone wrote the record for Yahweh. Only His angels could perform that task at the time of this prophecy. It was a practice of monarchs of the times to record the history of their reigns and to note the acts of their servants - Esther 6:1. Unlike earthly monarchs Yahweh does not require a record of past history in order to review distant events, but evidently has chosen to keep such a record of the lives of His saints for their present and ultimate benefit.

The use of the word *kathab* - to grave, to write, once again strongly suggests an actual record.

### **Revelation 20:12**

"And I saw the dead" – These are the mortals who have died during the Millennium and are raised at the second resurrection to face judgement at the end of Christ's 1,000 year reign. As the second resurrection and judgement will be a repetition in format and aim of the first, we may conclude that the methods used to dispense judgement are also the same.

"stand before God" – Christ will be the judge, he being the manifestation and representative of God.



"and the books were opened" – These books (plural) are quite distinct from the Book of Life which is next mentioned as a singular record. Clearly a daily account of each individual's life will be kept and out of these records they will be judged.

"according to their works" – Their 'works' or deeds are what is recorded in the books as these constitute an indication of character.

## **THE BOOK OF LIFE**

This is a record of those who will enter into eternal life. The names of all saints are recorded at the time of their baptism, i.e. the beginning of their probation - Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3.

The name remains in the book as long as the life of the saint is worthy of perpetuation eternally, otherwise it is "blotted out" - Rev. 3:5; Ex. 32:32-33; Ps. 69:28.

At the judgement only those whose names appear in the Book of Life will be granted immortality – Dan .12:1; Rev. 21:27; 20:15.

## **REAPING WHAT WE SOW**

Those who have devoted their lives to the fulfilling of fleshly desires will in the end reap of the flesh the only thing it can offer – corruption. On the other hand, those who have devoted their lives to spiritual pursuits will in the end reap of the Spirit life everlasting - Gal. 6:8.

The apostle elsewhere termed it "receiving in body" the things done, whether good or evil - 2 Cor .5:10.

## **2 Corinthians 5:10**

"we must all appear" – Paul uses the word *phaneroo* - to make apparent, show forth, which is twice rendered 'made manifest' in the next verse (v.11), to emphasise that we will receive bodily what we have done.

"that every one may receive the things done in his body" – It will be noted that the words 'done' and 'his' are in italics in the A.V. and therefore should be deleted to give the proper sense.

Rotherham's translation of this verse is interesting and captures the true sense; "For we all must needs be made manifest before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may get back the things done by means of the body, according to the things which he practised, whether good or corrupt". We shall receive in body the reward or punishment due according to that which we have done. The wages of sin is death or corruption but the gift of God is eternal life - Rom. 6:23.

## **CHILDREN AT THE JUDGEMENT SEAT**

The children of saints are "an heritage of Yahweh; and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Ps. 127:3). This being the case it is certain that the Father will provide an arrangement for the present and future well-being of children whose parents are called to the judgement seat. Neither the Father or His son are indifferent to the concerns and feelings of parents, and it is likely that children will accompany their parents in family groups to the precincts of Sinai where they will continue to receive care and education both during and subsequent to the judgement in order to prepare them for their place in the Kingdom as mortal subjects of Christ.

In the Ambassador Vol. 3 page 185 Brother Roberts commented on this subject as follows: "As to children who may be alive when the Lord returns and sends for the members of his household.....the question is, will not provision be made for the household of the faithful? If we are to judge from the Deity's operations in the past, we are justified in expecting that this will be so. Respect has always been shewn to the kindred of those who have been the objects of divine regard. Noah's family is one

instance; Lot's family another. His sons-in-law were, by command of the angels, invited to escape the impending judgement, but laughed the invitation to scorn. Rahab's family were spared from the destruction that befell Jericho. Is it not possible that similar favour will be shewn when the greatest judgement of all arrives? Is it not possible that households may be invited to accompany the saints eastward? As a matter of course, the saints alone are called to judgement, and they alone enter the Kingdom of God, in the sense of obtaining the life, honour, and glory of it; but mortal subjects will have to be provided for as well as kings and priests; and is it not possible the saints may have a commission to secure among these a place for such of their kindred as shall have to leave home and country for the seat of the New Power, there to shelter in the King's refuge until the judgement is overpast, and afterwards to settle among the tribes of Israel as strangers sojourning in the Land, to whom a portion will be divided? (Ezek.47:22). If so all difficulty about the children would be at an end"

The passage from Ezek. 47:22-23 referred to by Bro. Roberts bears closer examination as it provides the key to the future of the children of parents called to judgement.

### **Ezekiel 47:22-23**

V.22 - "ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance" – The context concerns the division of the Land of Promise amongst the restored and purified tribes of Israel in the age to come. The area divided to each tribe will then be further divided amongst the families of that tribe.

"to the strangers that sojourn among you" — The strangers are foreigners or Gentiles by origin. However, they are not ordinary Gentiles but a privileged class, as they are to be considered "as born in the country among the children of Israel". Furthermore, they will inherit equally in the Land with other natural born Israelites. Only a special class would be given such opportunities.

It is evident that these 'strangers' are the children of saints who had not reached the age of responsibility at Christ's return. They would by then be mature adults with families of their own, having been raised through the dramatic period of Christ's subjugation of the nations and his preparations for the Kingdom age. During this time they will have been well educated in the things of the Truth and will have accepted it in the appropriate manner. In fact more will be required of them than the Gentiles outside the Land. Not only must they be circumcised in heart (the principle of baptism) but also in flesh - Ezek. 44:9.

As mortals they will live out their probation in the Land under the guidance of Christ and his saints in preparation for their ultimate acceptance into immortality at the second resurrection and judgement.

### **Two Questions Considered**

Two questions naturally occur as a result of such a consideration as this. They are: -

1. What of the children whose parents are rejected at the judgement seat?
2. What is the age of responsibility and what will happen to those who have reached it but have not been baptised at Christ's return?

The following is an attempt to supply a scriptural answer to these two questions.

Question 1 - The over-riding principle in all cases that might be raised is, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right" (Gen.18:25). Where parents have turned their backs on the Truth and lived ungodly lives, and their children have followed their example it is certain that both parents and children will be banished from Christ's presence. This was the principle adopted in the case of the Canaanites who inhabited the Land of Promise (Deut. 20:16-18). The reason for destroying the children along with their adults was that having been educated in their parent's evil ways they would eventually grow up and practise the same evils.

If however, children have shown an interest in the things of the Truth despite their parent's indifference, it is certain that they will receive an opportunity to accept the Truth by being preserved from the judgement that will befall their parents. This is amply illustrated in the case of Korah and his children - Num. 26:9-11.

The children of Korah evidently dissociated themselves from their father's rebellion and were spared from the judgement poured out upon the rebels and their families.

Children whose parents are rejected in such a case may well be cared for and educated in spiritual things by immortal foster parents until they attain to maturity. Perhaps these children will grow up in the company of the children of Israelites who survive Armageddon, and be found playing "in the streets of Jerusalem" (Zech. 8:4-5).

In the plan of Deity 50 years will pass between the return of Christ and the opening of the Millennium, thus a child born just prior to the return will be over 50 when the Millennial Age dawns and will be able to take his place among the restored tribes of Israel.

Question 2 - In the wilderness the age of responsibility appears to have been "from twenty years old and upward". At least all who had attained that age were condemned to die in the wilderness - Num. 14:29. Twenty was also the age at which the payment of half a shekel had to be made (Ex. 30:14) and also the age at which a young man entered Israel's military forces (Num. 1:3). However, it would be dangerous to suggest that a fixed age determines responsibility to divine judgement. Responsibility results from knowledge, not age, and it is absolutely certain that any young person under twenty who has acquired sufficient knowledge to enlighten them as to what is required of them but have deliberately delayed answering the call of the Truth or have ignored it altogether, will be called upon to give an account at the judgement seat as to why they did so and will face inevitable and outright rejection. Such will be given no opportunity to live as mortals during the Kingdom Age.

Responsibility then, is predicated upon knowledge and this may come well before 20 as it did to Robert Roberts who was baptised at the age of 14.

What then of those young people who having reached an age when they are beginning to appreciate the message of the Truth and can see the need to grow in knowledge so that they might accept it, but are prevented from doing so by the intervention of the return of Christ?

There is no doubt that such children will receive merciful consideration by Christ. Not having attained sufficient knowledge to be considered responsible to judgement they will be given opportunity to continue their education in the things of the Truth and will live out their probation as mortals in the Kingdom Age. The key to their future well-being is their interest in the things of the Truth manifested by their keen involvement in such things as Sunday School work, but above all by a willing submission to their parent's guidance and instruction. The disinterested and disobedient child is not likely to be regarded as suitable for a privileged position among mortals in the Kingdom Age.

For those who have come to sufficient knowledge to make them accountable for their actions but are prevented by time from being baptised (e.g. the Lord may return the very week or day that they are due to be baptised!), it is certain that their intentions will be taken into account by the Judge. The God of heaven and earth says of Himself, "I Yahweh search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:10). Knowing the heart of his children, Yahweh will provide a way into immortality for those who have diligently sought Him and earnestly desired to make a covenant with Him by sacrifice in the waters of baptism, but were prevented from doing so by things beyond their control. The case is illustrated by the promise of Christ to the repentant thief on the cross - Luke 23:42-43.

The Judge of all the earth will do right in such cases. He will perceive the genuine and divide them from the dilatory and deceitful.

## **THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

A great responsibility devolves upon parents to educate their children in the things of the Truth from the earliest possible age that they might be prepared for reception by Christ as privileged mortals in the Kingdom Age.

It is an apostolic commandment to bring up children "in the nurture (Gr. - education and discipline) and admonition (Gr. - instruction) of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). To neglect the education, discipline and instruction of our children may cost them their lives eternally.

Children must also respond to their parent's guidance for it will be a critical factor in their acceptance by Christ as his mortal subjects in the age to come. Paul commanded, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1), and it is certain that children who disregard this injunction will not be considered suitable to be given opportunity for mortal probation in the Kingdom Age. In a similar way as the wife is to regard her husband as her head; the representative of Christ, so children should regard their father as being in God's stead, until they reach an age of responsibility to their Father in heaven. If children cannot obey their earthly fathers (providing of course, that their father merits obedience) then how can they render obedience to their Father in heaven whom they cannot see.

It is the wisdom of children to submit to parental guidance, instruction, and discipline even when occasional inadequacies and mistakes may be discerned in their parents. Children should accept that their parents have as their primary object the eternal well-being of their off-spring and though they may make some mistakes in the course of fulfilling their difficult duty, the end result can only be to the eternal advantage of the child.

This submission should continue until 'a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves unto his wife'. The modern trend of leaving home at an early age to escape parental control bespeaks the fulfilment of Paul's prophecy that the latter days would be characterised by a breakdown in family life with men being "disobedient to parents" - 2 Tim. 3:2. Sadly, the same problem is today evident within the Brotherhood of Christ.

Children should demonstrate their obedience and submission to their parents by a willingness to join in the reading and study of the Word in the home, by attending and fulfilling work associated with Sunday School and by sharing ecclesial life with their parents as age and opportunity permit. Children who do this will not be disappointed should the Lord return before they attain to maturity and responsibility; they will live as privileged mortals during the Kingdom Age.

## **WHY THE PERIOD OF JUDGEMENT WILL BE SHORT**

Earlier in these notes it was postulated that a period of 10 years will be consumed between the return of Christ and the battle of Armageddon. Will the whole 10 years be taken up by the judgement of the household? Certainly not. There are many things to be performed by Christ in this 10 year period as the notes will go on to show.

It is certain that the period of judgement will be relatively short, for to extend it over a period of many years would be an intolerable burden upon those waiting for Christ's verdict. There have been a number of suggestions as to how the Lord will remove the anxiety of his servants as they await their call to stand before him. We mention two that are worthy of consideration.

Suggestion 1 - The angels will gather the responsible to Mt. Sinai and will undertake a review of each individual's life, by the end of which it will be obvious which way Christ's verdict will go. They will then await their call to stand before him, probably in groups, and will receive his decision.

Suggestion 2 - The angels will convey the responsible to the judgement seat and usher them immediately into Christ's presence. The Judge will separate the just from the unjust and the two groups will then await their time to give a personal account and receive their reward or punishment.

We prefer the first suggestion because it will remove the anxiety of waiting for an indication of our destiny while still allowing time for the true characters of the just and unjust to be revealed in the presence of Christ.

The just will be absolutely humbled by a review of their lives in the presence of their angel. While their failings will be fully manifest it will also be clear that their life and character is approved by Christ. As they wait to stand before Christ and receive his verdict their sense of unworthiness will struggle with the euphoria associated with the indications of their acceptance, producing a grateful humility in which any feelings of self-importance will be completely absent. Open and uninhibited joy must wait until the final verdict is delivered by the Judge.

On the other hand, the unjust having had their lives reviewed by the angelic minister with clear indication of their unworthiness and pending rejection being given, will retire bewildered or resigned to their fate. In the case of those who were confident of acceptance but who now see the probability of rejection looming, there will be a time of reflection in which they will collect together a list of all their 'good works' which they will present to Christ in the indignant spirit of those mentioned in Matt. 7:22-23 and Luke 13:26-27.

Finally, all will have passed before Christ and will have turned either to his right or to his left to stand amongst the 'sheep' or the 'goats' to receive the reward or punishment due - Matt. 25:31-46. Then all shall be publicly revealed or 'made manifest' for what they are – see Rotherham's translation of 2 Cor. 5:10.

The purpose of the judgement will have been accomplished. The Lord "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5). The faithful will have been completely humbled before their exaltation and the unfaithful will be revealed for what they are – self-centred and proud.

If this suggestion is correct then the period of judgement will not need to be of great length despite the myriads who must appear at the tribunal of Christ.

## **THE FATE OF THE REJECTED**

This may be a negative subject but quite a deal is revealed concerning the punishment of the wicked and rejected in scripture as a warning of the consequences of unfaithfulness and disregard towards the things of the Truth. A brief consideration of some of these things can only be to our advantage.

1. Shame (Dan. 12:2), tribulation, anguish and wrath (Rom. 2:8-9), weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12) is the lot of the rejected.
2. Punishment will be meted out in degrees according to the principle of Luke 12:47-48.
3. The wicked will have their shame revealed before their brethren (Rev. 16:15; Luke 12:3).
4. They will depart from Christ fearfully looking for the inevitable judgement (Heb. 10:27).
5. The punishment of the rejected will be suffered amongst the nations described symbolically as "outer darkness" — Matt. 22:13. Possibly those who are alive and remain at Christ's return will have to endure the shame of returning to their home to experience the ridicule of their neighbours and acquaintances. The terror for those rejected out of past generations being cast out into the modern world then in complete turmoil can easily be imagined.

Suffice it to add a passage from Nazareth Revisited pages 393-4 by Bro. Robert Roberts:

**A man dismissed from the judgment seat first suffers the agony of having his shame "seen" (Rev. 16:15). He is publicly condemned in the presence of fellow-servants and a multitude of the angelic host (Rev. 3:5, 9; Luke 12:8). Next, he departs, but not whither he wills. He might choose to bury himself in the forests, or wander wide o'er earth or ocean, or find refuge in death. The sentence orders his expulsion to**

the "outer darkness" which still reigns in the world for a while after Christ's return. In this outer darkness, the world of the ungodly, organized as "the devil and his angels," alias "the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies" (Rev. 19:19), is marshalling its forces for "the war of the great day of God Almighty," in which they "make war with the Lamb, but the Lamb shall overcome them." Fierce judgment impends at that moment, of which the world is unconscious. Christ, of whose presence they are not aware, is about to be manifested "in naming fire taking vengeance" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8).

The sentence of expulsion consigns its unhappy objects to participation in "the judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:27). Their fate is to "depart from me ye cursed, into the aonian fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Into the countries of the condemned, the whole multitude of the rejected will be driven to shift for themselves among a cruel population for whom judgment waits. Mortal as they are, it is no stretch of the imagination to realize the suffering of body, the anguish of mind incidental to such a fearful situation—without home or friends or acquaintances or means of living, wandering as vagabonds like Cain, till the maturing judgment of God culminates in the terrible outbreak of destruction and desolation long foretold. This "hour of judgment" will take time to run. The "few stripes" will probably be exemplified in the shortening of the term of suffering. Such will die before the worst comes. "Many stripes" will be seen in the case of those wretched children of disobedience who will be preserved through all the terrors of "the time of trouble such as never was," and survive to be "engulfed in the finishing strokes of judgment by which wickedness will be finally overthrown, and the way cleared for the Kingdom of God.

## **THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD AT THIS TIME**

Some indication is given in the above extract of the state of the world while the judgement is in progress at Sinai. The "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) having been withdrawn, the world will descend into total darkness as intense as that which fell upon the land of Egypt at the behest of Moses - Isa. 60:2.

Politically, the world will be in absolute turmoil (Luke 21:25-28) as nations talk of peace (1 Thess. 5:3) but feverishly prepare for war (Joel 3:9-11).

Every last vestige of moral restraint will be abandoned as the world plunges into a state likened to the days of Noah and Lot – the earth will be filled with violence and moral corruption - Luke 17:26-29.

## **THE GLORIFIED BEING**

The glory and joy that will be the lot of those who are "raised incorruptible" is almost unspeakable, for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him". The vision of Bro. Roberts as he provides a cameo of life in the Land of Promise during the Kingdom Age in his work "The Final Consolation" is an attempt to articulate by scenario the reality of the glory to be revealed. There are some other interesting points of fact that help to add to the reality of our vision.

## **INSTANTANEOUS TRANSFORMATION - 1 Cor. 15:51-54**

The apostle Paul exults in the glorious prospect of "bearing the image of the heavenly" in the day that the Lord Jesus Christ "shall change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

The change into immortality will be effected instantaneously by the application of spirit power and all the worthy saints will experience this change at the same time. This was prefigured by the erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness in one day, after a long period of preparation of the materials - Ex. 40:2. The Tabernacle was typical of the whole process of redemption and the glory at the end of that process. Within the veil stood the Ark with its mercy seat and cherubim representing Christ and his

glorified ecclesia. By erecting this structure "in a moment" before all Israel Moses foreshadowed the instantaneous formation of the "tabernacle of Deity".

## **THE IMMORTAL CONSTITUTION**

In 1 Cor. 15:50 the apostle Paul states quite categorically that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God". The immortal body must therefore be of a different constitution than the mortal. Jesus the forerunner has left us with a clear idea of its constitution. When he appeared to his terrified apostles in the days following his resurrection he eased their troubled minds by advising them to handle him to prove his reality, saying, "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39). Flesh and bones then, make up the physical constitution of the immortal body. Blood is absent, for it is the life of all mortal flesh but the spirit empowers the incorruptible being and it is "the spirit that quickeneth". The presence of spirit excludes corruption in any form in nature or tendency and thus sin, disease, sickness, sorrow and physical decline are also completely absent – Rev. 21:3-4.

## **RETENTION OF IDENTITY**

Though the immortal being will have been perfected in nature and character he will retain his original identity. Those who knew him during his mortal probation will be able to recognise him by his appearance. This is manifest from the example of Christ who being immortalised presented himself to his disciples and was recognised by them – John 20:19-29.

This raises the question as to whether saints will carry physical abnormality into the Kingdom. Every principle of scripture is against this. The priesthood of Israel were to be physically perfect – abnormality disqualified them from priestly duty (Lev. 21:17-23). It is certain that the Millennial priesthood will not take with them into the Kingdom the marks of the weakness and corruption of the flesh.

Hence, while physical identity will not be lost, bodily infirmity or abnormality will be entirely absent.

## **MALE OR FEMALE?**

While male and female immortals will be readily identifiable, the change into spirit nature will involve the fusion of masculine and feminine qualities into the one being.

As for parts of the human body so essential to the natural functions of human life and continuance of the race; these will not be required in the immortal state. For immortal saints, marriage as presently experienced, will have become an unnecessary and undesired institution — they having passed beyond that into a far higher state of marriage with their heavenly bridegroom (Luke 20:36; Rev. 19:7). Instantaneous transformation will also mean the change or loss of those bodily organs and functions incidental to their present mortal state which will then have fallen into redundancy (1 Cor. 6:13; Rev. 7:16).

### **TRUST**

Still trust in God, then may these days of evil  
Purge out the dross, and leave some gold revealed,  
As tropic spices, bruised and crushed and broken  
Yield out a fragrance oft concealed.

If thou wouldst fit a stone in Yahweh's temple,  
Thou too must shaped and tried and polished be.  
The process may seem hard and unrelenting,  
Yet what abiding good 'twill work for thee!

# THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

## JOYOUS ACTIVITY AT SINAI

The departure of the rejected and unworthy from the judgement seat will be followed by a scene of unmixed joy and consolation as the worthy and glorified saints are united to their Lord and husband.

The bridegroom will take unto himself the multitudinous "chaste virgin" (2 Cor. 11:2) as his bride and institute a period of joyous fraternisation among the whole company of the Redeemed. The time of which John spoke in Rev. 19:7 will have then become a reality:

"The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

John's words are actually in the past tense in the original Greek, as the marriage takes place before the events narrated in the earlier verses. The marriage of the Lamb will be at Sinai while the marriage feast or supper will be celebrated at Jerusalem some time subsequently.

It is evident that some time will be spent in the precincts of Sinai in joyous fraternisation. The law of the newlyweds in Deut. 24:5 exempting a man recently married from military service for one year prefigured a similar period set aside for the participants in the greatest marriage of all.

Scripture abounds with references to the exultant joy of the Redeemed as they give vent to their gratitude to God and His son. The praise and thanksgiving of all saints will fill this period of time with a rejoicing and happiness never before witnessed upon earth — Rev. 5:8-12; 7:11-12; 19:4-7; Ps. 149; Isa. 26:19; 25:8-9.

The unity that Christ will share with his bride will see the fulfilment of such prophecies as Isa. 26:20-21 and Song of Sol. 2:10-13.

## HIS WIFE HATH MADE HERSELF READY

In Rev. 19:7-9 from whence this heading is taken there is a distinct emphasis upon the preparation of the bride. The glory and blessedness received by those who are united in marriage to Christ will not have come without much preparation on their part. The preparation and maintenance of their wedding garment will have cost them a lifetime of sacrifice, trial and tribulation through complete identity mentally and morally with their bridegroom.

The ideas of which the apostle speaks in Eph. 5:22-32 will have become a reality in their experience. They will then be mentally, morally, and physically one with their husband and Lord, "a glorious ecclesia, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing".

Christ's requirements in his bride provide the only basis for a successful, harmonious, and fruitful marriage in our days of probation. They are:—

1. Chasteness, or sanctification – 2 Cor. 11:1-2; Eph. 5:26-27
2. Mental, moral, and physical compatibility.

Concerning the former; the basis of successful marriage is separation from "all that is in the world" and a sanctification to God, in both partners. Concerning the latter; mental and moral parity and reciprocation are essential prerequisites for a successful and happy marriage.

Whether we speak of marriage now or the marriage of the Lamb to his bride, present and ultimate success can only be achieved in one way. The beauty of Christ's bride is derived from the application of the Word and its transforming power (Eph. 5:27) and this is the key to the attainment of the ideals of marriage. Those who constitute the Lamb's wife will not be ignorant of this principle.



## PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

Whilst the nations are in the final stages of being gathered to Jerusalem for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, Christ will be preparing his immortalised brethren for the warfare that lies before them.

To fully prepare the saints for the many and varied tasks before them will take some considerable time. It is certain that Christ will not leave Sinai until like Israel of old, the Israel of God, Yahweh Sabaoth or the Rainbowed Angel has been formed into an organised and well trained army. Perhaps like Israel, Yahweh's cherubim will march forth from Sinai in four divisions at the steps of the unveiled ark of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ in glory – Num. 10; Ezek. 1; Rev. 19:11-16.

## THE MARCH OF THE RAINBOWED ANGEL

The mighty angel of Rev. 10:1 standing astride the earth clothed with a cloud and shrouded by a rainbow presents a graphic symbolic picture of Christ and his glorified saints standing victorious over all countries surrounding the Mediterranean and over Catholic Europe. John sees Christ near the end of his work of subduing the nations, hence much has been accomplished since the mighty angel left Sinai.

The following illustration depicts the march of the rainbowed angel and the order of events leading up to the time of his conquest over Europe and all Mediterranean powers, and beyond. These notes will proceed to deal with those events as they will occur chronologically. For a full treatment of this subject read Eureka Vol. 2, Chap. 10, Pages 178-202 (Logos Edition).

### THE CONQUESTS OF THE RAINBOWED ANGEL - Rev. 10

John observes a rainbowed angel with an open book in his hand standing astride earth and sea as a conqueror. He listens to the seven thunders uttering their voices and though forbidden to record them is invited to eat the little book as an indication of his involvement in the events it recorded.

Finally, he receives the assurance that he will yet preach the Gospel to all peoples of the world in the future age.

V.1 - "And I saw another mighty angel!" – This angel is distinct from the seven angel-trumpeters. The description identifies him with the "one like unto the Son of Man" in Rev. 1 – the Multitudinous Christ.

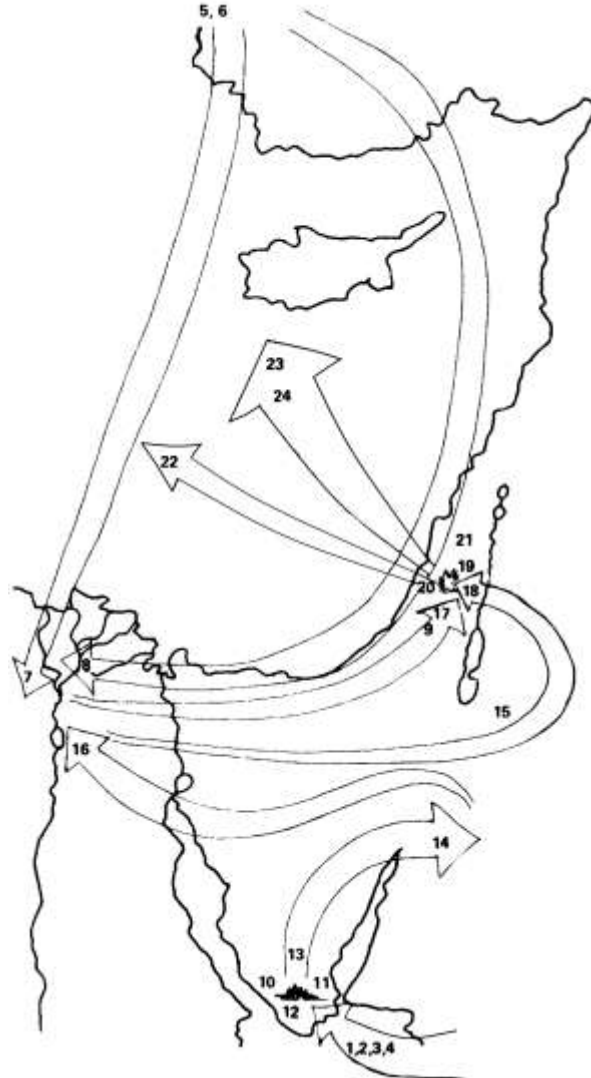
"clothed with a cloud" – The symbol of a multitude - Heb. 12:1; Ezek. 38:9. The whiteness of the cloud suggests righteousness — Rev. 19:8. The cloud represents the saints in glory.

"and a rainbow was upon his head" — The rainbow is formed by the rays of light emanating from the angel's face passing through the cloud! The light is refracted by tiny water droplets which act as a prism separating pure white light into its seven colours. The rainbow is the token of Yahweh's covenant of peace with flesh following destructive judgements (Gen. 9:11-16). Here it represents the divine covenant of peace, to be brought about by the work and influence of the saints as with John they go forth to shower Yahweh's doctrine (Deut. 32:2) upon all peoples under the direction and guidance of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2), thus establishing harmony between God and men - cp. v.11.

"his face was as it were the sun" – Christ is the sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2) and together with his saints will shine forth in the Kingdom Age (Matt. 13:43) reflecting the divine glory to all corners of the earth.

## THE MARCH OF THE RAINBOWED ANGEL

1. Return of Jesus Christ to the earth
2. Resurrection of the dead
3. Judgement Seat at Mt. Sinai
4. Rewards and rejections
5. Russian overthrow of Turkey
6. Europe confederated by Gog
7. Russia invades Egypt
8. World-Wide time of trouble
9. Gog besieges Jerusalem
10. Perfect Multitudinous Christ
11. Marriage of Lamb to Bride
12. Elijah's work of restoration
13. The Cherubim - Yahweh Tz'vaoth
14. Arabs subjected to Christ
15. Western powers humiliated
16. Smiting and healing of Egypt
17. Russia triumphant-Great image
18. Armageddon - Valley of Judgement
19. Christ revealed - Olivet splits
20. Kingdom established in Zion
21. Great Middle East changes
22. Millennial Gospel proclaimed
23. The Nations reject ultimatum
24. World-wide judgements & wars
25. Second Exodus of Israel
26. Established in bonds of Covenant
27. Nations subject to Zion's King
28. House of Prayer for all nations
29. Universal rule - Millennium begins
30. The Glory of Yahweh revealed



Read Eureka Volume 3 Pages 178-202 (Logos Edition)

"his feet as pillars of fire" – These are the feet of the Multitudinous Christ (Zech. 14:4). Fire is a symbol of judgement as well as of the presence of Yahweh. These feet go forth bearing the name of Yahweh (Isa. 30:27) and carrying His judgements to the nations of the earth until they stand entrenched in the 'sea' and upon the 'earth', triumphant.

V.2 - "And he had in his hand a little book open" – The Greek word *biblaridion* describes a little scroll or book. It is small in comparison with the seven-sealed scroll because its contents cover but a short period of time, perhaps 40 years. Being in the hand of the angel it indicates that it contained the work he was to perform. No mention is made of its contents, but it is certain they pertained to the judgement of the nations.

Ezekiel had an identical experience to John (Ezek. 2:9-3:14) and the scroll he consumed contained "lamentations, mourning and woe" against the iniquitous house of Judah. The little scroll consumed by John doubtless likewise contained a proclamation of the divine purpose with the earth and the judgements required to bring that purpose to its fulfilment.

"he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth" – John beholds the angel apparently standing still, which means that dominion has been obtained over the area he bestrides.

'The sea' is obviously a reference to the Mediterranean. The angel represents Christ and the saints victorious over the powers of the Mediterranean, chief of which is the Gogian confederacy with its headquarters in Constantinople (military) and Rome (ecclesiastical).

The 'earth' is clearly a reference to Catholic Europe (Rev. 13:1,11), and so Christ stands victorious over the image of Nebuchadnezzar in its Gogian and Catholic manifestations. What now remains is to grind the image to powder and fill the earth with God's glory.

V.3 - "a loud voice.....a lion roareth" – All the world will hear the voice of the Lion of the tribe of Judah - Rev. 5:5.

"seven thunders uttered their voices" – “The Jews were accustomed to speak of thunder as the seven voices” (Vincent). The expression is drawn from Psalm 29 where "the voice of Yahweh" is aligned with thunder (v.3), and the phrase is repeated seven times - v.3,4,5,7,8,9.

Thunder is symbolic of judgement and war. Seven thunders suggests seven campaigns by Christ to totally subjugate the nations to his rule. The outpouring of divine judgement after Armageddon will finally crush all resistance to Christ's rule after the pattern of David's campaigns - 2 Sam. 8 to 10.

V.4 - "seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered" – So personally involved with "the judgements written" (Ps. 149:9) is John as a representative of all his brethren that he was not permitted to record them as though they were something separate to himself. Soon he was invited to consume the little scroll, for he (and his brethren) would become the vehicle of divine judgement on the nations when the rainbowed angel is manifested.

V.5 - "lifted up his hand to heaven" – Diag. - "raised his right hand towards heaven". The right hand is the symbol of strength, direction, and authority. By raising it to heaven the angel indicated the surety and irrevocability of the fulfilment of these things - Dan. 12:7.

V.6 - "that there should be time no longer" – When the mighty angel goes forth, the time periods outlined by the angel to Daniel will be about to find their completion - Dan. 12:7. Once the seventh angel sounded there would be no delay in executing the final vengeance.

V.7 - "when he shall begin to sound" – Bro. Thomas translates – “when he shall sound”; i.e. during the period of 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet. The opening statement, "in (*en* - within) the days of the voice", indicates that the seventh trumpet which commenced in 1793 with the end of the first phase of the French Revolution, will continue to the fulfilment of the divine purpose. The final judgements will occur during the period of the seventh trumpet, but not necessarily at its beginning.

"the mystery of God should be finished" – Diag. - "the secret of God should be completed". The secret of God is no mystery to His servants - Rom. 16:25-26.

"as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" – Bro. Thomas translates, "announced its glad tidings". The Greek word *euanqelise* is used elsewhere of proclaiming the good news of salvation. The Gospel was preached to and through the prophets.

V.8 - "Go and take the little book" – John's experience is almost identical to Ezekiel's - Ezek. 2:9-10, 3:1-3, 14.

V.9 - "Take it and eat it" – The eating of the little scroll is a graphic symbolic portrayal of John's own personal involvement in the outworking of the divine purpose and judgements recorded therein. Moreover, John represents all his brethren who will likewise participate with him as part of the Rainbowed Angel.

"and it shall make thy belly bitter" – Comparing John's experience with Ezekiel's, bitterness implies fierce anger, judgement and destruction - Ezek. 3:14. The scroll proclaimed judgements against an unrepentant world, and in eating it John demonstrated his involvement.

"but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey" – Honey is both soothing and strengthening, and therefore is an apt illustration of the power and influence of the Truth (Ps. 19:10-11; Prov. 24:13-14). To such as John the Word of God is sweet, for they fully agree with the judgements written (Ps. 149).

V.10 - "and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter" – John's experience was exactly as 'the voice' had predicted. The divine edict was sweet upon its reception and productive of bitter indignation against a godless world upon its absorption.

V.11 - "Thou must prophesy again" – To prophesy is to teach and educate in the things of the Truth and to declare the will and purpose of God (1 Cor. 14:3). Following the judgements of Armageddon the saints will be sent into all parts of the world to teach and educate men in the things of God and to declare to them the divine will and purpose. The cloud (v.1) will pour down rain (God's doctrine - Deut. 32:2) upon the humbled nations (Ps. 72:6) until the knowledge of Yahweh's glory covers the earth (Hab. 2:14).

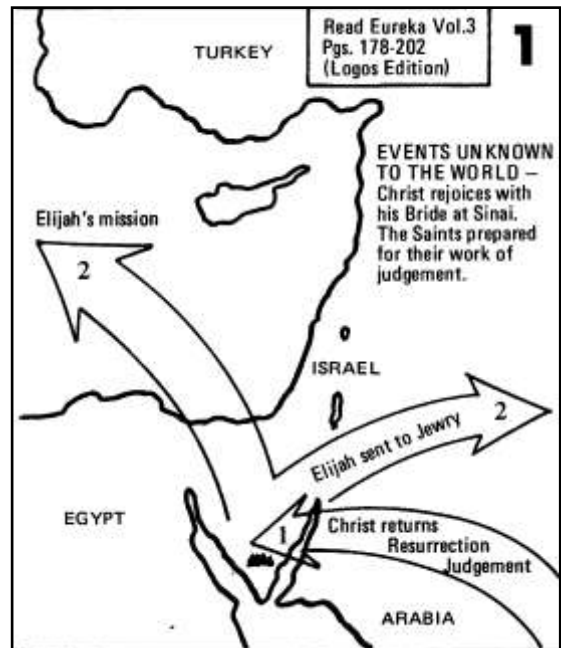
"before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings" – The word “before” is *epi* – over, upon. Bro. Thomas translates it “against” and suggests the initial ‘prophesying’ is by warfare.

The redeemed will have been taken out of the nations - Rev. 5:9-10. John who represents them will again preach the Gospel of Millennial salvation and so will all the redeemed. Evidently many will be sent back to the countries of their origin and probation to teach the people that remain the things of the Truth. Once ignored, despised and persecuted, they will now receive a ready and willing response to the things they teach. What a glorious prospect this is for the faithful like John.

## SYNCHRONISATION OF EVENTS OCCURING AT THIS TIME

While Christ is at Sinai preparing his saints to go forth with him, many things are happening in the world which gather all nations to "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" at Armageddon. Although many things will occur simultaneously, the following is an attempt to provide an order of events from Russia's advance into Turkey to Christ's appearance at Jerusalem.

1. Russia having formed an alliance with the Catholic Church and the nations of Europe will advance on Turkey.
2. Once established in Constantinople (Nebuchadnezzar's Image now nearing completion with but Israel and Egypt to be incorporated) the Russian forces will rapidly advance down the coastal plain of Israel, by-passing Jerusalem, and invade Egypt.
3. Elijah is sent forth to gather scattered Israel, while Christ and the saints move from Sinai, northwards, and subdue the Arab powers of the region.
4. The Tarshish powers enter the conflict and consolidate their power in and around Jerusalem.
5. After subduing and occupying Egypt the Russian forces receive tidings out of the east and the north which trouble them.
6. Leaving an occupation force, the Gogian confederacy advance upon Jerusalem and engage the forces of the west around Jerusalem.
7. Christ and the saints enter Egypt, subdue Gog's

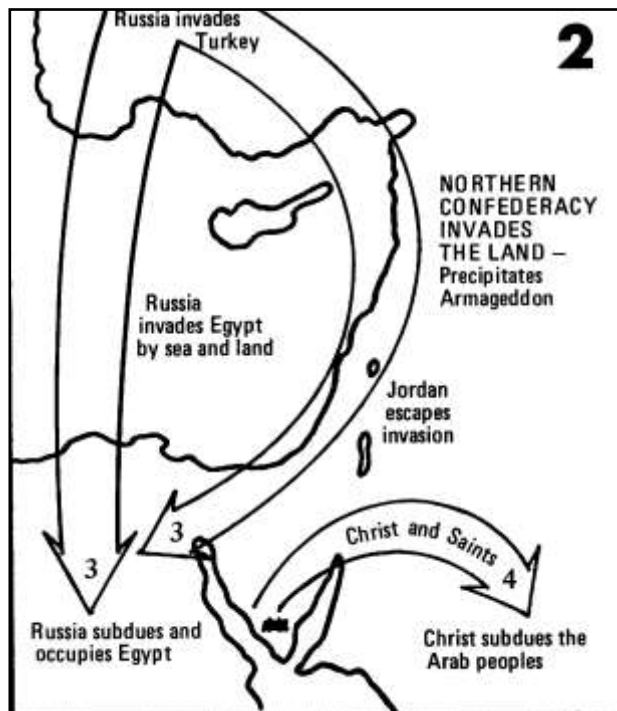


- occupying army and relieve Egyptian distress. They commence the work of converting Egypt.
8. Gog is victorious over all opposition in the land of Israel and sets his seat of power in Jerusalem.
  9. Christ and the saints having left Egypt travel east to Mt. Paran, Mt. Seir and the Dead Sea conquering any resistance encountered, and enter the land due east of Jerusalem, arriving at the Mount of Olives as Gog is going about the task of taking the remnant of the Jewish nation into captivity.
  10. Christ and the saints use divine power to overthrow Gog's forces and an earthquake makes dramatic changes to the topography of the land.

## THE GOGIAN INVASION

While the Rainbow Angel is being prepared for his work at Mt. Sinai, the world will be convulsed in war by the advance of Russia into the Middle East. But first the political 'Euphrates', or Turkey must be totally "dried up" through the occupation of Constantinople by the forces of the Russian Gog, the latter day manifestation of the Eastern Leg of the Roman Empire.

There is to be a latter day revival of the Roman Empire, when the military power of the emperors based in Constantinople supported and prospered the religious power of the Papacy based in Rome - Dan. 8:23-25. The power which will stand up against "the Prince of princes" is obviously Russia. Therefore, Daniel's prophecy spans many centuries between the time of Roman military supremacy in Constantinople and the latter day revival of that power in the form of a Russian military presence.



Hence Daniel speaks of a time when:-

1. Russia will occupy Turkey and establish its military power in Constantinople.
2. Russia in alliance with Roman Catholicism and the nations of Europe will promote the cause of the Papacy, for its (Russia's) own ends.
3. Russia will gain supreme dictatorial power over all of Europe.
4. Russian policy will be one of 'peace' by which the nations will be deceived and ultimately destroyed.
5. Russia with its confederate nations will advance upon the Middle East and become involved in the conflict with Christ and his saints, only to be utterly destroyed.

### Daniel 11:40-45

V.40 - "at the time of the end" – This prophecy provides an explanation for Dan. 8:19. This phrase speaks of a period of time in which many events will occur; e.g. Christ's return and a time of trouble (Dan. 12:1), resurrection and judgement of the responsible (Dan. 12:2), glorification of the worthy (Dan. 12:3,13). There is a beginning and an end to this period which according to this verse must embrace 1917. Some think that the beginning of a period known as 'the time of the end' may have been June 8th 1967 when Luke 21:24 received its primary fulfilment with the freeing of Jerusalem

from the hand of the Gentiles, thus fulfilling "the times of the Gentiles". Certainly the events which were to follow (Luke 21:25-27), describe a 'time of trouble' for the nations which will intensify with the apocalypse of 'Michael the great prince'.

"shall the king of the south push at him" – The 'him' of this verse is the 'king' of verse 36 or the power ruling in Constantinople (the little horn of the goat). In the days of Constantine (A.D. 324) and onwards, this city became the capital of the Roman Empire. In 1453 it fell to the Turkish power who made it their capital and have held it ever since. Turkey is therefore (as the occupying power) the 'him' referred to.

The 'king of the south' was the power occupying Egypt and this is quite obviously Britain, the last foreign power to do so. In 1917, during the Great War of 1914-18 the British power "pushed" at the Turkish power in occupation of Palestine and freed that country from centuries of Turkish oppression.

"and the king of the north" – Refers to Gog of Ezek. 38. When the Russian confederacy invades Constantinople the king of the north (a title given in this chapter to the power occupying Syria and environs) will also become the 'king' of v.36, the little horn of the goat (Dan. 8:9,23-25). It is from this stage that the image of Dan. 2 (now almost complete with its constituent parts) begins to stand up with the advance from Turkey into Israel and Egypt, only to be immediately dashed to pieces on the mountains of Israel - Dan. 2:44,45.

"like a whirlwind" – This speaks of a sudden unexpected attack by the Russian forces upon Turkey.

"he shall enter into the countries" – This implies wider conquests than Turkey and suggests that Russia will capitalise upon the advantage gained over its opposition by continuing the advance upon Turkey into countries of the Middle East. This is also inferred in the words "shall overflow and pass over".

By seizing Constantinople Russia becomes the 'king' of Dan. 11:36; by entering into 'the countries' including the area of ancient Syria, Russia will become 'the king of north'; by over-running Israel and Egypt the image of Nebuchadnezzar will be complete.

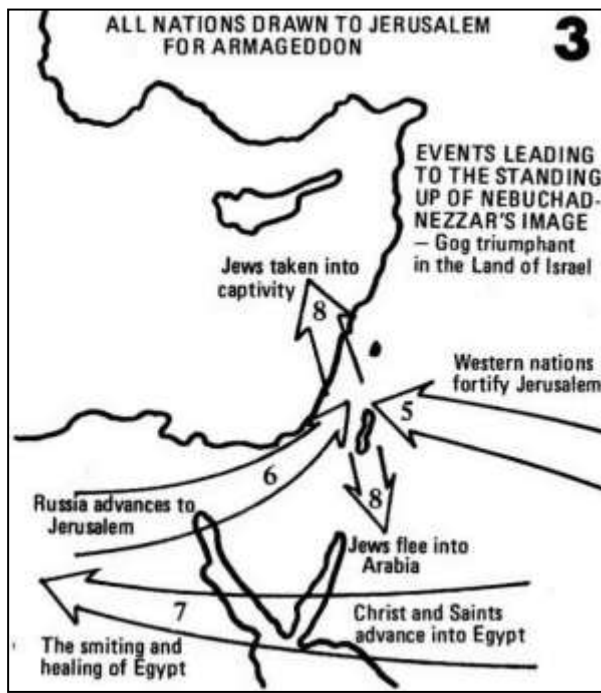
V.41 - "the glorious land" – This is the 'pleasant land' of Dan. 8:9, namely Palestine or the land of Israel (Ezek.38:8).

"overthrown" – *kashal* - to totter, waver, faint or fall through weakness.

"Edom, and Moab, and....Ammon" – Russia will drive along the coastal plains of Israel intent on taking Egypt first. At this stage Jerusalem will be by-passed, so will the territories east of Jordan (cp. Isa. 16:4). Modern Jordan will escape the Russian advance.

V.42 - "Egypt shall not escape" – Russia will invade and conquer Egypt, but notice that there is no 'king of the south' in existence at that time.

Bro. Thomas wrote in *Elpis Israel*, pg. 445, "Britain will be compelled to retreat from Egypt before Armageddon". This has occurred and the rejection of Soviet economic and military involvement in Egyptian affairs in 1975 has laid the groundwork for the fulfilment of this verse. Relations between Egypt and Russia were as a result very tense, even bitter for years and Russia will not soon forget the humiliation and huge financial and strategic losses suffered when Egypt ceased to be its chief Middle East satellite. Russia will seek to recover by military force what has been lost in the field of political diplomacy (Isa. 19:4).



V.43 - "the Libyans and the Ethiopians" – Russia has enjoyed close ties with these formerly Communist countries. They will form part of the confederacy of nations that advances into the Middle East - Ezek. 38:5. This is clearly implied in the phrase, they "shall be at his steps". They are mentioned here because both border on Egypt. (Modern Sudan is actually part of ancient Ethiopia and like modern Ethiopia must come under Russian influence).

V.44 - "tidings out of the east" – Sinai is east of Egypt. The Russian invasion of Egypt will signal the emergence of Yahweh Tz'vaoth from the precincts of Mt. Sinai to commence the march of the Rainbow Angel and doubtless reports of this unusual activity by a power unknown to Russia will cause him to be troubled. Not knowing what to make of the reports received from the east, the Russian forces will respond to those coming from the north.

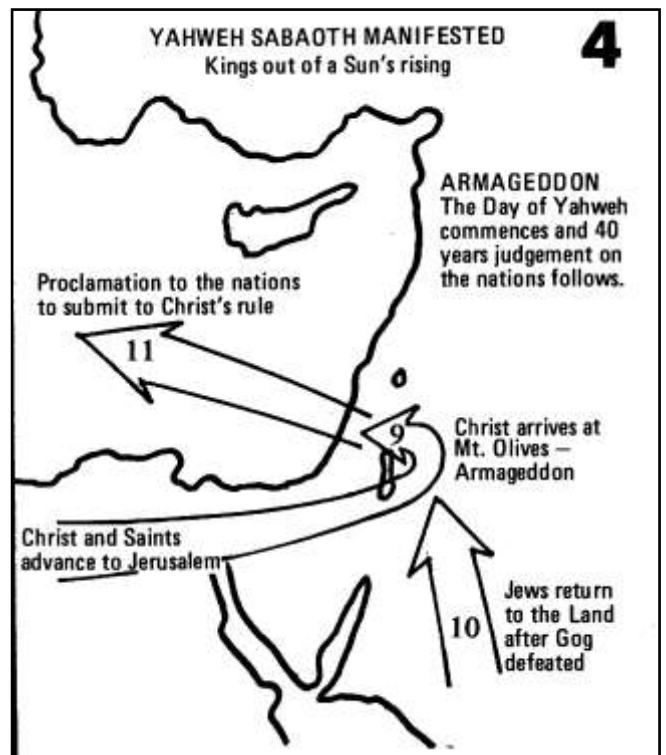
"and out of the north" — i.e. from Jerusalem. The western nations led by Britain (Tarshish - Ezek. 38:13) will advance into the Middle East via the Persian Gulf and Jordan and will consolidate their forces around Jerusalem. Access via the Mediterranean will not be possible due to complete control exercised by the Russian navy - verse 40. The news of a build-up of western forces in and around Jerusalem will force the Russian commander in Egypt to leave an occupying force and advance northwards to Jerusalem. Thus will be fulfilled Zech. 14:2.

"shall trouble him" – Roth. - "will terrify him". It is this terror that results in the mad fury of Russia's northern advance.

"and utterly to make away many" – Roth. - "and to devote many". Jerusalem Bible - "and complete destruction to many".

V.45 - "he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace" – *ohel ap-peh-den* - tents of his pavilion. This is the language of triumph. Russia will defeat the forces of the west gathered to Jerusalem and will establish its headquarters in Jerusalem. Having embraced Israel within its dominion the building up of its image-empire will be complete. At this instant Nebuchadnezzar's image will stand up complete upon the earth only to be immediately destroyed by the 'stone' power from Sinai.

"in the glorious holy mountain" – This is the place of Yahweh's feet (Isa. 60:13) which the prophet sees in the time of its exaltation and glory (Ps. 48:1-2) not in the time of its final treading down by the Gentiles – Luke 21:24.



"yet he shall come to his end" – A very brief summary of such prophecies as Zech. 14; Ezek. 38 & 39; Joel 3; Zeph. 3:8. The long journey pursued by Russia towards world domination, now seemingly almost over, will come to an abrupt and final end at the hand of Christ and the saints.

"and none shall help him" – Roth. - "with none to help him". No one will be able to help Russia. The nations of the west (Britain, U.S.A.) having been humbled, the final conflict will be between the Image and the Stone-power; that is between man's power and divine power. The result is a foregone conclusion and will see the fulfilment of Dan. 8:25.

## **THE WORK OF ELIJAH**

### **THE SCOPE OF ELIJAH'S WORK**

The ministry of Elijah the prophet was restricted to the northern kingdom of Israel and nowhere do we find him associated with the kingdom of Judah either as a prophet or as a visitor. When seeking refuge from the vengeful Jezebel, Elijah chose the solitary heights of Horeb rather than venture into Judah where Athaliah, Jezebel's daughter had ensconced herself in a position of influence in the family of Jehoshaphat.

Though he returned to anoint Elisha as a prophet in his stead Elijah's own ministry to Israel was never completed and it is this work which yet lies before him. His activities will be limited to Jewry outside the Land, for it will be Christ himself who will instruct those who have already returned (Zech. 12:7-14).

Elijah will go forth and direct the operations of a company of the glorified saints in a mission of instruction to scattered Jewry culminating in their return to the Land of Israel in the 'Second Exodus'.

### **'ISRAEL' AND 'JUDAH' IN THE PROPHETIC WORD**

In the days of the kings the nation of Israel was divided politically into two separate kingdoms - Israel in the north consisted of a majority of the people of the ten tribes, while Judah in the south consisted of principally Judah and Benjamin with many from Levi and Simeon who had their inheritance within the boundary of the southern kingdom.

In time, with mass migrations from the north to the south, and the Assyrian captivity of Israel in 723 B.C., a total confusion of the tribes took place so that the kingdom of Judah which survived to 586 B.C. actually consisted of people from every tribe of Israel. Despite this the nation continued to be known as Judah.

It was this political situation which led to the use of the terms 'Israel' and 'Judah' in the prophetic scriptures to describe the Jews scattered abroad and the Jews in the Land.

'Israel', 'Ephraim', and 'the remnant of Jacob' are synonymous terms for the nation of Israel in dispersion and in the latter day context relate to scattered Jewry worldwide - Zech. 9:13; Ezek. 20:27,30,39; Mic. 5:7-8.

'Judah' is the name given to the Jews who have returned to the Land and established the state of Israel. Thus, we read that Christ will save 'the tents of Judah first' - Zech. 12:7.

### **THE TIMING OF ELIJAH'S MISSION**

It has been suggested that Elijah and the saints will be sent on a mission to the Land of Israel to instruct the Jewish people before the invasion of the Land by Russia. The only evidence advanced in support of this suggestion is Jer. 3:14-17, but this context seems to have reference to Elijah's work



among scattered Jewry not the Jews in the Land. This becomes evident by comparing Jer. 3:12 with verse 18. Failure to delineate between 'Israel' and 'Judah' must lead to misunderstanding.

The problem arises over the fulfilment of Mal. 4:5 which is a prophecy concerning "all Israel" (Mal. 4:4). The prophecy demands that Elijah be sent to all Israel, or both Judah and Israel. The difficulty is surmounted when it is remembered that the Jews in the Land in the time of Christ were prophetically defined as 'the house of Judah' and Elijah was sent to them in the form of John the Baptist. Note the special manner in which the Lord spoke of John as Elijah, saying, "And if ye will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come". (Matt. 11:14). And again, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not" (Matt. 17:10-13). We may conclude from these words that Elijah's mission to 'Judah' is complete; all that remains is the mission to 'Israel' in dispersion.

### **Malachi 4:5-6**

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet" – Who are the 'you' of this verse? Malachi prophesied to Israel (1:1) and it is clear from the reference to "all Israel" (4:4) that the entire nation is the subject of the prophecy.

It is significant that Elijah should be associated here with Moses (v.4) as he is also in the transfiguration of Christ - Luke 9:28-31. Both are leaders of an Exodus, one past, one future, and the topic of their discussion with Christ was "his decease" (Gr. *exodus*).

"before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Yahweh" – The day referred to is the day or period of divine judgement upon the nations commencing with the battle of Armageddon - Rev. 16:14. 'The day of Yahweh' is frequently used by the prophets to speak of a time of national judgement - Isa. 2:12-17; Zech. 14:1; Zeph. 2:2-3.

Elijah is to be sent to Israel in dispersion before Christ destroys the Gogian hordes on the mountains of Israel, but as he is to go forth with a company of glorified saints (Matt. 24:31) it is clear his mission does not commence until after the marriage of the Lamb, i.e. just before Christ and the saints begin their work of conquest in the region of Sinai. If Elijah is sent out as Christ goes forth to smite and heal Egypt he will just have sufficient time to warn the Jews in all lands of impending events before Christ appears on the Mt. of Olives and overthrows the invaders of the Land.

Any call for the Jews to leave their adopted lands and gather together for the Second Exodus back to the Land of their fathers would be unlikely to receive much response without tangible and unmistakeable evidence of divine intervention in human affairs. That evidence will be provided to both Jew and Gentile in the day of Christ's triumph over Gog (Rev. 1:7). In the day of Christ's power the Jews will readily respond to Elijah's call - Ps. 110:3.

In a primary sense the prophecy was fulfilled when God sent forth 'Elijah' or John the Baptist to warn 'Judah' of impending national judgement which fell upon a guilty nation in A.D. 70 - Matt. 3:7-12.

V.6 - "he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children" – The fathers are the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who are represented in Isa. 29:23-24 as being so disgusted with the faithless attitude of the children of Israel as to be completely ashamed of them.

These words are quoted in the context of John the Baptist going forth in the spirit and power of Elijah - Luke 1:17, which Bro. Thomas translates "to restore to the posterity the fathers' dispositions and disobedient ones to just persons mode of thinking". John's mission was "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" and Elijah's mission will be the same.

This preparation will consist in converting Jewry from their selfish and godless ways to the faithfulness of their fathers so that the latter might receive them as their children upon their return to the Land. This is the work of the Second Exodus.

"lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" – God's purpose with Israel is the springboard for the fulfilment of His purpose with all nations. What happens to Israel will happen in due course to all nations. The success of Elijah's work will signal the pending success of Christ's work in subduing and converting all nations so that there will be no need for God to smite the earth with a curse.

### **ELIJAH'S ASSOCIATES - Matthew 24:30-31**

V.30 - "And then" – The context of verse 29 concerns the unprecedented political turmoil among all nations just prior to Armageddon. This turmoil would commence subsequent to the liberation of Jerusalem from Gentile hands in June 1967 (Luke 21:24) and would become progressively worse culminating in "a time of trouble such as never was" (Dan. 12:1).

"the sign of the Son of man in heaven" – The 'heaven' refers to the political arena upon the earth. Therefore the 'sign' provided by Christ will be a major political event resulting in all nations mourning at its world shattering consequences. This sign is quite obviously Armageddon, which with its associated earthquake will affect every nation on earth - Rev. 16:16-21.

"the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" – Clouds are symbolic of a multitude (Heb. 12:1) and here relate to the glorified saints who accompany Christ on his march to triumph over the nations - Zech. 14:5; Rev. 1:6-7.

The word 'coming' is *erchomai* meaning to move from one place to another. This refers to the March of the Rainbow Angel - the victorious progress of Christ leading up to the time when he shall be "King of kings and Lord of lords".

V.31 - "he shall send his angels" – Christ's 'angels' or messengers of the future age are the saints (Heb. 2:5) who will have become "as the angels" in nature, power and authority (Luke 20:36).

"with a great sound of a trumpet" – This cannot be the resurrectional trump of God (1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:52) for the work of resurrection and judgement is complete. The prophets speak of a great trumpet to be blown by Yahweh for the gathering of scattered Israel - Isa. 18:3; 27:13; Zech. 9:14. At this sound the Jews will respond to Elijah and the saints and the Second Exodus will begin.

"they shall gather together his elect" - 'Elect' signifies chosen and is a term applied to Israel as well as to the saints, for Israel is God's chosen nation - Ps. 105:6,43; Isa. 65:15.

"from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other" – This is clearly a reference to Deut. 30:4, thus confirming the 'elect' here to be the nation of Israel in dispersion.

It is fitting that Elijah be accompanied on his mission by others, as this is in keeping with his previous ministry in which he was associated with "the sons of the prophets" (2 Kings 2:15), a group of dedicated men whose task it was to disseminate "the still small voice" of God's word to the nation.

Placed in charge of the work of restoring Israel, Elijah will have associates with him whose labours he will supervise. Though sent out before Armageddon, the restoration will not be effected until after Christ's subjugation of the nations, and, in all, will occupy some 40 years in its completion. (See notes on 'Jubilee Period').

## **THE SECOND EXODUS OF ISRAEL**

### **ELIJAH'S MESSAGE TO SCATTERED ISRAEL**

With the world embroiled in war and gathering their armies into the Middle East for Armageddon "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7) will have arrived contemporaneously with "the time of

trouble such as never was" (Dan. 12:2). At this crisis in Jewry's affairs Elijah and his emissaries will visit every community of Jews in every country upon the earth to begin the work of restoration.

Education and instruction in the purpose of God and divine principles will precede a call for the Jews to leave their homes and adopted lands for the journey to the Covenant Land. Doubtless the Jews will be encouraged to respond to this call due to a growing persecution against their race as Anti-Semitism again rears its head. In addition, Elijah's ambassadors will be able by miraculous signs to convince the Jews that they are indeed divine messengers.

The message they will deliver is set out in a remarkable prophecy contained in Jeremiah 3:12-4:2.

### **Jeremiah 3:12-4:2**

"Go and proclaim these words toward the north" – That the north refers to Gentile lands is clear from v.18. Elijah's message is to scattered Israel, not the Jews now in the Land.

"return thou backsliding Israel" – It is important to note that a distinction is drawn between Israel and Judah in this prophecy (note vv.6-11,18). It is clear from v.18 that Judah and Israel will not be united until after Jerusalem becomes "the throne of Yahweh" (v.17), therefore the message carried to Israel must concern only those Jews scattered in all nations.

Elijah's message is a call to repentance so that Yahweh's mercy might be extended to Israel - vv.12-14.

V.14 - "I will take you one or a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion" – Though all Jews will leave their adopted lands and join the Second Exodus, not all will enter the Land to take up their inheritance. The purging out of rebels (Ezek. 20:33-38) during the exodus will thin the ranks of Israel in a similar manner as occurred to Israel in the wilderness under Moses. Only a few of the older generation will manifest the faith required for entry into the Covenant Land and the younger generation (perhaps the "two of a family") will enter the Land to take up their inheritance leaving their father's bones lying in "the wilderness of the people".

"I will give you pastors" – These will be Elijah and his associates whose task it will be to instruct Jewry in 'sound doctrine' that they might respond to Yahweh.

In verses 16-18 Jeremiah presents the ultimate results of Elijah's work. In the following verse he reveals how these results are attained.

V.19 - "How shall I put thee among the children" – Yahweh poses the question - How would it be possible for him to restore to the status of sons a people who had rejected his son and polluted his name among the Gentiles and still uphold his righteousness before all nations?

Only through total repentance and confession of their guilt could Yahweh justly forgive and restore Israel - v.13.

"Thou shalt call me, My father" - Israel in dispersion must learn to recognise their relationship to Yahweh, and manifest the proper filial respect to Him.

In verses 20-22 Jeremiah portrays the message that Elijah will deliver to Israel in order to cause them to review their past. The message in the form of rebuke followed by an appeal is calculated to produce in the Jews a repentant sorrow. This effect it will have, and the grateful, heart-broken response of Israel is then portrayed in verses 22-25.

Greeted with this response Elijah will instruct Israel as to what they are to do - Jer.4:1-2. The terms of their restitution are:

1. Israel must recognise Yahweh by acknowledging His existence.

2. Their acknowledgement must be revealed by the action of putting away all abominations and a confession.
3. Israel must swear that Yahweh lives, that He is the epitome of truth, judgement and righteousness and that their punishment at His hands was perfectly just.
4. This confession of faith forms the basis of Israel's restitution and will provide a channel of righteousness unto all nations who in their turn will follow Israel's example.

## RETURNING ISRAEL - YAHWEH'S WEAPONS OF WAR

The instruction given to the Jewish communities throughout the world will receive a willing response (Ps. 110:3) as Jews everywhere gather together and begin to make their way back to the Promised Land. However, they will be met with varying degrees of resistance from the nations they attempt to leave.

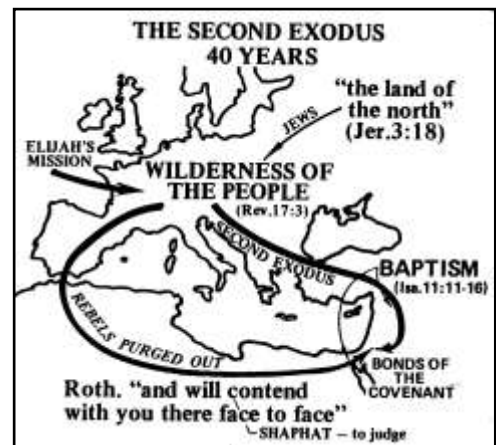
The resistance will be greatest among the Eurasian nations where the efforts of Jews to return to the Land of Israel will be interpreted as a hostile action designed to assist Israel, with whom the nations will be at war.

They will set out to suppress the revolt as they view it, and this will result in Israel resorting to force, assisted by divine power supplied through Elijah and the saints (Jer. 51:20). The purpose of this warfare is outlined by the prophet Ezekiel - Ezek. 20:33-38.

### Ezek. 20:33-38

V.33 - "with a mighty hand.....will I rule over you" – This is a reference to the work of Elijah and his associates also described in Zech. 9:12-17. Divine power to judge the nations and destroy their resistance will be freely exercised by the saints who will overshadow Israel unseen to the nations. This demonstration of amazing supernatural power by a seemingly unarmed and defenceless people will 'confound' the nations and convince Israel - Mic. 7:15-20.

V.34 - "gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered" – Elijah and the saints will gather together all scattered Jewry from every nation - none will be exempt. This will only be accomplished by the manifestation of divine power - Jer. 25:31-33.



V.35 - "the wilderness of the people" - This is not the Wilderness of Sinai but a 'wilderness' of people - a wilderness as unfriendly and inhospitable as the Egyptian desert (Deut. 8:15). The only "wilderness of people" mentioned in scripture is that into which John was carried in spirit to behold the woman seated on a scarlet beast, the Roman Catholic apostasy entrenched in Europe - Rev. 17:3. The "wilderness of the people" is thus identified with the Catholic nations of Europe and Central Asia. This harmonises with Jer. 3:18 ("the land of the north").

Israel's journey through the European nations to the Promised Land will most likely take quite some time and will provide a period of severe testing for Israel and a period of even severer judgements for the nations.

"there will I plead with you face to face" - The word 'plead' is *shaphat* - to judge; i.e. to pronounce sentence; by imp. to vindicate or punish. Roth. - "and will contend with you there face to face".

V.36 - "Like as I pleaded with your fathers" - Though repentant, Israel will nevertheless need to be purged. Under a time of severe testing the true character of the Israelites will be revealed. As entry to the land and into the covenant will be upon the basis of faith, ample opportunity is to be provided for faith to be revealed. Unfortunately, many Jews deeply ingrained in the ways of the Gentiles will, like their fathers of old, desire to 'return to Egypt' and like their fathers in the wilderness, Yahweh will contend with them.

V.37 - "I will cause you to pass under the rod" - This is the rod of divine correction wielded by the saints - Rev. 2:26-27; 19:15.

"I will bring you into the bond of the covenant" - Purged by trial and humbled by judgement, Israel will be invited to enter into covenant-relationship with Yahweh. Unlike the covenant made with their fathers which they broke, this new covenant will be written in their heart - Jer. 31:31-33.

V.38 - "I will purge out from among you the rebels" - Though brought out with the rest of Israel, the rebels will be purged in the process of the journey through the countries of Europe and its associated warfare. By the hand of Yahweh and of the enemy they will perish during the forty year period of the Second Exodus.

### **Zechariah 9:12-17**

V.12 - "Turn you to the stronghold" – i.e. to Yahweh - Nah. 1:7; Prov. 18:10. Roth. - "high fortress" (Mgn.).

"ye prisoners of hope" – Youngs Lit. - "ye prisoners of the hope." The word 'hope' is *tiqvah* and joined with the definite article is *hatikva* the national anthem of Israel. This phrase connects scattered Israel with this context.

"I will render double unto thee" – The blessing of the firstborn which Israel had forfeited through faithlessness is to be restored to them when they become the head of the nations. But first Israel must be purged and humbled.



V.13 - "When I have bent Judah for me" - Christ will "save the tents of Judah first" (Zech. 12:7) and they shall "fight at Jerusalem" against the power of the north (Zech. 14:14). The Jews in the Land called 'Judah' will provide the strength or motivation which will impel Israel to return to the Land and in the process act as Yahweh's arrow against the nations.

Refined 'Judah' is to become Yahweh's "goodly horse" in battle to overcome all peoples round about the Land of Israel - Zech. 10:3-5; 12:5-6.

"filled the bow with Ephraim" - Ephraim is equivalent to Israel and refers to scattered Jewry. Returning Israel is to be the striking force of Yahweh against the nations - Zech. 10:9-11.

"against thy sons, O Greece" - Zechariah's prophecy primarily concerned the wars fought by the Maccabees against the Grecian king of the north. Here the latter day 'king of the north' is shown to be a manifestation of the Grecian Empire.

V.14 - "Yahweh shall be seen over them" - The glorified saints will have the name of Yahweh named upon them (Rev. 3:12), and will overshadow and guide the Israelites in their conquests over the Gentiles.

"shall go with whirlwinds of the south" - Christ and the saints as Yahweh Sabaoth will have come from the south or Teman - Hab. 3:3; Deut. 33:2.

The word 'whirlwinds' is *cearah* signifying a hurricane, from a root *ca'ar* meaning to rush upon. The work of the saints in shepherding Israel back to the Land will leave behind sorely judged nations so that Jeremiah's prophecy will be fulfilled - Jer. 25:32-33.

V.15 - "Yahweh of hosts shall defend them" - *ganan* signifies to hedge about, i.e. to protect. This is the work of Elijah and his associates for a period of nearly 40 years.

## **THE ROUTE OF THE SECOND EXODUS**

The Israelites gathered by Elijah and the saints will make their way back to the Land in communities which will grow larger as groups from different nations coalesce along the way. They will eventually enter the Land from the north or the south; from across the Euphrates or the Red Sea where a national baptism will take place after all rebels have been purged out.

### **Isaiah 11:11-16**

This context deals with the Second Exodus of Israel and adds important details concerning the route by which the returning Jews will enter the Land.

V.15 - "the tongue of the Egyptian Sea" – Evidently a reference to the Red Sea which again will be divided to provide a way for Israel to pass over.

"shake his hand over the river" – A reference to the River Euphrates known in scripture as "the river" (Ps. 72:8).

"and make men go over dryshod" – This is the purpose of dividing the Red Sea and the Euphrates. A highway is to be created out of Egypt and Assyria for returning Israel. Those crossing the Red Sea will re-enact the crossing of their fathers under Moses, while those crossing the Euphrates will re-enact the 'crossing-over' of Abraham as he journeyed from Ur to the Land of Promise. Whether coming from north or south all will be baptised into Christ and prepared to settle in the Land in their allotted territory.

This is confirmed in an additional prophecy provided by Isaiah - Isa. 27:12-13.

## **CHRIST'S MILITARY STRATEGY**

### **SYNCHRONISATION OF EVENTS**

At the great crisis in human affairs described by Daniel as "a time of trouble such as never was", many events will occur during a short space of time. Some of those events although considered separately in these notes will occur simultaneously. The following is an attempt to relate those events chronologically so that an orderly progression may be seen in the outworking of the divine purpose at this time.

1. The Russian confederacy drives south along the coastal plains of Israel and into Egypt which is overwhelmed.
2. The western nations respond to Russia's occupation of Egypt by entrenching their forces in and around Jerusalem.
3. Meanwhile, Christ and his glorified saints prepare to move from Sinai. Incorporated in this preparation will be the sending forth of Elijah and his associates to scattered Jewry.
4. Tidings from the east (Sinai) and from the north (Jerusalem) trouble Gog and he advances northward to engage the forces of the 'Tarshish' powers at Jerusalem.

5. Christ and his saints - Yahweh Tzvaoth, move northwards to subdue the Arabs of the region and then into Egypt to overthrow the residue of Gog's occupation force and to "smite and heal" Egypt.
6. Russia defeats the western powers in Israel and victoriously plants the headquarters of its Image-Empire in Jerusalem.
7. The Jewish people are destroyed, scattered or taken into captivity by Gog's forces.
8. Christ and his saints having left Egypt arrive at Jerusalem after sweeping aside resistance along the way and destroying Gog's army in a great holocaust precipitated by an earthquake.



## THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE SAINTS

It will be an honour for all saints to execute upon the nations the judgements written and to carry forth divine vengeance upon a guilty world - Ps. 149; John 18:36, Rev. 19:11-14.

However, though all saints will be identified with the work of conquest, being part of the Multitudinous Christ or Yahweh Sabaoth, not all will be with Christ at Armageddon. It is obvious that some saints will be occupied in other aspects of the work while Christ goes forth with a representative army to destroy Gog.

The glorified saints will be organised into the 'eyes' (Zech. 4:10), 'arms' (Isa. 40:10), 'name' (Isa. 30:27), and 'feet' (Zech. 14:4) of Yahweh, each having a specific work to perform. Some saints will be given the work of teaching, others administration, and others directing the work of conquest.

As an example, Elijah and his glorified associates will not be at Armageddon but will be occupied in all lands warning and instructing scattered Jewry concerning impending events and of their Second Exodus. Furthermore, many of those glorified who were living contemporary with Christ's return will be occupied in tending to their own children (Ezek. 47:22-23), many of whom will still be of tender age. These and many other tasks will be appointed to the saints while Christ rejoices with his Bride following the marriage of the Lamb at Mt. Sinai.

## THE ARABS SUBDUED AND DISCIPLINED

While Gog goes forth from Egypt with great fury to utterly make away many, Christ will move from Sinai into the region round about where the Arab nations will be gathering at this crisis in world affairs that involves "all nations". That Christ's first work of conquest is among the Arab peoples is made clear from Habakkuk's prophecy.

### Habakkuk 3:7

From verse 3 of this chapter Habakkuk describes the power and movements of Yahweh Sabaoth or the 'Mighty One' (Eloah) who originates from Teman (the south). The prophet presents a picture of the Multitudinous Christ striding forth from Sinai to "drive asunder the nations" and reveals in verse seven the first peoples to feel the power of his judgement.

"I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction" – Roth. - "under distress saw I the tents....." The term 'tents' implies a nomadic people. As they are the first peoples encountered by 'the Mighty One' in his march from Mt. Sinai it is evident that they dwell in and around the area of the Sinai Peninsular.

Cushan or Ethiopia was originally situated to the north (modern Iraq - Gen. 2:13) but Cushites migrated south to Ethiopia (modern Abyssinia). However, there was a third Cushan identified with the land of Midian, adjacent to Teman. Moses' Midianitish wife, Zipporah (Ex. 2:15-21), is styled a Cushite, or Ethiopian in Num. 12:1. In Ezek. 38:13, Sheba and Dedan can be identified with the Arab peoples, and also with Cush. In Gen. 25:3, they are described as descendents of Abraham, whilst in 1 Chron. 1:9 they are traced from Cush. It appears that through the intermarriage of descendents of Abraham through Keturah with descendents of Cush the line of descent became confused. Obviously, the 'tents of Cushan' relate to the Arabian descendents of Cush through Abraham, dwelling in the region of Sinai.

"the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble" – The land of Midian is adjacent to the Gulf of Aqaba, stretching along the Red Sea coast - Ex. 2:15; 3:1. Hence, again this description relates to Arab peoples inhabiting the area of Sinai.

A terrible manifestation of supernatural power will be brought to bear upon the Arab peoples resulting in their complete subjugation to Christ. They will be the first to feel the sword of the 'Mighty One' from Teman.

## **THE PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY**

The subduing and disciplining of the Arabs is the first work Christ will do in order to provide a haven for Jews who flee from the land when Gog overwhelms Israel. The age-long hostility of Arab towards Jew which still exists today must be removed if the fleeing Jews are to find refuge among the Arab peoples adjacent to the land.

### **Isaiah 21:13-15**

V.13 - "The burden upon Arabia" – Roth. - "The oracle on Arabia". It is interesting to note the preceding verses which indicate the context of Isaiah's oracle upon Arabia.

"In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge" – Roth. - "Among the shrubs in Arabia must ye lodge". The word for 'forest' is *ya'ar* which is widely used in relation to forests or a wood of any kind. It means "to thicken with verdure". Hence, in relation to Arabia it must refer to a time when the Arabian wilderness is transformed into a lush forest region. This dramatic change will be one of the consequences of the massive changes Christ will bring to the region subsequent to (and as a result of) Armageddon.

The word 'lodge' means to dwell. The place of dwelling for the Arabs in the Kingdom Age is Arabia proper to the east and south of the territory promised to Abraham. To this area the humbled and disciplined Arab peoples will be taken and resettled.

"O ye travelling companies of Dedanim" – Dedan as noted above refers to the Arab peoples who descended from Abraham and Cush - Gen. 25:3; 1 Chron. 1:9. The fact that they are described as travelling in companies serves to confirm the obvious reference to the nomadic Bedouin tribes of the Arabian Peninsular, Sinai Desert, and Jordanian Plateau.



V.14 - "The inhabitants of the land of Tema" – Tema was a son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15) and probably gave his name to the region of Teman. The word signifies 'the south' and clearly refers to the region of Sinai (Hab. 3:3). The Arabs of this region who will be the first to feel the power of Christ's disciplining sword will stand ready to assist fleeing Jews in the "time of Jacob's trouble".

"brought water to him that was thirsty" – The refugees from Israel, fleeing Gog's furious attack upon the land of Israel will be desperate for sustenance as was their forefather Elijah in a similar situation (1 Kings 19:4-8). A drink of water in this dry and arid region is a valuable gift (Matt. 10:42) and given together with bread was regarded as an act of friendship (Deut. 23:4).

"they prevented with their bread him that fled" – R.V. - "did meet the fugitives with their bread". This implies that the Arab peoples will actually initiate help for the fleeing Jews. They will pre-empt their cries for help. What could bring about such a remarkable change in the attitude of Arab toward Jew but the supernatural intervention of Christ?

V.15 - "For they fled from the swords" – This verse provides the reason why the Jews must flee the land of Israel and seek refuge in adjoining lands. Gog's invasion of Israel will be so ruthless and devastating that two-thirds (or over 3 million) of the population will be destroyed (Zech. 13:8).

## **THE CONVERSION OF THE ARABS**

A number of passages clearly demonstrate that the Arabs are to be converted to the faith of their father Abraham, and that they will serve the Lord Jesus Christ as near neighbours of redeemed and regathered Israel.

Occupying such a position they will be a privileged people, able to freely frequent the Land and Temple in worship together with their mortal Israelitish brethren and companies of Gentiles from all over the world.

### **Psalm 72:9**

"They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him" – This obvious reference to the Arabs occurs in a context which speaks of Christ extending his dominion from the Land of the Covenant to all parts of the earth. The Arabs will be the first non-Israelitish people to submit to his authority.

### **Isaiah 60:6-7**

V.6 - "Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba" – Midian identifies the Arab peoples of the Sinai region - Ex. 2:15; 3:1. Ephah was a son of Midian (Gen. 25:4) and therefore relates to a branch of the Midianites. Sheba was a brother of Dedan and identifies with the people inhabiting the Arabian Peninsular (Gen. 25:3; 1 Chron. 1:9).

"they shall bring gold and incense" – The literal tokens of obeisance offered by the Arabs to purified Israel bespeaks the spiritual motivation behind their gifts. The Arabs will indeed manifest 'faith' (gold) and come to offer their 'prayers' (incense) to Yahweh. This is revealed by the following words.

"they shall shew forth the praises of Yahweh" – Roth. – "and the praises of Yahweh shall they joyfully tell." Having felt the fierce judgements of Yahweh and experienced his boundless loving-kindness as they witnessed the benefits flowing unto them as a consequence of their conversion they will have much to tell concerning "the goodness and severity of God".

V.7 - "All the flocks of Kedar" – Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13) but rose to pre-eminence over his older brother. Thus, the name Kedar is sometimes used to describe Arabia in general - Isa. 42:11; Ezek. 27:21.

"the rams of Nebaioth" - Same as Nebajoth, the firstborn of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13). This phrase is a parallelism to the former. The name means 'fruitfulness'.

"shall come up with acceptance on mine altar" - This verse appears to indicate that the flocks of the Arabs will be presented to Israel for use as altar offerings in the Temple. Again the inference is that the Arabs will be a privileged people.

"and I will glorify the house of my glory" - The Arabs are to make a significant contribution to the building and operation of the House of Prayer for all nations.

## **Isaiah 42:11-12**

V.11 - "the villages that Kedar doth inhabit" - See note on "Kedar" above. This is a reference to the peoples of modern Saudi Arabia.

"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing" - The word 'rock' is *selah* – a lofty, craggy rock. Bro. Thomas translates "the rocky country" and interprets the phrase to mean Arabia Petrea.

V.12 - "Let them give glory unto Yahweh" - This is the reason why the Arab peoples will lift up their voices and sing. Humbled and converted they will gladly serve and praise Yahweh for His righteousness and goodness.

## **THE FATE OF EDMOM**

Edom is not to be confused with the Arab people, for the destiny of Edom is to be quite different as is declared by Obadiah the prophet; "They shall be as though they had not been" (Obad. 16). This was the fate of ancient Edom, and it will be the fate of typical Edom: the flesh in political manifestation.

## **THE SMITING AND HEALING OF EGYPT**

Following the subjugation and disciplining of the Arabs, Christ and the saints will move westwards into Egypt. In Isaiah 19 this is shown to be by invitation of the sorely oppressed Egyptians who will be suffering at the hands of "a cruel lord".

Christ's entry into Egypt is part of a predetermined plan by God to provide a base for the return of purged and redeemed Israel to the land of their fathers (Isa. 11:15). Because of its proximity to the Covenant Land Egypt occupies an important place in the purpose of God; this purpose is fully outlined in Isaiah 19 which also provides details of the great crisis to descend upon Egypt during "the time of trouble such as never was".

## **YAHWEH INVADES EGYPT - Isaiah 19:1**

V.1 - "The burden of Egypt" – Roth. - "The oracle on Egypt". The Hebrew word *massah* is from the root *nasah* - to lift, to raise up, therefore something that is heavy or burdensome, requiring to be lifted. This chapter describes the 'burden of Egypt' through which it will be humbled, disciplined and healed.

"Behold, Yahweh rideth upon a swift cloud" – This is the imagery of Rev. 10 and describes the movement of the Rainbow Angel fresh from victory over the Arabs, westwards towards Egypt.

A 'cloud' is representative of a multitude (Heb. 12:1) and here portrays the glorified saints, the cherubic chariot or vehicle upon which Yahweh (the Lord Jesus Christ) will ride into Egypt. However, as the cloud is described as 'swift', a word signifying light and therefore rapid in movement (*gal*) the inference is that not all the saints will accompany Christ on this mission but only a

representative multitude. Doubtless much work will remain for the remainder among the Arab peoples.

"and shall come into Egypt" – It can be shown that Christ must enter Egypt before Armageddon. Hab. 3:8 hints that the next work before the Mighty One after disciplining the Arabs is connected with Egypt. Dan. 11:42-45 demonstrates how Russia will invade and occupy Egypt but will then send its main force to Jerusalem where it will be overthrown by Christ. If this overthrow preceded Christ's march into Egypt it is likely that the Egyptians would be able to successfully throw out the remnant of Russia's forces without Christ's help, but they are represented as desperately crying to Yahweh for help because of the oppression (Isa. 19:20) and this implies a pre-Armageddon situation.

"and the idols shall be moved at his presence" – Roth. - "and the idols of Egypt shall shake at his presence". Idols are not capable of emotional feelings but their makers and devotees are. The presence of Christ will finally dispel the superstitions and destroy the idolatry that has shackled the Egyptians for ages.

The word 'moved' is *nuwah* in the Hebrew and can also be rendered "to be removed". This suggests the ultimate purpose of Christ in entering Egypt.

"And the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it" – This is the language of fear and trepidation - Josh. 2:11; 14:8. The word 'melt' is *macac* signifying to liquefy. This is the condition into which the Egyptians will be brought so that like Rahab they may turn in faith unto Yahweh in a time of great distress.

This first verse actually announces the final results of Yahweh's purpose with Egypt. What follows is a description of events leading up to Christ's intervention. This is in accord with the principle frequently employed in the prophets of announcing the end result before the process required to bring it to pass; e.g. Isa. 2.

#### **EGYPT UNDER GOG - Isaiah 19:2-4**

V.2 - "And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians" – The prophet depicts Egypt torn with internal strife just prior to Russia's invasion (v.4). What will cause this is not revealed in detail but it will be brought about by the divine hand.

The strife will be so serious as to verge on civil war - "city against city, and kingdom (LXX. - district) against kingdom".

V.3 - "And the spirit of Egypt shall fail" – *baqaq* - to pour out, i.e. to empty. Internal strife and external danger will result in a total break-down of the fabric of Egyptian society.

"I will destroy the counsel thereof" – Roth. - "the sagacity thereof will I swallow up". Government will collapse amidst the general confusion leaving Egypt wide open to external intervention.

"they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers" – In vain the Egyptians will fall back upon their false religion (Mohammedism - 'the idols') and the vanities of their superstitions. As the terms 'charmers' and 'wizards' are applied to the Apostasy (Isa. 8:19) the Egyptians may even turn to the 'Christian' world for help when they find their Muslim brothers otherwise preoccupied.

V.4 - "the Egyptians will I give over into the hands of a cruel lord" – This cruel lord is Gog - Dan. 11:40-45. Few nations in the so-called 'civilised' world are as brutal and cruel to captured nations as Russia. The latter day 'Assyrian' is named such because his despotism and ruthlessness match that of the Assyrian kings of old. Egypt will be swamped by Gog's invasion and fall to the iron rule of "a fierce king".

#### **EGYPT'S DIRE POVERTY - Isaiah 19:5-10**

The livelihood of Egypt has always revolved around the River Nile and in latter times around both the Nile and the Suez Canal. Both of these vital waterways appear to be referred to in this passage which predicts the total collapse of Egypt's economy. Egypt will be thoroughly humbled by depression as the following conditions are gradually felt.

V.5 Commerce which in Egypt depends upon the waterways will grind to a halt as the waters figuratively dry up.

V.6 Egypt will be isolated from help, its canals will silt up, poverty will become acute.

V.7 The vital fields on the flood plains of the Nile will be left uncultivated.

V.8 Egypt's important fishing industry will go into decline and eventual ruin.

V.9 Egypt's craft and industry will close down.

V.10 The depression will strike all classes, rich and poor and the general calamity will bring Egypt to its knees.

### **EGYPT'S POLITICAL FOLLY - Isaiah 19:11-15**

Now the reason for Egypt's economic collapse is given; a failure of government. This is clear from v.15 which attributes the disastrous economic situation to poor leadership.

Briefly stated the failure of Egypt's rulers which brings about this parlous state may be summarised thus:

1. Egypt's government advisors become wasteful and irrational in handling the nation's affairs ('brutish' - to consume, v.11).
2. A failure of the wisdom once displayed by Egypt's rulers in ancient times manifested in an inability to perceive the divine purpose in relation to Israel and Egypt (v.12).
3. A breakdown of effective government through the selfishness of the ruling class (v.13).
4. The mingling of a perverse spirit among Egypt's rulers by Yahweh who will exploit their inefficiencies, selfishness, and irrationality to bring to pass His purpose with Egypt (v.14).

### **EGYPT TO BE HUMBLLED - Isaiah 19:16-17**

V.16 - "in that day" – This is the day spoken of in v.1, as is clear from what follows in this verse. The latter part of the chapter deals with the healing of Egypt.

"shall Egypt be like unto women" – This simile is chosen to portray Egypt's helpless state in the face of the overwhelming divine power of Yahweh Tzvaoth.

"the shaking of the hand of Yahweh Tzvaoth" – Shaking of the hand is figurative of wielding authority. This is the work of the mighty Rainbow Angel in Egypt. The word 'shaking' is *tenuwphah* signifying a brandishing (in threat). Christ and the saints will humble the Egyptians by wielding divine supernatural powers.

V.17 - "the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt" - The nation of Israel is already a terror to Egypt but will become more so when they are visited by "the lion of the tribe of Judah". They will tremble in expectation of retribution for their age-long anti-Semitism at the appearance of this more terrifying manifestation of Israeli might.

### **EGYPT CONVERTED - Isaiah 19:18**

V.18 - "In that day shall five cities" – Five is the number of grace. These five cities will be appointed by Christ as centres of instruction where the truth concerning the grace and mercy of

Yahweh will be proclaimed. The saints will preside over these centres to provide instruction in divine things to the humbled and disciplined Egyptians.

"speak the language of Canaan" – Namely Hebrew which will become the universal language in the Kingdom Age (Zeph. 3:9). The 'language of Canaan' is however more than just an alphabet and a system of speech; it is a system of truth. The tongue of Deity which is most likely scriptural Hebrew, is indivisible from His truth which is best proclaimed in that language.

"and swear to Yahweh" – i.e. swear allegiance to Yahweh.

"one shall be called, the city of destruction" – One of the cities appointed as centres of instruction will be particularly important.

The word 'destruction' is *herec* signifying demolition or destruction. Some commentators offer the alternative "city of the sun" and the Septuagint has, "the city of righteousness". While these can easily be seen to have relation to Christ the A.V. rendition is probably correct.

Perhaps this city will be established as a place of commemoration of Christ's victory over Gog's forces in Egypt (cp. Ezek. 39:11,15-16) and over Egyptian idolatry (v.1).

### **YAHWEH MEMORIALISED IN EGYPT - Isaiah 19:19-20**

V.19 - "an altar to Yahweh" – Not for the purpose of sacrifice but as a memorial to the victory of Yahweh over Egypt's oppressors and a reminder of their responsibility to serve Yahweh with sacrifices upon His altar in Zion - cp. Josh. 22:24-29.

"and a pillar at the border" – Another physical memorial to commemorate Christ's victorious intervention in Egypt's affairs, at a time of great distress.

V.20 - "it shall be for a sign" – *owth* - a signal. The LXX. adds to this phrase "for the age". This obelisk will be erected to commemorate past and future deliverances by Yahweh.

"for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors" – Primarily this refers to the cry of distress as a result of the oppression of a 'cruel lord'; namely Gog, but Hebraists state that the verb will permit the verse to be given in the future tense, and may therefore relate to subsequent oppressions - cp. Zech. 14:18.

"he shall send them a saviour" – Primarily, this refers to Christ but also has relationship to the saints who will complete the work he initiates.

"a great one" – *rab* - abundant. The word is used in a wide variety of applications. It is translated "captain", "prince", and "officer" elsewhere, and in those places implies a ruler or governor having others ranked beneath him. This refers to Christ and his co-rulers - Ps. 22:27-28.

### **THE CONVERSION OF EGYPT - Isaiah 19:21-22**

V.21 - "And the LORD shall be known to Egypt" – Roth. - "Then will Yahweh make himself known to the Egyptians, so shall the Egyptians know Yahweh". This will be the result of instruction and education.

"and shall do sacrifice and oblation" – The Egyptians will serve Yahweh in Jerusalem along with all nations - Zech. 14:16.

V.22 - "The LORD shall smite and heal it" – The word 'smite' is *nagaph* signifying to push, gore, defeat, inflict. This will be accomplished in Yahweh's invasion of Egypt - v.1.

The healing of Egypt must of necessity be a work of time and will be effected by instruction in divine things. There are two great afflictions in Egypt; leprosy (Deut. 28:60; 7:15) and blindness, and these

are typical of the spiritual state of the people. Christ and the saints will heal Egypt of 'sin' and 'ignorance' by education.

"and they shall return even to the LORD" – The word 'return' is *shuwb* signifying to turn. Hence, Roth. - "and they will turn unto Yahweh". As a result of turning to Yahweh, He will in turn be entreated of them on the principle of James 4:8.

### **EGYPT FORMS PART OF A UNITED WORLD - Isaiah 19:23**

V.23 - "a highway out of Egypt to Assyria" – In Isaiah's day Egypt and Assyria were the two greatest nations and between them virtually constituted the then known world. The highway refers to a "way of righteousness" in which the nations will walk. There will be a highway out of both Assyria and Egypt for Israel to return to the Land (Isa. 62:10; 11:16) and in which the Gentiles will also walk (Zech. 8:22-23).

### **EGYPT SUBMITS TO ISRAEL AS THE FIRST DOMINION - Isaiah 19:24-25**

V.24 - "shall Israel be the third with Egypt" – This does not mean Israel will be third in rank but the intermediary between Egypt and Assyria. Recognition of Israel's status will be one of the conditions that Christ will lay down before the nations for their acceptance - Ezek. 39:23,27; Zech. 8:20-23. That Israel is the channel through which Assyria and Egypt will become a blessing to all nations is made clear by the next statement that these three nations shall be "a blessing in the midst of the earth" (Roth.).

V.25 — "Blessed be Egypt my people" – They will become such by conversion to Yahweh's truth.

"and Assyria the work of my hands" – The intervention of Yahweh's hands will transform this people of the north. Thus in these statements is portrayed the conversion of the whole world.

"and Israel mine inheritance" – To Israel alone is reserved the privilege of becoming Yahweh's inheritance among the nations, for there He will dwell - Zech. 2:10-13.

## **CHRIST AT JERUSALEM**

### **THE SACRIFICE IN BOZRAH – Isaiah 34**

Bozrah was evidently the capital of Edom - Amos 1:11-12; Gen.36:33. Idumea a name which occurs in Isaiah 34:5,6; Ezek. 35:15; 36:5 is actually the same as Edom and is a variation attributable to the translators of 1611. Most subsequent translations revert to the correct term - Edom.

Isaiah 34 refers to "the day of Yahweh", the day of vengeance upon all nations. This is evident from the following passages: —

Vv.1-2 "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter."

V.8 "For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion."

And yet the judgements are represented as falling upon the land of Edom, and as having occurred in Bozrah.

Vv.5-6 "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgement. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea."

## **EDOM AND BOZRAH TYPICAL NAMES**

Ancient Edom is extinct — the race no longer exists (Obadiah 9,10,16). However, typical Edom - flesh in political manifestation opposed to the things of Zion is very much in evidence and will be seen in the plenitude of its power when Yahweh gathers "all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 14:2). It is these forces of the Gentiles, styled "the house of Esau" and "the mount of Esau" (Obadiah 18,19,21) which Christ and the saints will overthrow at Armageddon.

Bozrah the capital of Edom is figuratively the headquarters of Gentile power. The name means an enclosure, i.e. a sheepfold, but comes from a root *batsar* meaning to clip off or gather grapes. The word also relates to an isolated place (i.e. inaccessible by height or fortification). In summary, Bozrah can signify either 'fortification', 'sheepfold', or 'vintage'.

Significantly, Rome in Hebrew means 'fortification' while Babylon was built in the plain of Dura which likewise means a 'wall' or 'rampart' or fortified place. Bozrah is therefore linked etymologically with Babylon and Rome and typically represents the headquarters or fortified place of fleshly, Gentile political power - see Dan. 11:45.

To Jerusalem will God gather all nations as into 'a sheepfold' for slaughter or the treading of the 'vintage'.

## **TREADING THE WINEPRESS AT BOZRAH - Isaiah 63:1-6**

V.1 - "Who is this that cometh from Edom" – This question is posed in a remarkable setting. In the previous chapter Isaiah has set forth the glorious destiny of Zion and called upon Israel to make every preparation to receive its Messiah. However, Israel is to be ignorant of the identity of their saviour, and it is this one to whom the prophet now turns.

As vv.1-6 are preceded and followed by prophecies concerning the redemption of Israel this passage may be compared with other prophecies dealing with Israel's recognition of their Messiah, namely, Zech. 12:9-14; 13:8-9; Matt. 23:39. Because Israel's recognition of their Messiah is subsequent to the battle of Armageddon, Christ is represented as coming from Edom and Bozrah which figuratively speak of the place of divine judgement upon the nations - that place is outside the walls of Jerusalem on "the mountains of Israel" - Rev. 16:16; Joel 3:2; Ezek. 39:4.

"with dyed garments from Bozrah" – The prophecy depicts the glorious Multitudinous Christ at a time subsequent to the treading of the winepress. The 'vintage' of Bozrah has been trodden. Gentile anti-Semitic power has been crushed at Armageddon.

"this that is glorious in his apparel" – Roth. - "this made splendid in his raiment, marching on in the greatness of his strength". This is a glorious picture of the march of the Rainbow Angel who Bro. Thomas portrays as passing literal Bozrah and Edom on his way to Yahweh's "sacrifice in Bozrah" at Jerusalem.

V.2 - "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel" – The enquiry is made: How did Israel's mighty saviour sustain his blood spattered garments?

"like him that treadeth in the wine fat" - Roth. - "as of one treading in a wine-trough?" The answer comes in the following verse.

V.3 - "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me" – The last phrase should be translated "and of the peoples there was no man with me" (Roth. & R.S.V.). He who comes from Edom is Yahweh Tz'vaoth or the Multitudinous Christ. Hence, Christ will not be alone but in the company of many glorified saints. However, as they will comprise 'The Man of the One', the 'mighty Rainbow Angel', and 'one like unto the Son of man' they may be spoken of as being "alone". The "peoples" (plural) refers to the nations who will be the subject of the judgements.

"their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments" – Not literally, but figuratively. Christ and the saints will bring supernatural power to bear upon the forces of the nations.

V.4 - "the day of vengeance is in my heart" – Again it is clear that this passage of Isaiah relates to events surrounding Armageddon and not to a skirmish at Bozrah in Edom.

## **ARMAGEDDON AND ITS AFTERMATH**

The word Armageddon occurs only once in the scriptures (Rev. 16:16). It there appears Hebraistically as a word transliterated into the Greek. The Greek form is a compilation of three Hebrew words *arema*, a heap of sheaves; *gai*, a valley; *dun*, judgement. Thus it means 'a heap of sheaves in a valley for judgement'. It speaks therefore of the divine purpose as well as to the place of that judgement. The word 'Armageddon' is obviously drawn from the prophecy of Joel.

### **Joel 3:1-17**

V.1 - "in those days" – Verse 1 establishes the time period for the fulfilment of this prophecy, namely subsequent to the bringing again of the captivity of Judah (1948) and of Jerusalem (1967).

V.2 - "I will also gather all nations" – This is a divine work performed unbeknown to the nations themselves - cp. Zech. 14:2.

"into the valley of Jehoshaphat" – The name signifies 'the judgement of Yah'. This valley also styled "the valley of threshing" (decision) in verse 14 is the Valley of the Kidron; a narrow glen which runs from north to south between the Mount of Olives on the east and Mount Moriah on the west.

"and will plead with them there" – The word 'plead' is *shaphat* – to judge. Hence there is a play on the name Jehoshaphat.

V.11 - "Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen" – Roth. - "Give help - and come in all ye nations on every side", i.e. of Jerusalem - cp. v.12.

"thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD" – Roth. - "thither bring down O Yahweh thy mighty ones" – a reference to Christ and his glorified saints. Thus while all nations gather "against Jerusalem to battle", Yahweh brings His mighty ones upon the scene to judge for Him - v.12.

V.13 - "the press is full, the fats overflow" – Roth. - "vats". Compare notes on Isa. 63:1-6. This is the winepress of Bozrah.

V.14 - "Multitudes, multitudes" – The Hebrew word is *hamon*. This helps to identify the origin of the multitude. In Ezek. 39:11 Gog's destroyed army is described as being buried in the valley of Hamon-Gog.

"the valley of decision" – The word is *charuts* - incision, threshing. The latter harmonises with the meaning of Armageddon. Refer to Eureka Vol. 3, pages 603-604.



## THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE - DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

The destruction of Gog and the forces of all nations gathered against Jerusalem is to be accomplished by an unprecedented outpouring of divine power. Amongst the elements to be wielded supernaturally by Christ and his saints are "overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Ezek. 38:22), snow and hail (Job 38:22-23), but by far the most effective weapon, and the one resulting in permanent changes to the Land is the great earthquake described in Ezek. 38:19-20; Zech. 14:4-5.

This earthquake will basically serve three purposes: -

1. The destruction of the invading armies on the mountains of Israel.
2. Spread massive destruction throughout all the earth by the chain reaction of seismic disturbance - Ezek. 38:20; Isa. 2:10-21.
3. Result in dramatic alterations to the topography of the Land of Israel and probably the whole earth.

The following brief consideration of Zech. 14 seeks to follow events associated with Armageddon and highlight the changes it will bring about.

### ARMAGEDDON - Zechariah 14:1-3

V.1 - "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh" – The day of Yahweh is to be a day of anger and vengeance upon Jewry as well as upon the nations - Jer. 30:7; Isa. 34:8, Zeph. 2:1-3. For the saints it will be a day of great rejoicing as they witness and participate in the vindication of Yahweh's righteousness in the earth - Rev. 1:10; Isa. 61:2-3; 26:8-10.

"thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee" – Cp. Ezek. 38:12-13. The riches of Israel must fall into Russian hands but they will not be allowed to enjoy them.

V.2 - "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle" – Roth. - "all the nations". This will be the fulfilment of Yahweh's 'determination' (Zeph. 3:8), that both Israel and the nations might be humbled.

"half of the city shall go forth into captivity" – The prophet provides a vivid account of the progress of the conflict. Gog's forces will be victorious over all other armies involved in the conflict and half of the city of Jerusalem will fall to him in fierce hand to hand combat. While Gog lays siege to the remaining half of the city, the Jewish captives are deported (an Assyrian practice - cp. Micah 5:5-6). At this juncture, while the remnant of Israel struggles vainly for survival in Jerusalem, Christ and the saints intervene in the manner described in the following verses.

V.3 - "Then shall the LORD go forth" – The Lord Jesus Christ as Yahweh in manifestation will go forth to battle, and he will not be alone (v.5) but in the company, of the saints. Hence, this is a reference to Yahweh Tzvaoth; the Multitudinous Christ who as 'a man of war' (Ex. 15:3) will manifest himself at the critical moment when Israel will be in complete despair. A propitious manifestation is implied by the word "then".

The "going forth" will have been from Sinai - Deut. 33:1-3; Hab. 3:3; Ps. 68:17. (See notes on "The Place of Judgement").

"as when he fought in the day of battle" – Yahweh went forth before the hosts of Israel in the past - Judges 4:14; 2 Sam. 5:24; 1 Chron. 14:15. He was manifested belligerently on Israel's behalf through the angelic host - Ex. 23:20-23; Josh. 5:14; 10:14; 23:3; Judges 4:15. At this great crisis He will be manifested in Christ and the saints on Israel's behalf and then the nations will witness once again the manifestation of divine power - Isa. 42:14; 17:12-14.

## THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE - Zechariah 14:4-5

V.4 - "his feet" – The feet of the Multitudinous Christ - Rev. 10:1; 1:15. These feet are instruments of judgement.

"the mount of Olives" – The central eminence of a mile long line of limestone hills. It rises almost 200 feet above Mt. Zion, but is to be ultimately overshadowed by it - Isa. 2:2.

There is an obvious connection between this prophecy and the circumstances of Christ's ascension and the prediction of his return - Acts 1:9-12. While the prediction of the angels concerning the manner of Christ's return is not to be confused with the prophecy of Zech. 14:4, there is a clear link between these two contexts. The restoration of Israel's kingdom was on the apostles' minds as they witnessed Christ's ascension (Acts 1:6) from the mount of Olives, and to that very place he will return and make himself known to Israel for their redemption - Rev. 1:7; Isa. 59:20.

"on the east" – From here the glory departed from Jerusalem (Ezek. 11:23) and from the east it is to return (Ezek. 43:1-2).

"the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof" – An earthquake of unprecedented magnitude will be triggered off upon Christ's arrival at the mount of Olives. The mount will "cleave asunder" (Roth.) along a fault line running east-west so that half the mount shall be pushed northwards and the other half southwards, thus forming an enormous valley running from Jerusalem to the Jordan valley.

The immediate effect of this earthquake will be the destruction of Gog's forces on the mountains of Israel - Ezek. 38:19-21; Isa. 2:19; Joel 3:16. Such will be the terror and panic of Gog's army that those who survive the earthquake will annihilate each other in mutual slaughter.

V.5 - "And ye shall flee" – i.e. The Jews shall flee from the severity of the earthquake which will however have one significant benefit for them: it will distract Gog from his oppression of the Jewish people.

"to the valley of the mountains" – Delete "to" which is in italics and this phrase reads as it should, "flee the valley"; i.e. flee from the valley created by the earthquake.

"for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal" – Roth. - "for the valley of the mountains shall reach very near". The word *azal* should evidently not be a noun. The word means to join, but apparently can also signify to separate. Some choose to interpret *azal* as signifying Jerusalem, the holy or separate place. Both views agree that the phrase indicates that the valley formed by the earthquake will reach to the precincts of Jerusalem.

"like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah" – Josephus records that an earthquake accompanied the smiting of king Uzziah with leprosy at the time of his presumptuous attempt to usurp the high-priesthood (2 Chron. 26:16-20). Whether this is correct or not, an earthquake of some magnitude must have occurred in Judah in those days, the terror of which had been related from one generation to another down to the prophet's day.

"the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee" – Yahweh my Elohim indicates Yahweh manifested in a multitude, namely the Multitudinous Christ. This multitude is styled "saints" - Heb. *qadosh*, signifying sacred, and is translated by Rotherham "holy ones". Their status here also reveals their origin — they are a community of separate ones called out of the Gentiles to be a people for Yahweh's name - Acts 15:14.

That the saints will accompany Christ on his mission to subjugate the nations is revealed here and in Ps. 149, John 18:37, and Rev.19:11-15.

## THE DAY OF YAHWEH - Zechariah 14:6-7

V.6 - "the light shall not be clear, nor dark" – Roth. - "that there shall be no light, the bright stars shall be withdrawn". R.V. - "the bright ones shall contract themselves". Bro. Thomas translates "and it shall be in that day there shall be no brightness, the splendid ones drawing in. And it shall be one day that shall be known to Yahweh, neither day nor night, but it shall be at the time of evening there shall be brightness".

The "splendid ones" are of course the glorified saints (v.5) who will then be equal unto the angels (Luke 20:36) and able to shine forth in glory (Matt. 28:3) or appear as ordinary men (Gen. 18:1-2).

The "day of Yahweh" is the forty year period of divine judgement foreshadowed in v.1 - a day "pertaining to Yahweh" (Roth.), or "known to Yahweh" (v.7) because it will be the time of His judgement on all nations (v.2). The epoch of judgement will be a time when the saints will not be seen in the brightness of their glory by the nations at large. Thus the saints will draw in their glory in the execution of the judgements written. But a time will come for that glory to be revealed to all.

V.7 - "at evening time it shall be light" – Roth. - "at evening time there shall be light". To the Hebrews evening preceded the day, as the Jewish day began at 6pm; (Gen. 1:5). So following the subjugation of the nations and the erection of the House of Prayer for all nations, Christ and the saints will be manifested in glory before all flesh. The glory which Ezekiel saw depart from Jerusalem (Ezek. 10:4,18-19; 11:23) will return and fill the Temple with glory (Ezek. 43:1-2).

### **LIVING WATERS FROM JERUSALEM - Zechariah 14:8**

V.8 - "living waters shall go out from Jerusalem" – Jerusalem is known for its natural springs but the earthquake which exalts Zion will create a spring so large as to be a mighty river. The waters of this spring will play an important part in the worship conducted at the Temple and will flow eastward for the healing of the Dead Sea - Ezek. 47:1-11. The waters are to flow from under the altar upon the elevated Mt. Zion, down the south side and emerge from underground out of the northern and southern entrances of the Temple - Cp. Joel 3:18; Ps. 46:4; Isa. 30:25; 33:21; 41:18; 43:19-20.

"half of them toward the former sea....hinder sea" – The former sea is the Dead Sea (i.e. eastern - see mgn.) while the hinder sea is the Mediterranean. The waters that flow from Zion will be divided into two streams (Ezek. 47:1-2,9), both of which first flow eastward. One pours waters into the Dead Sea so that it is healed (Ezek. 47:8), the other evidently flows east and then north-west to finally empty its waters into the Mediterranean.

"in summer and winter shall it be" – Being from a perennial spring the waters will not depend upon rain or seasons.

### **ONE UNIVERSAL MONARCH — Zechariah 14:9**

V.9 - "And Yahweh shall be king over all the earth" – The proclamation that Yahweh reigns supreme over all nations in the person of his son will be made in the Temple at its inaugural service - Ezek. 43:7 (Cp. Ezek. 37:22,24,28; Ps. 72:8-11; Rev. 11:15; 19:16).

"there shall be one Yahweh, and his name one" – R.V. - "Yahweh shall be one and his name one". This depicts the fulfilment of the purpose of the Gospel (John 17:17-23); the complete unity of Christ and his saints so that together they might bear and manifest the divine name - Rev. 3:12; Isa. 30:27.

### **THE ELEVATION OF ZION - Zechariah 14:10-11**

V.10 - "All the land shall be turned as a plain" – R.V. - "All the land shall be turned as the Arabah". The Arabah is the present depression of land in the Jordan Valley, and this statement declares that all the land south of Jerusalem shall be changed from its present hilly state to form a

vast depression or plain. This will accentuate the position and height of Jerusalem which will appear greatly elevated in consequence.

"from Geba" – Geba which means 'hillock', was in the territory of Benjamin 10 kms (6 miles) north of Jerusalem.

"to Rimmon" – Rimmon was 53 kms (33 miles) south-west of Jerusalem, situated on the southern border of Judah (Josh. 15:21,32). This stretch of land of some 64 kms (40 miles) diameter is to be set apart for divine use (Zech. 2:12) and is styled by Ezekiel, the 'holy oblation' (Ezek. 48:9-12). It will be set aside for divine worship in the age to come. Within this territory south of Jerusalem the city Yahweh Shammah (Ezek. 48:35) will be set up to accommodate worshippers journeying to Jerusalem to worship in the Temple.

"and it shall be lifted up" – Roth. - "and shall lift herself on high and abide in her own place". Mt. Zion is to be elevated to dominate the whole country - Ps. 68:15,16; 48:2.

Yahweh has carefully prepared the topographical features and geological structures of this region so that in due time it might become "the place of His feet".

"from Benjamin's gate unto.....the king's winepress" – cp. Jer. 31:38-40. The new city will be a temple city, built to Yahweh. It will extend from the tower of Hananeel which was on the north-eastern corner, to the hill Gareb which cannot be identified, to compass about to Goath (or Golgotha). The whole of the valley of Hinnom shall be incorporated in this new temple-city as well as the Kedron.

V.11 - "And men shall dwell in it" – Ezekiel reveals that both immortal and mortal priests will minister in the House of Prayer for all nations - Ezek. 42 to 44.

"there shall be no more utter destruction" – Lit. "a curse". Zion is to become a blessing, not a curse as in the past - Zech. 8:13.

"but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited" – Roth. - "but Jerusalem shall abide in security".

## **THE REFINING OF JUDAH**

Zechariah devotes a good proportion of his prophecy to this theme and in so doing reveals the divine method of humbling and refining the faithless and ungodly people who now inhabit the land. Briefly, he reveals that: -

1. Jerusalem is to become the centre of international controversy - Zech. 12:2-3.
2. Jerusalem is to be trodden down for the last time by the Gentiles - Zech. 14:1-2.
3. Two-thirds of the population is to be destroyed in the "time of Jacob's trouble" - Zech. 13:8.
4. The people of the land will fight against Gog's army with divine help - Zech. 12:6; 14:14.
5. The survivors will be refined by suffering and mourning - Zech. 13:9; 12:10-14.
6. The remnant will be morally cleansed and brought into the bonds of the Covenant through baptism into Christ - Zech. 13:1-2; 10:6.

## **THE LAND OF ISRAEL CLEANSSED**

In the aftermath of Armageddon the remnant of Judah, refined and converted by the events described so vividly by Zechariah, will set about the task of cleansing the land of the relics of the past and the debris of fallen armies. Ezekiel describes this work (Ezek. 39:8-20) in detail and depicts Israelites

chosen as "men of continual employment" fully occupied for seven months in cleansing the land of the wreckage of war and the evidence of death. Thus cleansed the land will become a suitable habitation for Christ and the saints, and purified Israel.

## **THE TRIBAL CANTONS**

The Land will again be divided among the twelve tribes of Israel and they will be allocated new areas as enumerated in Ezek. 48. These cantons or divisions will be of equal width running parallel east and west, the full breadth of the Land promised to Abraham and his seed.

Over each of the tribes one of the apostles will reign as prince (Matt. 19:28) subject to the King of kings (Rev. 19:16) who will reign from Jerusalem (Luke 1:32-33; Matt. 5:35). The northern and southern boundaries are described as from the Euphrates to the Nile (Gen. 15:18 - the Hebrew word related to the Nile, and not the brook of Egypt referred to elsewhere where a different word is used), and from "sea to sea" (Ps. 72:8) or from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. Thus a greatly extended stretch of territory will be occupied by Israel as the chief of nations.

Israel is to be humbled, disciplined, educated, restored, and elevated to the first dominion (Mic. 4:8). Ungodliness will be turned away from Jacob by the Deliverer (Rom. 11:26), and the nation revived "as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11; Acts 3:21).

## **THE SUBJUGATION OF THE NATIONS**

### **PROCLAMATION TO THE NATIONS**

Having consolidated his power in Zion and established his government over the remnant of 'Judah', Christ will seek to extend his power to all corners of the world. This he will accomplish by warfare and judgement upon the unyielding and recalcitrant but not without first providing ample opportunity for nations to consider the events of Armageddon and peacefully submit to his rule.

Bro. Thomas suggests that a period of 10 years may be consumed awaiting the peaceful response and submission of the nations or allowing them to gather their forces in an attempt to overthrow the new power ensconced in Jerusalem. To permit the nations an opportunity to choose is the purpose of the "mid-heaven prophecy".

### **THE MID-HEAVEN PROPHECY - Revelation 14:6-7**

V.6 - "I saw another angel" – This angel is identified with the mighty angel of Rev.10:1, but not in its belligerent manifestation. The saints will carry Christ's ultimatum to the nations.

"fly in the midst of heaven" – The political heavens of Gentile power will still exist even though Christ's government will constitute the development of the political heavens of the Millennial age. The 'angel ambassadors' of Christ fly in the midst of heaven or political air of Babylon into which the judgements of the seventh vial are to be poured (Rev. 16:17). The implication of this is that their message will be to both governments and peoples of all nations, because they fly or travel between the 'heavens' (ruling powers) and the 'earth' (the common people or subjects of the beast).

"having the everlasting gospel to preach" – The definite article is lacking. R.V. - "an everlasting gospel". 'Everlasting' is *aionion*, and denotes "pertaining to the age". It relates to a proclamation that will be adapted to the needs of the coming age. Bro. Thomas refers to it as "Millennial good news". The word 'gospel' is *evangelion* - good news; while the word 'preach' is *evangelisai*, and denotes proclamation of good tidings. R.V. - "proclaim". This rendering is more fitting in this context than "preach".

"unto them that dwell on the earth" – The expression is used politically for those who previously followed after the beast (Rev. 13:3).

"and to every nation....and people" – Christ's message is to the common people as well as to governments. All people will be given the opportunity to submit to Christ or give their power unto the beast. The millennial good-news is a message of hope to any desirous of serving the new king in Jerusalem but constitutes an ultimatum to the rebellious and unheeding.

V.7 - "Saying with a loud voice" – This is so that all might hear. Symbolically, the idea is that the message will be proclaimed far and wide. None will be able to claim ignorance of Christ's demands.

"Fear God, and give glory to him" - This is the call to submit to Christ's authority to rule on behalf of his Father. A warning of the consequences of failure "to bend the knee" is given - "the hour of his judgements is come".

The nations will in the main not respond well to this ultimatum and will prepare for war against the new power under the spiritual guidance of the Papacy - Ps. 2; Rev. 17:13-14,17.

## **THE RESPONSE OF THE NATIONS**

The Psalmist presents a graphic picture in Psalm 2 of the nations rebelling against the claims of the new king in Jerusalem. They are seen tumultuously assembling together to take counsel and imagine a vain thing, namely, setting themselves against Yahweh's anointed.

The result of this folly is a foregone conclusion. David describes the victory of Zion's anointed king over the resistance of the nations and witnesses his triumph in receiving the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

But what would move the nations to oppose Christ in this manner, and which nations are involved? Undoubtedly, the force behind this rebellion is the Roman Catholic Church and its head, 'the false prophet'. The Catholic nations of Europe will confederate under the Pope's leadership to oppose the new power in Jerusalem who they will represent as the 'anti-christ' of Catholic teaching. Many nations will be deceived by the machinations of the 'false prophet' and will join the confederacy of nations arraigned against Zion's king - see Rev. 17:12-14,17; 19:19-20.

Not all nations however, will contemplate the folly of those influenced by papal intrigue and political ambition, as is clear from the prophecies concerning the submission of some to Christ's ultimatum.

## **THE SUBMISSION OF BRITAIN**

"The land shadowing with wings" (Isa. 18:1-2) which has already played an important part in the regathering of Israel to the land and the establishment of their state, is yet to be more intimately involved in the gathering of the remnant of Jacob's seed following Armageddon (Isa. 18:3,7). This implies an early submission by Britain to the rule of Christ, and such is the clear teaching of a number of prophecies.

1. Britain will use its naval power to transport the remnant of Israel from distant lands to the Promised Land - Isa. 60:9; 66:19-20.
2. The British will be among the Gentiles who assist in the building of the house of prayer for all nations, and who will bring their wealth to assist in that project - Isa. 60:9-11.
3. These arrangements will follow the visit of the "daughter of Tyre" to pay tribute to the new king in Zion - Ps. 45:12. Whether this implies a queen of Britain ruling at the time of Christ's return only time will tell.

4. Ultimately, when all nations are subdued, British rulers will be in the forefront of the nations offering tribute and submission to the 'King of kings' - Ps. 72:10.

## THE LULL BEFORE THE FINAL STORM

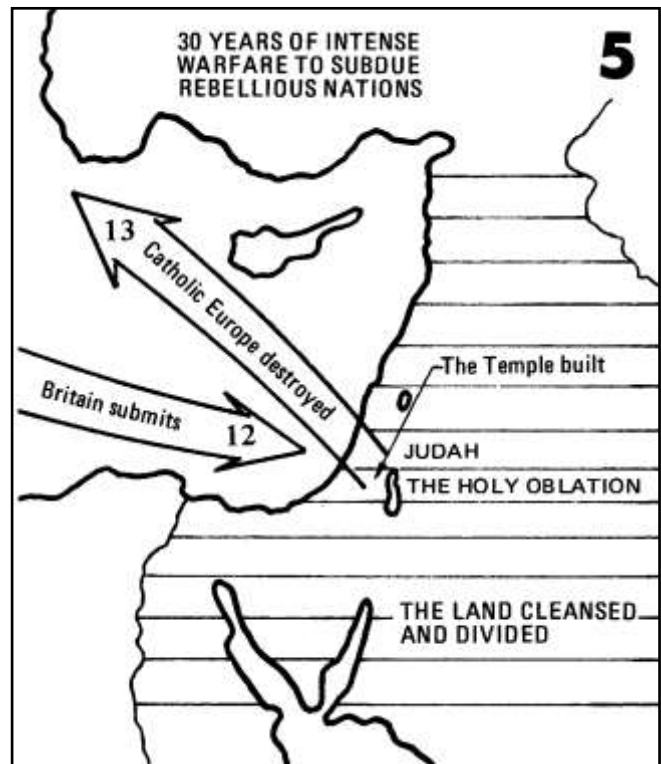
The period intervening between Armageddon and the judgement of the nations will be one of feverish activity both in the land and throughout the earth. While Christ and the saints overshadow the work of the remnant of Judah in cleansing the land and making preparations for the construction of the House of Prayer for all nations, the nations of the world will be deciding their policy in regard to the new power established in Jerusalem.

Some like Britain will submit to Christ's rule and assist in the work of restoration both of the people of Israel and of the land. The remainder under the 'spiritual' guidance of the papacy will set themselves for the final struggle with Zion's king.

The object of the lull is to give all nations an opportunity to declare themselves and to allow for full ripening of the vine clusters in the Roman West. The rebellious nations will fully deserve the judgements that will fall upon them. All the evidence will reveal to them the fact that a supernatural power is ensconced in Jerusalem. To

oppose that power after witnessing the destruction of Gog's army and the world shattering events associated with Armageddon will be the height of folly, but the nations will be intoxicated with the wine of 'Babylon the great' and will share her awful fate - Rev. 18:2-3.

While the nations assemble for war the land promised to Abraham's seed will be revealing the effects brought about by Christ's presence. The submissive nations will journey to a land blossoming with verdure and rich growth to behold the miracle of "rivers in the desert".



## RIVERS IN THE DESERT

The return of Christ to the earth will mean the return of miracles by his hand even more astonishing than those which he performed during his ministry. As far as the nations are concerned those miracles will be witnessed in the great earthquake and the outpouring of divine wrath through the elements in the destruction of Gog. However, the consequences of those events will leave a permanent testimony to the presence of miracle. The total transformation of the land topographically, ecologically, and botanically will flow out of the events of Armageddon and Christ's presence in Zion.

The resurgence of deserts and wasteland will result from the supply of water to arid regions in the vast territory promised to Abraham. Initially, the streams in the desert will be to provide sustenance for the remnant of Judah who flee from the oppression of Gog into the wilderness region east and south of Jordan – Isa. 41:13-14,17-19; 43:18-21, 30:25. Within a few years the miracle of total transformation to Edenic conditions will be seen, so dramatic that the physical beauty of the land is chosen by Isaiah to represent symbolically the moral excellency that will be Israel's when Christ has refined and transformed them by turning away ungodliness from Jacob – Isa. 35:1-2.

For such conditions to prevail, an adjustment to weather patterns would be required so that the arid deserts which now receive little rain might receive regular and abundant rainfall. The bringer of the spiritual "latter and former rain" to Israel (Hos. 6:2-3) will experience no difficulty in so adjusting the weather patterns.

## **THE TIME OF TROUBLE SUCH AS NEVER WAS**

The nations having tumultuously assembled and set themselves to overthrow Zion's king (Ps. 2:1-6), the lull will end and a violent storm will break as Yahweh's controversy with the nations begins - Jer. 25:31.

## **THE DESTRUCTION OF ROME**

The first to suffer divine wrath will be Rome which is spoken of as being overthrown by a massive upheaval. In Rev. 14:8 a second angel follows the angel bearing the proclamation to the nations with a declaration that Rome has been destroyed. This indicates that the overthrow of Rome occurs some 10 years after Armageddon. See Eureka Vol. 5 pgs. 38-39, 74-75, 163-165 (Logos Edition).

Rev. 18:21 indicates Rome's end is to be violent. An earthquake or subterranean subsidence of the sort which overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrah appears to be inferred by the language used - Rev. 19:20; cp. 11:8.

## **A FINAL PLEA TO THE NATIONS**

In the aftermath of Rome's destruction, the Lord Jesus Christ will make a final plea to the nations to act wisely and submit themselves to his rule - Rev. 14:9-10; Ps. 2:11-12.

When this last call is rejected, as it will be by the Catholic nations where Papal influence still prevails despite the Vatican's demise, Yahweh "will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth" who resist Christ's rule - Jer. 25:29.

## **YAHWEH'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE NATIONS**

Jeremiah describes the terrible but justified judgements that will be poured out upon the nations so that all resistance might be broken and all flesh completely subdued. So horrific will be these judgements that lamentation or burial for the dead will not only seem out of place but a matter of no concern to the survivors desperately seeking preservation of their own lives - Jer. 25:31-33.

Isaiah paints a similar word picture of the awful events of this time of national judgement - Isa. 2:10-21; 34:1-3; 66:14-16.

Micah also prophesied of this day, as do many of the prophets, saying, Yahweh "will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard" (Micah 5:15).

In a world racked by war, suffering and violence have become commonplace, and after the horrors of Armageddon which will be widely reported throughout the world, to say that the judgements are of such intensity that they surpass any previous sufferings imposed upon humanity for their wickedness, is to say that they are virtually indescribable. It will truly be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation upon earth.



## **THE DURATION OF NATIONAL JUDGEMENT**

According to Bro. Thomas the lull of about 10 years following Armageddon will be followed by a period of 30 years of intense wars. This is the period of the "one hour" judgements on Rome and its adherents. Refer Eureka Vol. 5 pgs. 34, 38-39, 74-75, 163-165 (Logos Edition).

The wars will move from one nation to another until all nations are subdued - Jer. 25:32. This means that a tapering off will occur as time goes on and nations large and small, near and far, are forced to submit to Christ's rule. Slowly but surely resistance will be crushed until only small pockets remain which Christ will overcome in his final campaigns after the pattern of David's subjugation of the nations around Israel. Thus will the image of Nebuchadnezzar be ground to powder by the 'stone' power which will then fill the whole earth - Dan. 2:44.

### **RANDOM OR SELECTIVE JUDGEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS?**

While it is clear that all flesh will be worthy of the divine fury to be poured out upon them, some will be more worthy than others. The inference to be drawn from some prophecies is that a heavy vengeance is to fall upon those who most deserve it - Isa. 2:12; 66:14,17-18; Jer. 25:31.

It is logical to expect that as Yahweh removed from among Israel in the wilderness, over a period of 40 years, a perverse and wicked generation, so will He destroy from among the nations the incorrigible and inveterate sinners who despite judgement will not respond to Christ's call for submission (Isa. 26:9-10). Those who survive will consist of the responsive and the younger who will have grown up through the turbulent years of Armageddon and subsequent wars and will have been thereby rendered willing to receive instruction.

The principle that will govern this matter is expressed in Jeremiah - "I Yahweh search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:10).

## **ISRAEL ESTABLISHED IN THE BONDS OF THE COVENANT**

### **THE RETURN OF SCATTERED ISRAEL**

Purged by the fires of affliction and trials encountered in "the wilderness of the people" Israel will willingly accept the covenant offered to them by Yahweh (Ezek. 20:34-38). However, unlike the covenant of Sinai which never touched their hearts, this new covenant will affect every individual who enters the land under Elijah. It will be written upon their hearts and be a motivating force in their lives (Jer. 31:31-34).

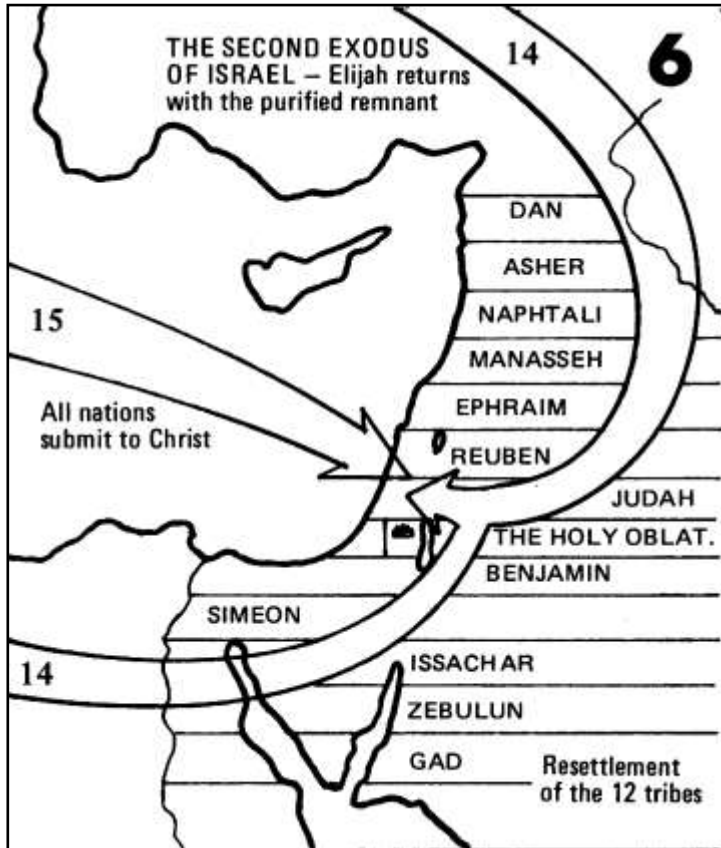
In this refined and disciplined state they will gather on the borders of the land ready to enter into their inheritance.

### **ISRAEL ENTERS THE LAND**

From the south through Egypt and the north through Assyria a double stream of traffic will converge upon an area east of the Dead Sea (Isa. 11:15-16). Here under the guidance of Elijah and immortal assistants the regenerated Israelites will prepare to meet Judah's king - their Messiah.

Here there will be a period of great rejoicing as Israel prepares to journey along the Valley of Achor up to Zion (Hos. 2:14-15). The Valley of Achor, formed by the great earthquake of Armageddon (Zech. 14:4), will stand before the nation as a door of hope - a way of entry into the fellowship of Israel's true God (Hos. 2:16-20).

Triumphantly, Elijah will lead Israel into the presence of their Messiah and a scene paralleling that of Joseph and his brethren will take place - Gen. 45:1-8.



## ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE COMPLETE

With Israel's humble acceptance of their Messiah and King and his reception of them, the deliverance of the nation will be complete. Israel's redeemer will have turned ungodliness away from Jacob (Isa. 59:20-21) and all Israel will have been saved (Rom. 11:26-27). Judah and Israel will be united under one king (Ezek. 37:21-22) who will guide them so that they might continually walk in the ways of Yahweh (Ezek. 37:24) and dwell at peace in the land promised to their fathers (Ezek. 37:25-27).

Thus will the long awaited national deliverance of Israel be accomplished - Ezek. 36:24-35.

## CHRIST'S REIGN ON EARTH

### ALL NATIONS SUBJECT TO ZION'S KING

Finally, the campaigns of Christ to subdue and humble the nations will end with the total subjection of all peoples. Then "all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Ps. 72:11). Then will be fulfilled Rev. 11:15 - "The kingdom of the world has become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign for the ages of the ages" (Diag.).

Thus subjugated to Zion's glorious king the nations will be ready to receive the blessings of his reign and guidance. These blessings will be bestowed in many different ways affecting every avenue of human life. The ministers of blessing and instruction will be the glorified saints.

### THE SAINTS AS KING-PRIESTS

For the duration of the Millennium Christ's glorified brethren will rule the earth with him. To sit with him in his throne to govern the nations is the promise he holds out to those who overcome and endure to the end of their probation - Rev. 3:21; 2:26-27.

The unspeakable blessedness of those who enter the Kingdom as immortals is emphasised by John in the Apocalypse where he twice speaks of the saints living and reigning with Christ as kings and priests for a thousand years in the space of three verses - Rev. 20:4-6.

The glorified saints will be the administrators and the mediators of the kingdom age. They will govern and guide the mortal populace in every aspect of life. Prominent among their tasks will be the education and instruction of mortals in divine ways. They will also administer the new law based upon the Law of Moses and judge with righteousness on Christ's behalf - Isa. 32:1,16-17; Ps. 72:1-4.

As priests the saints will minister to the spiritual needs of those over whom they are given responsibility. Once encompassed with mortal infirmity themselves they will be able to succour and guide the mortals with the compassion and insight now exercised by Christ towards his brethren (Heb. 2:17-18; 5:1-2). However, in that time the assistance provided to straying mortals will be more direct and open - Isa. 30:21; 33:5-6.

Among the saints there will be varying degrees of authority, and of responsibility. This appears to be indicated by such declarations as Mark 10:40, and Matt. 19:28 (Cp. also Luke 19:17-19).

## **TRIBUTE TO DAVID'S SON**

Solomon was an ample type of Christ during his early reign. His was a reign of peace after the wars fought during David's reign had subdued the surrounding nations. His wisdom and prosperity coupled with the magnificent Temple which he built for Yahweh in Jerusalem attracted the nations near and far to pay their tribute and bestow gifts upon him. So it will be when Christ reigns supreme over all nations.

The nations will bring their wealth to Christ in Jerusalem - Isa. 60:5-6,9; Hag. 2:8. Doubtless the wealth of the nations will be used to adorn the Temple that Christ will build.

## **SATAN BOUND**

The judgement of the nations will effectively rid the world of the incorrigibly wicked. The 40 years duration of these judgements will see the rise of a new generation whose experience of life will be limited to the troublous times subsequent to Armageddon. They will be aware that sin and wickedness, under the rule of Christ and his saints, will receive an immediate and just recompense of reward - Ecc. 8:11. With the hardened and corrupt removed, the remnant of humanity will begin to learn righteousness - Isa. 26:9-10.

Thus satan or sin in its political and ecclesiastical manifestations will be destroyed or bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3). However, sin in the flesh will remain. Though sin will be suppressed by fear of the consequences and the constant presence of the saints, men will still need discipline and chastening in order for them to walk in right paths. This is evinced by the fact that once the pressure is released at the end of the Millennium, a massive rebellion will occur - Rev. 20:7-9.

Discipline in the Kingdom Age will therefore be very strict, as it was in Israel under the Law of Moses. The difference being that the administrators of the law will possess supernatural powers of perception and judgement. This will in turn produce in the mortal peoples a revulsion towards sin as they come to see the folly of rebellion, and they will also act to remove any cause of offence - Zech. 13:3.

On a national level, rebellion will be hastily and severely punished should it occur, by removal of essential rain or by sending a plague - Zech. 14:17-18.

Finally, as a constant reminder of the consequences of rebellion or harboured wickedness it appears that an area outside the western wall of the Temple will be devoted to become a dump for the bodies of those who appear before Yahweh to worship but are corrupt and unyielding to His will - Isa. 66:23-24.

# **A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS**

## **WHEN AND HOW THE TEMPLE WILL BE BUILT**

In the wake of the great earthquake which decimates Gog's forces and topples every structure in the land a massive clean-up will be undertaken to cleanse the land and prepare it for the process of

rebuilding. Once the area around newly exalted Mt. Zion is prepared, work will probably begin on the foundations of the Temple. This means that while Christ is calling upon the nations to submit to his rule, he will also be guiding the construction of the Temple in its early stages.

The building of the Temple will probably be carried out in a manner similar to the construction of Solomon's temple. Solomon the king guided the construction, assisted by able men of Israel who supervised the work.

Highly skilled artificers were selected to manufacture the intricate and ornamental portions of the building, while thousands of Israelites and Gentiles laboured off the site preparing the timber and stone for the building. So accurate was this preparation of materials that there was no need for on-site adjustment. Each stone and beam fitted precisely so that no hammer or axe was heard on the site.

Similarly, Christ will guide the construction of the house of prayer for all nations with selected saints (like Ezekiel) acting as overseers. Christ is the "man of brass" and the saints "a line of flax in his hand" (Ezek. 40:3) whom Ezekiel saw measuring and making the various features of the Temple. (See "The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy" - H. Sulley pgs. 31-37).

Christ is the builder who will be associated with his glorified brethren in raising up this house. However the physical labour will most likely be performed by refined Judah assisted by the saints.

The materials for the Temple will be provided and prepared by both Jew and Gentile - Isa. 60:5,6,9-11,13,17. The assistance provided by Hiram king of Tyre in supplying materials to Solomon almost certainly typically foreshadowed the assistance to be provided by a humbled and submissive Britain - Ps. 45:12.

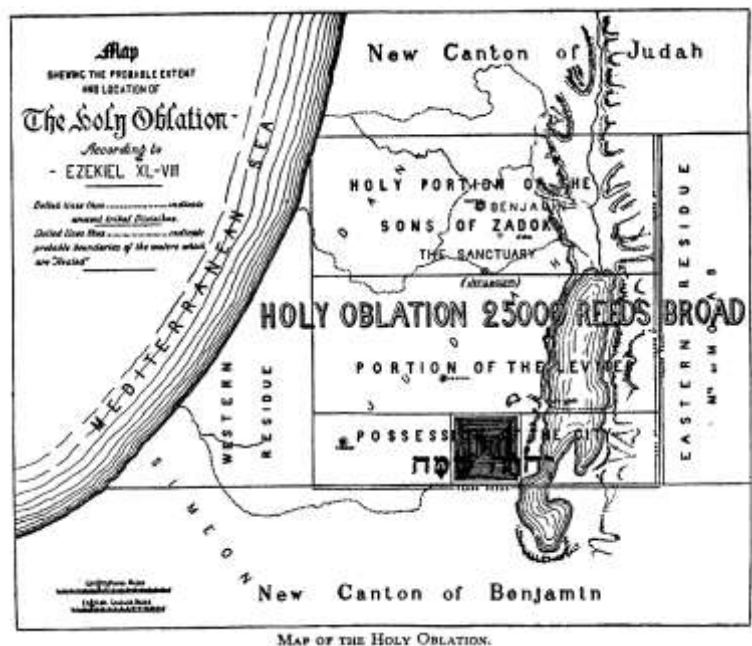
## THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE

There can be no doubt as to where the extraordinary building seen by Ezekiel is to be erected. In Ezek. 40:1 he informs us that he was taken to Jerusalem ("the city [which] was smitten"), while in v.2 he describes being set upon (Heb. *el* – near) a very high mountain. This is obviously Mt. Zion exalted after the manner described in Zech. 14:10 (see notes on 'Armageddon and its aftermath'). Around this mountain he beheld a mighty building which he then gives an account of in great detail.

Testimony abounds that Zion is to be the site of the Temple of the future age. Here are just a few passages - Ps. 132:13-14; Ezek. 43:2-7; Isa. 18:7; Zech. 1:16; Ps. 48:1-3,11-13; Isa. 2:2-3.

## THE HOLY OBLATION

The Temple will be built in the Holy Oblation as shown by the following diagram. A section of the land, approximately 90 kms (56 miles) square (Ezek. 48:20), occupying practically all of Judah's ancient territory will be set apart for the specific purpose of divine worship (Zech. 2:12). This territory will be divided into profane (Ezek. 48:15), holy (verse 14), and most holy (verse 12) sections. The southernmost portion will be given over for the city where visitors to the land will be housed pending their call to the Temple for worship (Deut. 33:19). The central section will be given over to the Levites



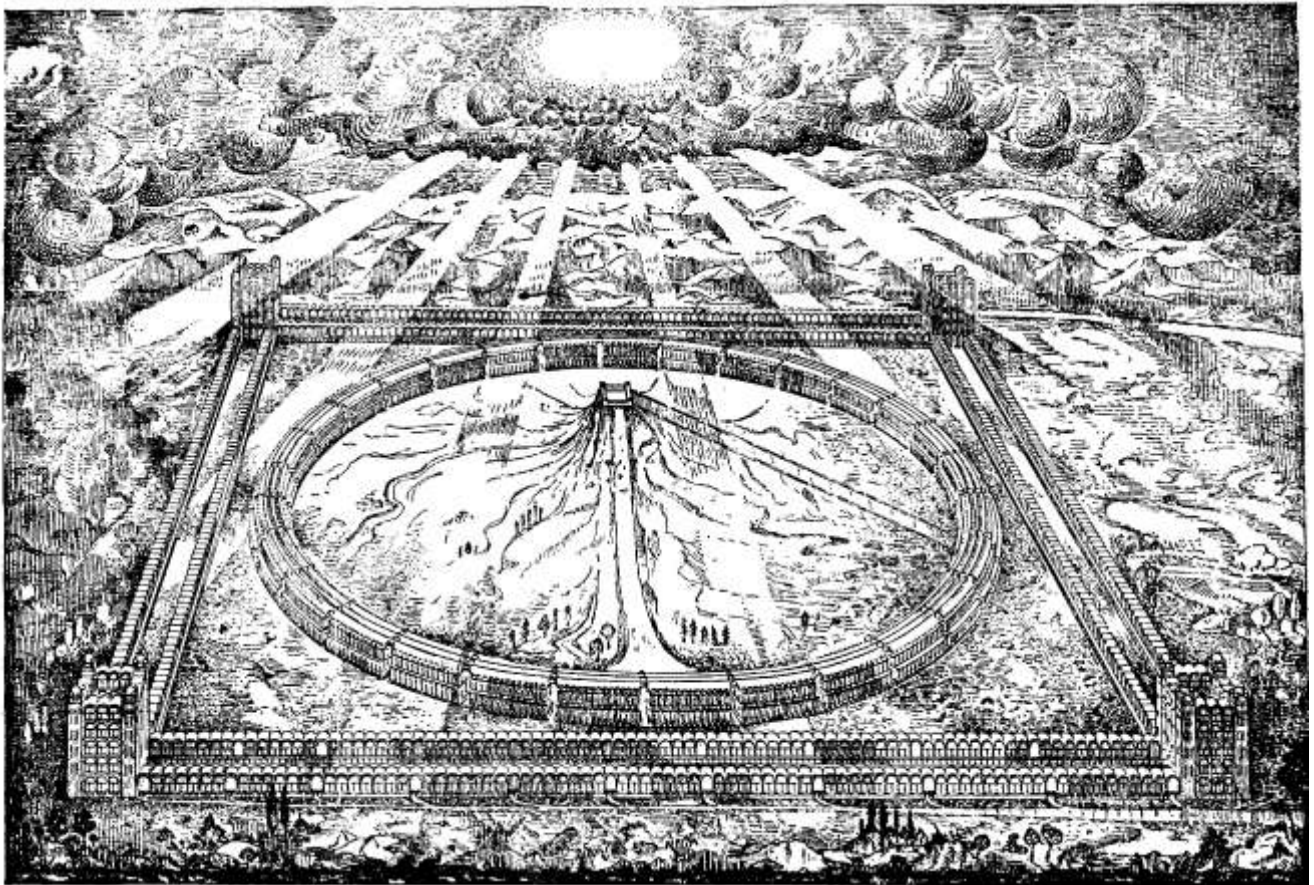
(the mortal priests of a lower course) who will assist immortal priests in the worship. The northernmost sector will be for the use of the sons of Zadok - the immortalised priests. East and west of this Holy Oblation will be a section described as the Prince's portion (Ezek. 45:7). Those among the immortals or mortals whom he wishes to particularly honour, may find a place of residence in the Prince's portion in accordance with the terms set forth in Ezekiel 46:16-17.

## THE TEMPLE STRUCTURE

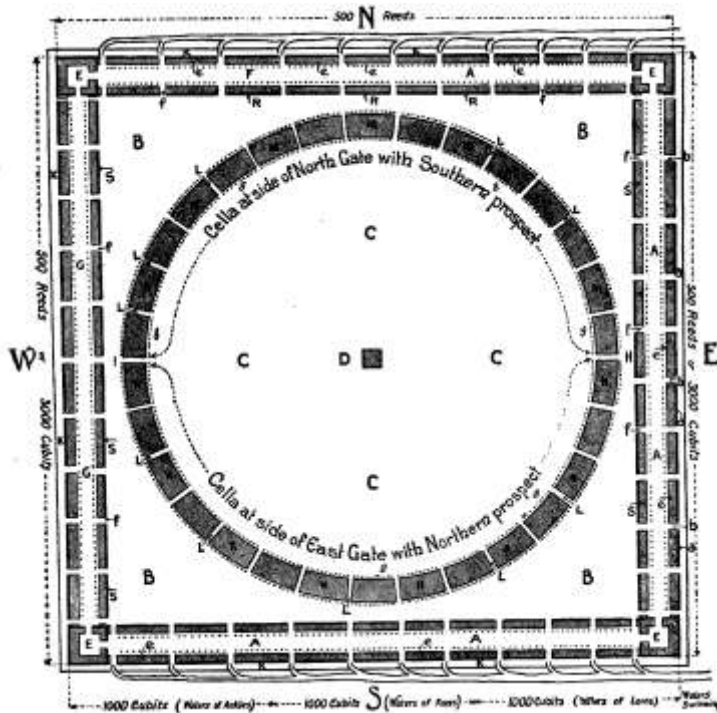
It is not intended in these notes to provide a detailed examination of Ezekiel's Temple or a verse by verse treatment of Ezekiel 40 to 48, but rather to supply a brief description of the principal features and functions of the Temple, which with diagrammatic assistance should adequately portray this magnificent structure before our minds.

The Temple consists of a building 1.6 kms (1 mile) square with lofty towers at each corner. On each side an outer and inner row of cellae flank a wide court running between each corner tower. This square building encloses another structure, this time circular in construction and composed of many large cellae running continuously around the foot of Mt. Zion exalted in the midst. Over Mt. Zion is a cloud of glory as a covering by day and night, thus providing a shelter from the sun and rain by day, and light by night - Isa. 4:5-6.

The entire city of Jerusalem is to become a temple-city, "built unto Yahweh", and occupying an area greater than any time in the past - Jer. 31:38-40.



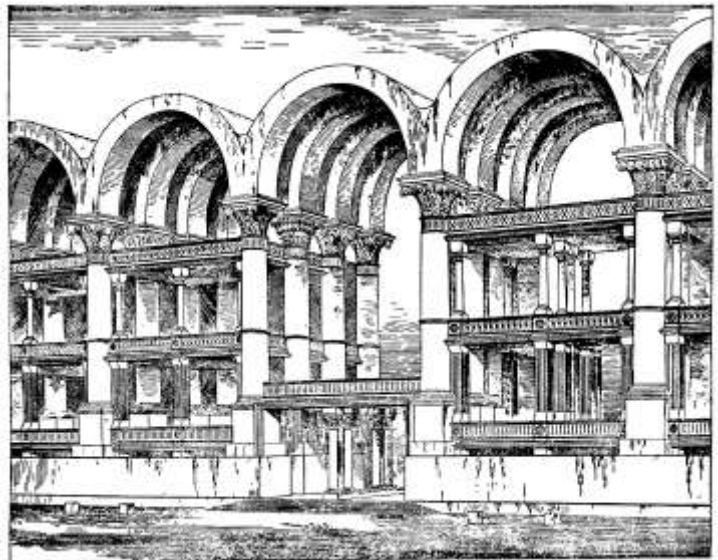
## GROUND PLAN OF THE TEMPLE



The ground plan reveals a circle within a square. The never-ending circle suggests eternity; the square is the symbol of Israel (Num. 2; Rev. 21:16). The spiritual lesson derived from the construction of the Temple suggests the principle that eternal life is only possible through the Hope of Israel. Entrance for worshippers is only from north or south (Ezek. 46:9), and whosoever enters by one entrance must go out by the opposite exit, ensuring that Psalm 48 verse 12 will be literally fulfilled. A stream of living water, emanating from under the altar will flow eastward from the northern and southern gates, so that anybody entering from these directions must go through the water. Baptism will thus find its counterpart in the age to come for the mortal worshippers.

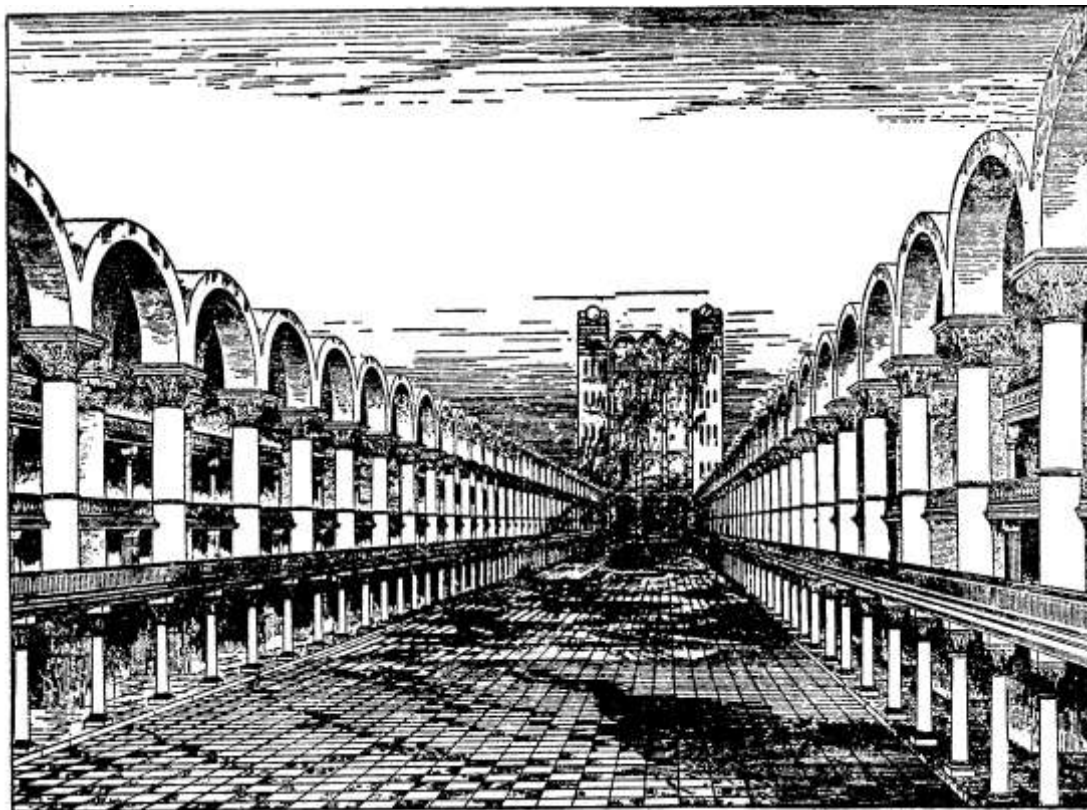
## THE ENTRANCE GATES

On approaching the Temple, the visitor will see a magnificent building with symmetrical arches and pillars extending for 1.6kms (1 mile), and rising to a height of some 37 metres (120 feet). Here, met by a mortal Levite, the visitor will be instructed in the etiquette of worship and symbolism of the Temple (Ezek. 44:9,23,24; 43:10-11). Sacrifice then having been made (Isa. 60:7), the visitor will then be invited to ascend the seven (covenant) steps (Ezek. 40:6,26) to the entrance hall where a line of tall, slender, elegant pillars made like palms and teaching a powerful lesson (Ezek. 40:16; Ps. 92:12) will meet his gaze. There will be both compulsory (Zech. 14:16), and voluntary pilgrimages to the Land (Zech. 8:21-22), and services of various kinds will be continuous throughout the year (Isa. 66:23).



Inside this entrance gate, there is found the outer court, closed in by another line of buildings similar in size and construction to those in which the entrance gates are found. Down the far end of this outer court will be seen the massive corner courts some 148 metres (480 feet) high and 110 metres (360 feet) wide (Ezek. 46:22). Here the sacrifices will be prepared, a portion to find their place on the altar, and portion to be used as a sacrificial feast on the part of the worshippers (Ezek. 46:20,22 - mgn.).

Beyond this double range of outer buildings is the open space of the inner court which gives access to the circular Temple.



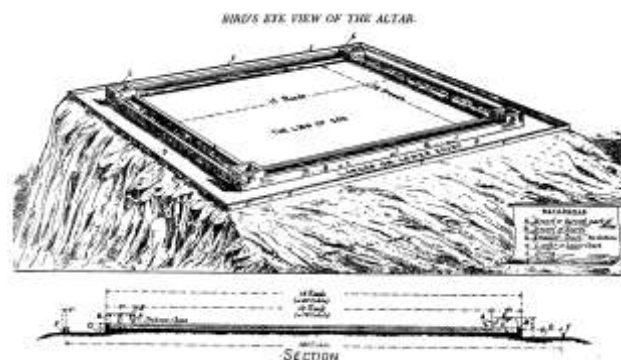
### THE CIRCULAR INNER TEMPLE

Encircling Mt. Zion in the centre of the sanctuary, there is a range of buildings which acts as a division between the holy place and the most holy (the mount itself). Here are found the chambers of the singers (Ezek. 40:44), courts of judgement, and so forth. The mortal priests shall bear the portions of the sacrifices through the entrance of this inner circular range of buildings, but will not be permitted to go beyond them.

There the sacrifices will be taken care of by immortal priests who will supervise them to the altar (Ezek. 44:15-16) - these verses should be in parenthesis to separate them from those that go before and after. The circular range of buildings will be used during the actual service of praise that shall be witnessed by the worshippers in the inner court.

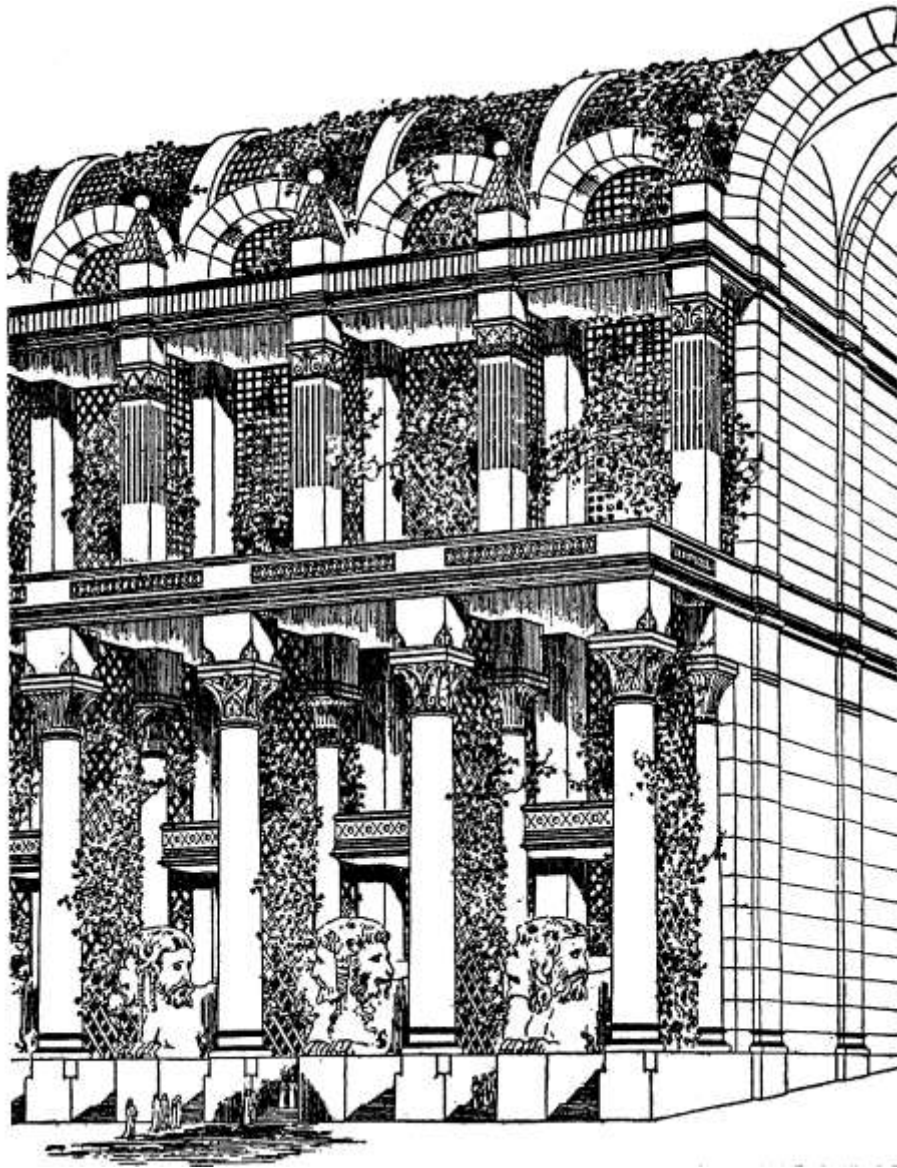
### THE ALTAR

This is situated in a dominant position on top of Mt. Zion (Ezek. 43.-12-16 mgn.), and is designated 'most holy'. Only immortals will have access to this 'most holy' mount (Ps. 24:3-4), and they will do so as priests (Rev. 5:9-10). A stream of living water will issue forth from under the altar, and forming two streams will flow east to the Dead Sea whose waters will then flow north-west to the Mediterranean. The altar itself, with its four horns is like a miniature of the Temple with its four corner courts.





As the Temple receives the worshippers, so the altar receives the offerings. The altar types the Lord Jesus (Heb. 13:10), from whom shall emanate a stream of living water in the doctrine of salvation that he shall cause to be universally proclaimed (John 4:14) and which shall heal the Dead Sea of nations (Isa. 57:20-21). Thus will the Temple fulfil the prophecy of the Lord (Mk.11:17) and effect the transformation predicted in Isaiah 2:2-4.





# **The Final Consolation**

By Brother Robert Roberts

It is a picture, but not a fancy. It is beautiful, but not a fancy. It is ravishing to the imagination, and yet the presentment of truth as practical and actual and tangible as any sight to be seen at any time in the humdrum street of a modern city. It comes direct to us on the guarantee of Him who holds heaven and earth in His hand — who, having cursed, can bless: who, having smitten, can heal; who, having caused us to know the misery of His withdrawn countenance from the earth, and the consequent prevalence of disorder and death, can gladden our eyes by the spectacle of the tabernacle of God with men, and human life a beautiful and holy and joyful thing for ever.

Come to the land of promise in the day of its glory — not as you are now — burdened with infirmity, with a nature easily fatigued, eye soon dimmed, power soon spent, and having but scant capacity to rise to the surrounding sublimities of the universe, or to apprehend sympathetically the subtle glories of the Spirit. Come, when it has been said to you, as to Joshua, "Take away the filthy garments from him. ... I will clothe thee with a change of raiment." Come when mortality no longer weighs you to the earth, and when you know the new experience of having "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Come when you can step lightly and joyously abroad upon the earth in the freedom and power of spirit nature; when the cup of life mantles full and sparkling to the brim; when the strong, penetrating eye looks out of a glad heart to behold in all things the unfolded love, and wisdom, and glory of God; when every thought is a joy, every movement a pleasure: every breath the inspiration of an ecstasy that can only find fit expression in praise to Him that sits upon the throne.

In such a state, any land, any configuration of country, would furnish suitable sphere. But God puts His jewels in fit settings. He hath called and glorified His children, and "He hath prepared for them a city" — a city having foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. Abraham sojourned in the geographical area of this city — in the land of promise — as in a strange country: but that is now long past. Forsaken and hated for ages, the land, at that time not far ahead, is now "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." God has fulfilled His promise, and has made "her wilderness like Eden — her desert like the garden of the Lord."

"Come and see." We go: we stand on the hills of Judea, now no longer sterile and wild. They are clad with glorious vegetation, of every form and fragrance. The hills are clothed with pleasant woods, and the valleys rejoice in the smiling beauties of a rich cultivation — field and vineyard, fruits and flowers, corn and wine. The air is clear and warm, and laden with pleasant odour. The view on all sides is magnificent and far-reaching. No smoke obscures the landscape, no fog on the valleys, no mist on the hills. The sky is cloudless, and the sun pours his healing flood of light on rejoicing land and ocean. The whirr of pleasant insect; the musical song of bird helps the sense of gladness that fills the air. Near are pleasant homesteads, standing each in its own plot or portion, neatly trimmed, well kept. Below in the valley, towns and hamlets, peopled by righteous Israelites are visible in the far receding distance, clearly visible in this transparent atmosphere in which everything appears nearer than it is. Jerusalem is faintly visible on our northern horizon.

Let us hasten in that direction. Where we are is only the profane portion of the land — a scene of peace and righteousness and plenty, truly, but not comparable to "the holy portion of the land." Come to the holy portion of the land — the land given as an oblation to the Lord. We approach Jerusalem, or rather Yahweh Shammah (the new name of the new city) from the south. It stands in the southernmost section of the holy portion. It is an immense city, built upon a plan of perfect symmetry and proportion. It is very unlike the huddled clusters of human dwellings called towns with which we have been familiar. The general plan is an exact square, marked by an outer wall. The square is of

enormous extent measuring nine miles through at any point. The wall is of bright stone, and adorned with towers at regular distances. We only see the south wall. It stretches away right and left further than the eye can follow. It is over nine miles long on the south side, and on all the other sides the same. There are lofty ornamental gates at regular distances. We descend from the overlooking hill and enter by one of these gates. We notice at a glance the stately character of the city. The streets are straight and wide, and shaded with trees, and, at regular distances, open out into squares and crescents. The houses are not high, and stand apart in gardens except where here and there, palatial blocks of buildings spring from the midst of the squares. We asked what these are, and are informed that they are reception houses, for the accommodation of the visitors who daily come in crowds from all parts.

There is an immense number of the people in the city, but the city is so vast that they do not appear numerous, except at certain points, as we pass along. Their aspect is such as we never saw in any city crowd before — so quiet, yet so cheerful; so brightly interested in everything, yet so orderly and respectful; so apparently cultured and well-to-do, yet having none of the fussiness and arrogance usually associated with prosperity. All are well clad, cleanly, intelligent, good, righteous and happy — no boisterous merrymaking — no foolish banter — no unseemly utterance. They are a few of the happy subjects of the kingdom of God. They have come from all parts of the earth to do homage to the king — wives and families with them, leaving behind them prosperous homesteads and occupations to which they will return in a little season.

We hasten in a straight line along our nine-mile avenue of picturesque and happy human habitation — (we could take the help of an electric tram if we liked; for such has been provided in all the thoroughfares for the use of the people: but, in our new state, we prefer to walk; we can quicken our pace, when we want to do so, by gliding along in the air, skimming the surface of the road, as we dreamt of in our mortal days). We get out at the gate of Judah; opposite which, after crossing an ornamental common of about half a mile in breadth that runs round the entire city, there opens a magnificent highway running in a straight line in a northern direction towards the temple which is distant about 30 miles.

Along this highway we proceed. It is very broad, and of noble aspect. A line of tall trees in a broad band of turf divides it in the centre, and again in the middle of each side, giving four spacious roadways running side by side, lined with trees and bordered with turf and flowers. The country on each side is laid out in fields and estates, which are in the occupation of the Levites of the second order who serve the temple, whose lands, however, are accessible to visitors at all times.

The country becomes more magnificent at every step. At certain points, side roads strike off and return in many turnings and windings to the main road again. These side roads lead through woody solitudes of paradisaic beauty.

Let us go down one of these roads, and behold the fulfilment of the promise that Yahweh would make the place of His feet glorious. All is quiet, comforting, and beautiful. There is no dankness, but only a sense of bracing relief in the shade they give: no wetness on the ground, but only a pleasant soft hardness. There are no walls or fences at the side of the road. You may walk straight off the road on to velvet turf under the trees and among the shrubs. Here you find all kinds of fruit growing — all kinds of flowers in bloom. You are at liberty to put forth your hand and do as you will. How delicious the odour everywhere! We stroll and stroll. We come upon a break in the wood where the ground descends into a gorge. We see clear out to the side of an opposite hill. A brook murmurs past where we stand. The sun streams over all. What a delicious hush! What a sense of joy in every fibre of being. We enjoy the scene for a few moments, when hark! there is a burst of music! It comes rolling towards us from the top of the opposite hill. What is it? It is a mixture of voices and instruments — stringed instruments. How beautiful! The voices so musical, so full and correct — the instruments so adapted to the voices. There must be at least 100 people. It is beautiful! It is ravishing! We stand and

listen. We do not know the piece yet it seems familiar. It is a psalm of praise to God. We hear it out and then all falls quiet. We would like to make the acquaintance of the company. We direct our steps towards the top of the hill. Going along an upward leading path, we see people coming towards us. As we go forward, we approach them. They look enquiringly and smilingly at us: we look enquiringly and smilingly at them. We are not in the least embarrassed: only we were silent. Then the foremost of their company — a fresh elderly\* man with noble look — so majestic, yet so friendly — with such exquisite tenderness of manner, and yet such kingliness of carriage — breaks the silence. He speaks in Hebrew, but we seemed to understand it quite naturally. He# says—

"You are friends, I know."

"We are."

"Friends of God?"

"Praise God, yes."

"You have come in a happy time — the time of favour of Zion."

"Yes, it is a time we have long waited for."

"So have we all. God's word is sure, and has come to pass."

"Whither hail ye from?"

"Britain."

"Oh Britain — Tarshish — yes; the most celebrated of the isles of the Gentiles. God has made great use of her in bringing about Israel's deliverance. We have just been indulging in a psalm on the subject."

"Yes, we heard you; we were greatly delighted. We should like to hear it again."

"Should you? Well, there is nothing to hinder. There is an open space at the foot of this gorge where it would be convenient."

We cannot express the indefinable pleasure we feel as we walk together down the hillside towards the spot indicated. As we walk, we say —

"Might we be so bold as to ask who your company are?"

"They are a small band of the Lord's people, settled now in these parts, who have come out for an evening stroll. You ought to know who we are. You look as if you belonged to the Lord's people yourselves."

"Well in truth, we do; and we instinctively felt that you were a company of the saints — the immortal saints. Yet we felt fain not to presume on this our first visit to this most blessed realm."

"Have you been among the dead, then, my friends?"

"No: we belong to the current generation. We were alive at the coming of the Lord."

"Ah! you have been favoured not to see corruption."

"We do not feel it has been a greater favour than that enjoyed by those who, by a momentary wink as it were, escaped from the vanity of human life, as it was in the Lord's absence, into the glory revealed at his return."

"Well, there is something to be said on that score. For one, I should not have liked to live all the days that divided my mortal life from resurrection."

"How long might the interval have been?"

"Nigh three thousand years."

"Whom may we have the honour of speaking to?"

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\* The indications of Scripture are that the faithful will shed their age in the immortal state, and appear in all the vigour of the prime of life. The angels appeared on earth as "young men" (Mark 16:5), and Isaiah predicts: "They that wait upon Yahweh shall renew their strength . . . they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). They will show in their appearance a strength of body that will match their intellectual strength of mind.

# There is what we might style a poetical licence taken by Brother Roberts in this imaginary conversation, for in reality, there will be a general gathering of immortal saints, and fraternisation together at the Judgement Seat of Christ. Doubtless, at that time, all the approved will have seen the Lord and his more intimate friends, and therefore will not need the introductions suggested in this imaginary picture. Nevertheless, at some time or other, we must be introduced to such as Abraham and David.

The old man (looking so young in his hoary hairs) paused. Those near him who had gathered close to us, and were eagerly enjoying our conversation, said, "Who do you think?" We looked enquiringly.

"Guess?"

"We cannot."

"Who wrote most of the Psalms?"

We bowed with unspeakable pleasure.

"King David? Oh! Happy day!"

Our majestic interlocutor said,

"Even so: a morning without clouds, as the Lord promised."

Arrived at the bottom of the glade, we stood together and sang the anthem we had heard them sing on the top of the hill — David leading. Oh, such voices! Oh, such blending of liquid melodies! Oh, such fervent pouring of the soul into the meaning of the words. The delight was unutterable. Preparing to resume the journey, we are asked whither bound.

"The temple."

"Not tonight?"

"We had thought of it."

"Put it off till tomorrow. Come with us. We spend the night at Abraham's palace. There we shall introduce you to a number of friends."

That proposal is overpoweringly good. But we are not embarrassed. We would have been so in the old mortal. In the new man to which we have attained, we are simply at home in a perfect satisfaction. We express our pure pleasure at the prospect, and start off with our company, numbering about 200 persons — men and women — all so lovely to look at and so bright to talk to. We find they comprise Jonathan, Asaph, Nathan, Uriah, Bathsheba, and a number who were David's intimates in the days of his flesh. Others we do not know. We ascertain that they form David's personal circle in the new order of things.

Abraham's palace to which we are bent is some distance off. It stands within seven miles of the temple, and we are still 20 miles away. There is need for speed, as the softening light warns us of the approach of the shades of evening. So, at a signal from our leader, we resort to the angelic mode of locomotion, and by a simple act of the will, are able to propel ourselves through the air by a slight motion of the limbs at a short distance from the ground. We went at a rapid pace, but it was not at all fatiguing, and there was no sense of chill from rushing through the air. On the contrary, it was a delightful exercise. We seemed to get along like a company on very fleet bicycles, but without their violent contortions.

The air was balmy; and our progress through it only seemed to give us a higher sense of its exhilarating power, and bring out more distinctly the sweetness of the odours exhaling from the paradisaic vegetation clothing hill and dale.

In an hour's time we arrive at Abraham's palace — a magnificent pile, standing in a wooded seclusion. He has evidently a large company at home. They are waiting us expectantly. We are announced while yet a good way off, and they all come out on the balconies and corridors in front of the spacious building, and salute us as we pass within the grounds in front. Ornamental tables are arranged for a repast. There is a pleasant mingling on the green sward — much brilliant talking and silvery laughter — everyone so bright and well. Then they all sit down — about 600 people. A venerable figure rises — not bent or aged, but noble in the air of ripe maturity — hair and flowing beard of pure white: a countenance full of gravity and kindly repose, but having no sign of weakness. He calls upon every glorified son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty to give thanks to the Possessor of Heaven and earth for the overflowing bounty of His goodness in Christ Jesus. In few meet and sonorous words, he presents the offering of thanksgiving. Then the other kingly old man stands also and says, "It is a good and pleasant thing to give thanks to the Lord."

"Let us praise the Lord!" and the whole company rise with a readiness that seems like an elastic bound, and all eyes on David, who raises his hand to lead, they break forth into a psalm with such fervour of shout, such emphatic enunciation of words and such beauty of musical utterance, that the mere exercise seems to rouse them into a fresh glow of the heavenly arbour that is normal with them all. They then sit down, and partake of grapes and various fruits. There are cooked dishes of various kinds for those who prefer. All is partaken of with perfect gastronomic relish.

There is much pleasant talk and interchange of animated glances between persons at different parts of the table. All eat heartily, but not heavily.\* There are no heavinesses or indigestions afterwards. It is not possible. The food partaken of becomes the subject of a slow, spiritual combustion, which assimilates every atom of it to the energy of the spiritual body; and the process of this combustion is a source of pleasure to the eaters.

The repast finished, there is a breaking up of the company into groups, and an indiscriminate commingling, affording the opportunity of private snatches of conversation with any who may choose. In this way, we approach Abraham, who stands in the centre of a group, conversing in a deliberate, cordial, but stately manner. We listen, and do not presume to take part, though having many questions we would like to put. We know there will be plenty of time afterwards.

After two hours spent in this way, we unite in another song, after which we are all shown to separate apartments for the night. We are not tired. We had no inclination to go to sleep. We feel quite as bright as mortals usually do in the morning, and a little brighter, I fancy. Still it was an acceptable change to enter a cool, lightly-constructed, pleasant chamber, with slight and elegant furnishings, to spend the night alone. There was no darkness. There was a glorious moon overhead, showing a brightness rarely visible in western countries. The chamber was lit electrically: and, in addition to this, we felt in ourselves a light that made us feel as if darkness could not be. The night quickly passes: sometimes we pace the room in reflection: sometimes recline on the top of an elegant couch (no need for getting under the clothes): sometimes get up and read, and sometimes sing. When morning arrives, the sun pours her golden flood in at the windows, and we are ready for a new day without any sense of fatigue such as we should be sure to experience after such a night in mortal days.

Looking out at the windows, the eye takes in a noble stretch of country, looking away behind the beautiful grounds of the palace, just in front. The country descends towards the Jordan in the distance, beyond which rises a rampart of purple hills running north and south. To the right and left, in the near neighbourhood of the palace, are distinctly marked spurs of the ridge on which the palace itself stands covered with wood. It is a picture of seclusion and peace in the morning brightness and the balmy air, yet without loneliness. Pleasant sounds and the occasional sight of a visitor stepping out to enjoy the scene, remind us that we are in the habitation of intelligence and love — in one of the abiding places of the Father's house now set up on earth.

Descending to a great hall on the ground floor, we find a large company mustered, joyous, bright and gay. I observe there is none of the quiet fatigue that mortals experience after an evening's social exertion such as we had had. All are fresh and lively. Exchanging hearty greetings with those next us,

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\* The partaking of food by immortals, though possible (the risen Christ ate the food given him) will not be at all necessary as it is today. In fact, in the change to which all will be subjected who attain unto the state of incorruptibility (1 Cor. 15:53), the body itself will be altered. Paul declared: "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them" (1 Cor. 6:13). Thus the internal organs of the body will be completely changed. They are there today, to make provision for digestion and absorption of food; such as will be entirely unnecessary then. Food may be partaken of by immortals in the Kingdom for pleasure (they will feast at Jerusalem, before Christ, and elsewhere) but will not be necessary for the sustaining of life. Of course Brother Roberts recognised this, and we merely add this footnote for the guidance of others. We do not think that the normal eating habits of breakfast, lunch and dinner will be practised by the saints in the future.

we sit down and wait the progress of events, our uppermost desire being an early departure to see the temple.

Shortly, a psalm is proposed, in which all take part in the effective manner of the previous evening. Then the God of Abraham is addressed by Abraham, the father of us all, in simple, earnest words, that take us all with him to the throne of the Eternal. Shortly after, we are summoned to another room for the morning meal. Out we throng in pleasant crowds, and are conducted to a large banqueting hall, with skylight dome roof and walls largely constructed of glass, on which vines are trained, and which are adorned with various ornamental plants. Bright tables occupying the hall from end to end groan under the load of all good things, interspersed with flowers. Abraham calls on David, who gives thanks with a fervour that thrills us all, and evokes a loud "Amen" from every mouth. We asked if Isaac and Jacob were present, and are told they are not; that they had palaces of their own not a great distance away, and that though frequent visitors, they had more often to act the part of host to the numbers that came to see them from all points. We might see them in the course of the day at the Temple, as there was to be a special gathering of all the saints.

"Shall we see Moses?"

"Very likely; he is always prominent on such occasions."

"And the prophet like unto Moses?"

"We are nothing without Him. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

We feel almost overpowered at the prospect of seeing the Lord Jesus in all his glory.

Breakfast being over, we discover there will be no delay in getting our desire gratified. The whole company are shortly ready, and on the road that lies in the direction of the Temple, going south and west from Abraham's palace. The road lies through a mountainous district, exuberant with the choicest vegetation, and the morning air is rich with the odour of flowers.

We are not long in accomplishing the distance at a moderate walk. The intercourse we enjoy with first one and then another in that superb company would quickly while away a desert journey. What is its goodness in the holy ground of Zion whom the Lord had comforted, as it is written "He will make the wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord?" Truly joy and gladness were found therein — thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

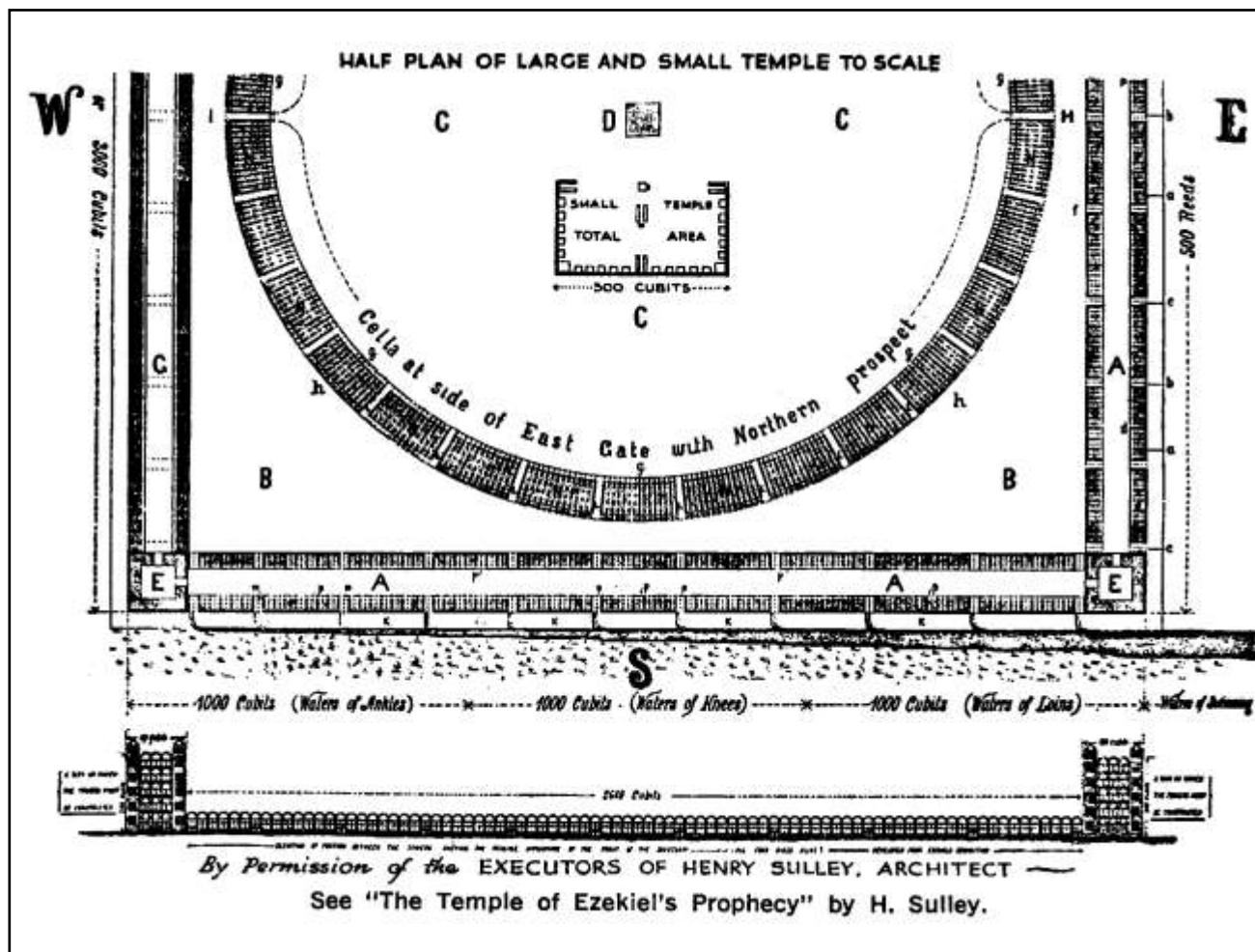
At last the temple bursts upon our view as we round the corner of a hill on which we stand at a considerable elevation. How shall I describe it? It is about a mile off from where we stand. It looks like a square-set symmetrical city of palaces. It is not what we have always understood by a temple: that is, it is not a building, an edifice, however large, but an immense open structure of light and airy parts, all of enormous size, yet all resembling one another, and covering such an area that they do not look so large as they are. What we see from where we stand is, of course, the outer wall; but it is a very different thing from what is suggested to us by a wall. It is in reality a long line of arches standing upon a solid basement, and stretched from east to west for a distance of over a mile.

There must be nearly 200 arches in the line. Between every dozen arches or so is an entrance gate, towering considerably above the arches; and at each end of the line is an enormous tower, giving a well-marked finish to the wall. We can see inside through the arches, but what we see seems simply like a forest of palace-like structures, with a hill top shooting through the centre, and crowned with what looks like a shrine. We advance towards the splendid structure — the tabernacle of the Most High — the place of the soles of His feet where He dwells in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.

Shortly, we come upon a bridgeless stream of crystal water that comes flowing from under the house, and runs due east towards the Dead Sea, flanked with trees along its banks. This we cross with a graceful movement, passed gently through the air from one bank to the other. We are now near "the

house," and see of what an immense size the arches are — about 120 feet high. Through open arches, they are latticed, and plants which look like vines are trained among the lattice work.

We enter by one of the gates, and find ourselves in the first court, open to the air. Here are thousands upon thousands of people who have come for the special day mentioned at the breakfast table. It strikes me as peculiar that the country we had come through was so lacking of people in view of this multitude. It is explained to me that the public access to the temple is from the south only, by the highway we had traversed the day before, and that to the north, and east, and west, of the temple is private to those who have to do with the service of the temple. As we pass in, the people made an avenue, and bow themselves in sincere reverence to a company of the Sons of God. Crossing the outer court (a breadth of 200 feet), we enter a gate of the inner range of arch-building which resembles the outer wall, but stands a little higher; passing through, we are in the inner court, of similar dimensions to the outer court (also open to the sky). Before us, about 200 feet further on, stands the temple proper — not a square building, but an immense circle of arch building, three miles in circumference. This circle of building fills the whole view from right to left, gradually diminishing with the distance. We enter this circle by the gate opposite us, and passing through the building, find ourselves inside the inner and holiest precincts of the house, viz., an immense circle nearly a mile across, open to the sky. The floor of this circle was the ground, not flat, however, but rising gradually on all sides to the centre.



At the time of our arrival this interior space was nearly empty; but by-and-by, companies like our own began to arrive from all sides of the circle. As they arrive, they enter the circle, and take up a position which apparently had been assigned beforehand; for servitors, who were in charge, all round

the building, escort the new arrivals to their places. These servitors were graceful, pleasant-mannered, agile, well-formed young men in loose robes.

(One of our company whispers to me they are angels<sup>\*</sup>). As the time wears on, the arrivals became more numerous, until there is one continual stream from all sides. There is on all hands a pleasant hum, as of a multitude conversing. Presently, the circle is full, and the inflow ceased. Quiet and order settle down. The assembly presents an imposing appearance, packed together in a picturesque and living mass as far as the eye could reach. The prevailing costume is white with gold fittings. I have not asked who they are. I instinctively feel they are the assembled body of Christ; and my rapturous interest in them is only held in check by the greater thought that Christ is presently to be introduced.

Where was he? I ask my companion. He is not yet arrived. His palace is some 30 miles off in a straight line east of the temple, standing in the paradisaic glories of "the prince's portion," overlooking the Jordan valley. The prince's portion is an extensive tract of country flanking the temple district, east and west. In both portions, the prince is surrounded by special friends, to whom he has assigned seats of residence and honour. The portion to the west is a sea-board, looking out on the Mediterranean, where also the prince has a palace; but on state occasions, his arrival is from the palace on the east.

This I learn in the interval while we are waiting. — Presently, a hush falls on the assembly: then a brightness seems to break out simultaneously from all parts of it, as if hidden electric footlights had been suddenly turned on all over the building. Every face glows with light: every garment becomes lustrous and shining. It is not an oppressive brightness, but an atmosphere of subdued light and warmth that seems to diffuse a sense of unspeakable comfort and joy.

In a few moments more, the air over our heads becomes alive with light and life. A multitude of the heavenly host became visible; the brightness grows to glory: there is a quivering excitement of rapturous expectation; a sound as of trees swayed by the wind; a movement at the eastern entrance, and, lo, a dazzling figure, escorted right and left by a shining phalanx, emerges into view. Instantly, the angelic host overhead breaks into acclamation, in which the whole assembled multitude joins. It is nothing like the "applause" to be heard in mortal assemblies. There is all the abandon with it that is ever manifested at the most enthusiastic meeting, but there is with this, a gentle fervour and musical cadence that seems to send waves of thrilling sweetness to the remotest corner.

The Lord Jesus advances to the midst of the assembly. All eyes are on him; his demeanour is royal, yet simple and loving. He passes, there is silence. Then he lifts his eyes and looks gravely round, not all round: and in a voice that is gentle, kind, strong and exultant all in one, in tones rich, but not strong, and yet as distinctly audible as if spoken in a small room to one person, he said, "I have been to my Father and your Father. It was needful that I should go away; but I have come again as I said, in the glory of my Father and his holy angels. Ye have had sorrow; but now ye rejoice, and your joy no man any more taketh from you. It is written, in the midst of my brethren will I sing praise. Now, praise our God, all ye His servants."

Then an electric spasm of joy seems to pass through the assembly. There is a rustle, and a preparation, and a fixing of attention to Christ. He lifts his hand, and, as if by an inspiration, the whole assembly takes the lead from him, and breaks into a transport of tumultuous and glorious

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\* Again, a little touch of poetic licence. The fact that such were angels would be perfectly obvious to an immortal. Further, whilst it is true that angels will be present at the inaugural opening ceremony of the Temple (Heb. 1:6 - RV); Rev. 5:11), their work, in the age to come, will be taken over by immortalised saints (Heb. 2:5), who will thus act as Christ's servitors in all necessary appointments. Nor will it be necessary for one immortal saint to ask of another that he point out Christ to him, for all must first appear before the Lord. Once again, we emphasise, that Brother Roberts recognised all that we here state, but desired to bring the picture within the scope of humble men and women of this age.



sound. Every energy is strained to the utmost. Mortal nerves could not stand it; but the assembly of the immortals seem to revel and gather increasing strength with every higher and higher effort of musical strain. "Blessing and honour and glory be unto him that sits upon the throne and unto the lamb for ever. Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and honour and glory, and blessing. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests and we shall reign with thee upon the earth. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of Our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. Amen."



**“Even so, come,  
Lord Jesus”**